



what was the primary? John says, that the first cause of all the events represented in the seals was "THE LAMB;" "he openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;" *He opens all the seal-periods*; and, by that omnipotence given to him in heaven and in earth, he gives such a *shape and color* to the world's affairs, civil, ecclesiastical, and social, as accords with the prefigurations of the Spirit in this prophecy. He is that popularly styled "Providence," who, for the past eighteen centuries, has been engaged in preparing a situation of affairs favorable to the establishment of his throne and kingdom upon earth. Providence is the Lamb; and the Lamb, with his seven horns and seven eyes, recovered from the wound with which he was wounded in the house of his friends (Zech. 13:6); and embodying the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne — is the symbol of the All-powerful Spirit of the Deity. This is manifest from ch. 4:5; 5:6. It gives symbolic shape to the great mystery of *Deity manifested, justified and glorified in crucified flesh*. The embodiment of this mystery was "made both Lord and Christ" by his ascent from the lower nature of His fathers Abraham and David, to the higher nature of his Father the Eternal Spirit — John 10:17; Heb. 2:7,9,16,17; Acts 2:36. Thus he became spirit after leaving his sepulchre, and about forty days before his assumption to the right hand of power. Ever since he hath been "the Lord the Spirit" — 2 Cor. 3:17; "the Quickening Spirit" — 1 Cor. 15:45: so that when "He that was dead" — Apoc. 1:18, dictates to John the matter of the epistles to the seven Asian ecclesias, he concludes his address to each of them by an exhortation to "hear what THE SPIRIT saith to the ecclesias." As the Dead One, anointed with spices and bound with grave clothes, he was Sin's Flesh crucified, slain, and buried; in which by the slaying sin had been condemned, and by the burial, put out of sight: but as the Living One again alive for the Aion of the Aions — "the Son of Deity with power by spirit of holiness out of a resurrection of dead ones," He is the Spirit — "the Seven Spirits before the throne;" "the Alpha and Omega, beginning and ending; the first and the last; he who is and who was and who is coming, THE

Opp. DOMITIAN — Domitian was the son of Vespasian, and brother of the popular Titus who took the city of Jerusalem in A. D. 70. He came to office a despised younger brother, embittered by his elders' contempt. He vented his spite on such notable men as Juvenal, Tacitus, Seutonius and Pliny. He encouraged the pernicious system of the common informer and the law of treason. He persecuted the Christians, continuing the policy and legislation of Nero in that regard. Domitian considered himself a god, and accused the Christians of treason for refusing to acknowledge him as such. According to Irenaeus (5:30:3), and accepted by J. Thomas, the Apocalypse was written during his reign. Domitian's suppression of Christianity extended to his family, so high had the movement penetrated. And this increased his opposition to it. It is conjectured that Domitian banished John the Apostle to Patmos, there to work in the mines (Rev. 1:9). In A. D. 96, Domitian was murdered after a plot supported by his wife, who felt the insecurity of her own position. In such circumstances, the Apocalypse was given to John, and circulated among the ecclesias.

OMNIPOTENT" — Apoc. 1:4,8,11; 16:5.

Such is the signification of the symbolic Lamb who opens the scroll, having prevailed so to do, and to "see it" in the loosing of all its seals, that the prophecy may be read, and understood, and observed by them who are faithful and true.

3. — The Four Living Ones

But beside the symbolic Lamb we find the Four Living Ones acting a part in connection with the first four seal-periods. They are not introduced into the drama as mere drapery and ornament; but as representative of a class of agents performing a very important part in association with the Lamb during the first four seal-periods. Aggregately they are the symbols of the "ONE BODY — of *"the Ecclesia which is His body"* — Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4. When encircling the throne, they represent the one body of the redeemed after their appearance at the judgment seat of Christ; but in these seals they are emblematic of the general assembly and ecclesia of firstborns, who have been enrolled for heavens (Heb. 12:23) in their relation, or rather, opposition, to "the Prosecutor of the Brethren" enthroned in the heaven of Pagan Rome — ch. 12:7-10. This power, symbolized by "the Dragon in heaven," was continually assailing them with accusations of blasphemy and atheism, and of hatred to mankind in general; and unrighteously subjecting them to the cruelest pains and penalties of despotic and arbitrary power. But, energized by the Lamb, "they loved not their lives unto the death"; and "by the word of their testimony" withstood their enemy until at length "they overcame him."

The Lamb and the Four Living Ones in the first four seals symbolize, then, what may be styled in popular phrase, "*the church militant*" — such as the ecclesia of the Deity was in the time of the apostle John. The Lamb was then in the midst of the seven golden lightstands, in which burned the seven flames of fire. In other words, the apostolic ecclesias were all in the Spirit's Mouth, from which they were not "*spued,*" or ejected, until after the fifth seal. The Lamb and the Four Living Ones were One Body — "the Father in Jesus, and Jesus in the Father, and they, the true believers, in them," a Divine Unity. This was a power too strong for the Dragon-power of Rome. It was the spirit of the Deity in intellectual and moral activity contending *in flesh and blood* "against principalities, against powers, against the worldrulers of the darkness of the aion, against the spirituals of the wickedness in the heavenlies" of Daniel's fourth beast — Eph. 6:12. While the weapons of the Dragon's warfare were carnal — imprisonment, torture, confiscation, fire, and sword; the weapon of theirs was

“the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” It was not they who opened the seal-periods, but the Spirit-Lamb; and when he opened them in order, the voice of that same spirit, issuing from the corporate aggregations of eyes, which derived their intelligence from Him, invited John as a member of the body, and as the dramatic representative of his class in then present and after times, to “*Come and see*”. “And,” saith he, “I saw.” The dethronement and death of Domitian were the thunder-voice of the opened first seal-period, which arrested the attention of all christadelphian eyes to behold what was next to “come.” Their Ephesian vigilance required not to hear the mandate, “Come and see,” for their eyes were full orbed upon the government; and anxiously and earnestly watching events bearing upon its policy with reference to themselves, and the conflict in which they were engaged.

The fall of Domitian, then was in itself a command to all the eyes of the One Body (and it was *gemonta ophthalmon*, “full of eyes” ch. 4:8; Ezek. 10:12) to *come* “to the consideration of the event,” and to “*see*,” to discern, the unloosing of the seal.

And what did they see in the Dragon-empire consequent upon the tyrant’s fall? They saw a very remarkable change of times. The previous fifteen years of misrule and cruelty were immediately succeeded by a mild and beneficent reign of sixteen months and eight days. This was the short, but brilliant reign of Nerva, which was inaugurated by an act of the Roman Senate, which condemned Domitian’s memory, and rescinded his decrees. Nerva was one of the best monarchs permitted by the Lamb to occupy the Dragon throne. Under his mild administration of the laws, the people of the Roman Horse was everywhere contented and happy. He extended his clemency as “the minister of the Deity for good,” to all who were imprisoned for treason; called home all that had been banished in Domitian’s time, except the tyrant’s own niece, Domitilla, whose freedman had assassinated him; restored all sequestrated estates; punished informers, and, to the utmost of his power, redressed the grievances of every description of his subjects. To christadelphians he allowed the freest toleration, not permitting any to persecute either them or the Jews, though the saints were generally regarded as Atheists, having no visible temples, altars, or sacrifice, which the pagans considered as essential to a profession of religion.

II. THE SEAL-PERIOD OCCURRENT

2. “*And I saw, and behold, a White Horse, and One sitting upon him having a Bow, and there was given to him a coronal wreath; and he went forth conquering, and that he might conquer.*”

i. The Whiteness of the Horse

In regard to the period thus propitiously initiated by the reign of Nerva, Gibbon has remarked that, “were a man called to fix upon an epoch in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was the most *happy and prosperous*, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus,” namely, from A.D. 96, to A.D. 180. “The vast extent of the Roman empire was governed by absolute power under the guidance of wisdom and virtue. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws. Such princes deserved the honor of restoring the republic, had the Romans of their day been capable of enjoying a rational freedom.”

Here then are two periods of about equal duration, the one ending, and the other beginning at the death of Domitian; the former styled by the historian, “*that unhappy period;*” and the latter, “*the most happy and prosperous*” known to the world. This happiness and prosperity of the Roman people for eighty-four years was owing to the exemption they enjoyed from civil discord under these emperors. The period was a reign of peace over the Roman earth, granted by the opener of the seal; and as *white* is symbolical of peace and prosperity, the Horseman in the first seal-period, is paraded upon the arena sitting on a *white* horse.

Some light is thrown upon the *whiteness* of the horse in this seal by what the spirit saith of the white horses in Zech. 6:6. He reveals four chariots issuing forth from between two mountains of brass, and horsed with horses of divers colors. He terms these “the four spirits of the heavens which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.” One of the spirit-chariots was harnessed with *black* horses, and another of them with *white*. Their mission was “into the north country”

— north from Jerusalem. That country was to be plagued, therefore the *black* horses were sent thither first. While they were doing their work, the Lord's Spirit was in a state of unrest, actively inflicting judgment upon the workers of iniquity in the north country. But when they had been sufficiently plagued, the *white* horses were sent into the country after them — "the white go forth after the black." As the white drove through the land the black would retire; and the vision of the north country would be a spirit-chariot with white horses. What then would be the condition of that country so symbolized? The answer is, peace, prosperity, and plenty would be its condition; in other words, the Lord's Spirit having conquered, would be in a state of rest; his wrath against the people would have passed away, and public tranquility be restored; as saith the Spirit, "Behold these that go toward the north country have *quieted my spirit* in the north country."

Now without identifying the vision in Zechariah with the seals, the illustration of the figuration of the first seal derived from it is this. The "unhappy period" which preceded the fall of Domitian was a period of unrest to the Spirit of the Lord of the whole earth — "the Lamb." In it "the spirits of the heavens" went forth through all the Roman habitable earth, inflicting judicial calamities upon the families which had for ages presided over the destinies of the republic, and upon the pagan people; all of whom were colleagued against the Deity in their persecution of his apostles unto death, and of his saints and nation. Had these fourscore years of trouble been symbolized by horses, they would have been black and red; and while in motion, going forth, would have indicated the unquiet state of the spirit of judgment. But the judicial condition of the Roman habitable during those years is not symbolized. We know from Daniel, that the Roman Dragonic Horn would magnify itself against the Prince of Judah's host, suppress the Daily Sacrifice, destroy the city and sanctuary, cast down the truth to the ground, and practice and prosper — ch. 8:11, 12; 9:26; — all of which came to pass in the period before Domitian's assassination. But, of the judicial visitation that should fall upon Roman society in the period the Roman government and people should be venting the ferocity so characteristic of them upon Messiah the Prince and "the people of the holy one," prophecy does not testify. But with the first seal's symbolization, we "see," as John "saw," that whatever might have been the color of things hitherto, a white horse was to be the spirit of the heaven when the first seal-period should be open; and that then the spirit of the Lord would be quieted in the Roman Habitable until the time arrived to open the second seal-period however long that might be; and that then in the first seal-period, there would be peace,

prosperity, and plenty for the people generally.

2. — The Rider and the Bow

But John not only saw the coming of this “most happy and prosperous period” in the color of the horse, but he saw a rider upon him. The rider of a horse is one who governs, controls, influences him in all his movements. He is active, while the horse is passive and subject to his will. The Roman horse, or people, in this first seal-period, were to be ridden, or subjected to certain activities, which would result in such a consummation as was indicated by other elements of the figuration. The rider was “the spirit of the heaven” whose mission was conquest. He gave energy to a certain class of activities, by which they were prosperously advanced, until at length they overcame all obstacles. He was not therefore an emperor, nor a succession of emperors, wreathed or diademed; but a class of spirit-agencies to be coronally wreathed when their triumph over all that hindered was complete.

A rider with any thing remarkable in his hand would naturally attract a beholder’s attention, and fix it upon himself and the instrument he bore. John therefore not only notes the rider, but tells us that “he had a bow.” Whatever the bow may signify, it was the rider’s badge or token, a mark by which he might be known. He was then, an archer, and his mission that of archery. But he had no “quiver full of arrows,” nor any arrow at all; what use then a bow without arrows to shoot? But suppose he had been armed with arrows, what then? In that case the horse he rode should have been red, not white. He would have represented a bloodshedding agency, which would have been incompatible with the color pertaining to the first seal-period.

“He had a bow.” John did not see him without a bow. The bow was inherently his. It was the weapon of his warfare which killed without shedding the blood, or piercing the bodies, of his enemies. It was the weapon with which “he went forth conquering that he might conquer.” It was an invincible weapon in his hand; and he who used it though unharnessed with shield, breastplate, or helmet in the figuration, was fearless of heart, and able to quench all the fiery darts of his adversaries.

But this conquering archer’s *bow*, what did the Deity “signify” by the use of it in this symbolization? To get at the divine signification, we must consider the prophetic use of the symbol in other parts of the scripture; we may perhaps then be able to “*see it.*”

In Zech. 9:13, the Spirit says, “I will render double unto thee, O Zion, when I have *bent* Judah for me, filled *the bow* with Ephraim and



This equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, Emperor from A.D. 161 to 180, and author of the famous *Meditations* stands in the Piazza del Campidoglio on the Capitoline Hill in Rome, illustrates the symbolism of the First Seal. In *The Apocalypse* the horse is used as a symbol of Rome, and the rider thereon as its ruler. Marcus Aurelius reigned during portion of the period of the 1st Seal, an epoch of Roman history when peace generally reigned, permitting the spread of the Gospel. Gibbon in *The Decline And Fall Of The Roman Empire* describes this period as the happiest era in the entire course of human history. The *Waverley Book of Knowledge* states concerning the period of the First Seal: "In this period of tranquility the new religion founded by Jesus of Nazareth had an opportunity to grow, until, in the reign of Constantine, Christianity became the official faith of the Roman Empire."

raised up thy sons against the sons of Greece." In this *a bow* in the hand of the Spirit symbolizes a multitude, and that multitude the whole tribe of Judah. This will be a mighty bow, but not arrowless, like the same Spirit's bow in the seal. The arrow of the Judah-bow, is Ephraim, or the ten tribes which fill the bow. Here is a bow and arrow of tremendous power when handled by the Spirit, who expelled the Dragon-power from the heaven in the period of the sixth seal. Of this Ephraim-arrow, which is Yahweh's, it is said, "it shall go forth as the lightning," and "they shall devour."

Again, in Hab. 3:9, the Spirit saith, "quite naked was made thy bow — oaths of the tribes — *the word*." Here bow stands for the word, which contains the covenanted promises of Deity concerning the tribes of Israel. In other words, bow represents that "certain word" which Paul preached as "the hope of Israel," and styled in the New Testament "the gospel of the kingdom." This is the Spirit's Bow from which arrows are shot more killing than barbed steel.

Thus *a multitude imbued with the word* is an agency that might be fitly represented by a bow in the hand of the Spirit of the heaven riding the white horse of the seal. But then, how does he use this intelligent multitudinous bow? How does he shoot from it; and what are the arrows he shoots? We shall be able to "see" this by reference to other scriptural uses of the word *bow*.

In Psalm 64 it is written, "the workers of iniquity whet their tongue like a sword, and bow their arrows, bitter words, that they may shoot in secret at the perfect." In this the tongue is compared to a bow from which words are shot forth as arrows. Hence, a multitude may not only itself be a bow, but its tongues may be bowed or bent, to shoot forth doctrine or testimony, which, as an arrow in the vitals, shall put to death the enmity of the carnal mind, or "the thinking of the flesh," against the Deity. When such a multitude would deliver the testimony it held to be true, it would be drawing the bow and shooting at its adversaries the word of truth. This word would also be the arrow of their bow, as well as their sword; and whether regarded as an arrow or a sword, "living and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" — Heb. 4:12.

But there is a remarkable instance of the use of the phrase *drawing the bow*, in the sense of *proclaiming the truth*, in Isa. 66:19: thus, "I will send *maihem* of those that escape to the nations Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, *drawers of the bow*; Tubal and Javan, the coasts far off which have not heard my fame, nor seen my glory; and they shall declare my

glory among the nations." "Yahweh gives the word, and great is the company of those who publish it" — Psa. 68:11.

Translators of Isaiah have been much at a loss what to do with *moshkai kesheth* "drawers of the bow," in this text. Some have thought that *moshkai* should be rendered *Meshech*, called *Moschi* by the Greeks, as a proper name, seeing it is associated with Tubal as in other places. Boothroyd has so rendered it, and Lowth is inclined to it, as appears from his notes; but in the text he renders the phrase by the words "*who draw the bow*" in common with the English Version. But though it is true it may be literally rendered thus, the strictly literal sense does not apply in this place. "Who draw the bow," or "drawers of the bow," is a mode of warfare not at all more characteristic of Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, than of Tubal and Javan, of whom it is not affirmed. They all drew the bow in battle when the prophet wrote; and Tarshish at the present time is more famous for gunpowder and cannon balls than for shooting arrows from the bow.

The metaphorical, and not the literal, must be the sense of the words in this place. It should be rendered *sounders of the truth*, which is in agreement with what is affirmed of those sent saying, "and they shall *declare my glory* (or sound the truth in bowing, or bending, their tongue to shoot) among the nations." See note in *Anatolia*,* p. 94.

From this text we derive then the idea of a multitude going forth with a bow to the nations, and in their use of it, declaring the truth, or their testimony, to them concerning the coming of Yahweh with his chariots like a whirlwind to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. Such is the style in which the spirit gives expression to "the deep things of Deity" in the holy writings of the prophets; and as the writings of the apostles are a revelation by the same spirit of the hidden mysteries of the prophetic scriptures, he continues therein to speak after his wonted manner; which is "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the holy spirit teacheth, interpreting spiritual things by spiritual."

We conclude then that the spirit-symbols of the first seal, which are its "spiritual things," are scripturally interpreted by comparison with the "spiritual things" of the law and the testimony; for "the servants of the Deity" are instructed out of the law, and not out of learned and classical disquisitions on Greek and Roman Numismatics. The rider and his bow in the first seal, doubtless, symbolizes a like idea to that of the Spirit giving the word, and bowing or shooting it through

* The book *Anatolia*, written by the Author of *Eureka* was later replaced by *The Exposition of Daniel*. The comment referred to is found at the end of the book in Section 34 entitled: *The Times Of The Kingdom of Babylon and of Judah*.

a great company of believers to the world. This answers to the facts in the case as they obtained in the first, second, and third centuries; and as they will obtain again, when the Lamb appears upon Mount Zion with the 144,000 gathered unto him — ch. 14:1; 2 Thess. 2:1. A great company of obedient believers had been gathered together into “*one body*” by the labours of the apostles, which, in John’s apocalyptic epoch, had attained “*to a perfect man*” — a man that could not be seen as an ordinary man by the eye of sense; but a man who could be seen, discerned, looked upon, as the seals can be *seen*, by the eye of the understanding enlightened by the divine testimony. This was the Spirit-Man who fought for conquest against Caesar as the power which hindered, that he might be taken out of the way. He began this good fight in Caesar’s empire on the fiftieth day after he was wounded in the heel by the serpent-power. Being healed of his wound, he went forth with his bow “conquering;” and in his prospering course, “pulling down strongholds, casting down reasonings, and every lofty conceit that exalted itself against the knowledge of the Deity, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” — Eph. 4:13; 2 Cor. 10:5. For about sixty years he had handled his bow with great dexterity, prowess, and effect; and had already witnessed the signal overthrow of the Jewish power, against which he had been practising his archery nearly forty years. But the fall of Jerusalem did not bring peace to him. His work was still to “contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints,” until the idolatrous superstition of which Caesar was the Chief Pontiff should be expelled from place and power in “the heaven” of the Roman Orb, or habitable earth. For upwards of thirty years he had been bleeding at every pore, “sweating great drops of blood,” in his encounters with the Neros and Domitians of the Roman state. Still he went on conquering with his bow, subduing enemies with the truth, and transforming them into *Eyes of the Living Ones*, and his own faithful allies in the good fight of faith.

This *perfect man* of the Ephesian phasis of the “One Body” had thus for sixty years “borne, endured, and labored for the sake of the Spirit’s Name, and had not fainted” (ch. 2:3). He drew his bow against all adversaries, whether lying pretenders to apostleship, and Nicolaitanes within; or the Jewish and Pagan denizens of the rayless darkness without. They were all the prey of his devouring bow, which spared neither age, sex, nor condition, admitted of no neutrality, knew no compromise, and tolerated only that which was indisputably true. This Spirit-Man, whose head was Christ, his members in particular, those whom he filled with spirit-gifts for the work of the ministry and edifying of the body; and his flesh and bones, the faithful in general —

Eph. 4:10-12; 5:30 — this Spirit-Man, I say, was a real and formidable potential existence in the empire of the Goat's Little Horn. He had made Felix tremble; he had almost persuaded king Agrippa to be a bowman with himself; and he had so alarmed Caesar, that this imperial pontiff of the state superstition commanded him to draw his bow no more in the name of Jesus. But to this mandate he paid no regard. The louder the lion of the forest roared, the louder the echoes of his voice above the battle's din, and the grander the execution of his bow; so that according to Pliny's letter to Trajan (see vol. 1 p. 254) in the early part of his reign, the number of the bowman's victims was so great as to call for the serious consultation of the authorities; for, he says, "the contagion of the superstition hath spread not only through cities, but even villages and the country: . . . the temples were almost desolate, the sacred solemnities long intermitted, and the sacrificial victims could scarcely find a purchaser," This roused the priests, who had their wealth by the craft "by law established," to infuriate official Rome to the deadliest ferocity against him. But "the great iron teeth, and brazen claws," of the Dragon could not devour and rend him to death. The two-edged sword of the magistrate was too dull fatally to disable this Bowman of the Seal. His "fellow-servants and brethren might be laid under the altar, weltering in their blood (see fifth seal); but the power of Rome was not equal to the subjugation of what Pliny styles "their sullen and obstinate inflexibility." They obeyed Christ before Caesar, whose gods and imperial image were their abomination; and his power, though "dreadful and terrible," too impotent to compel them to invoke.

While John was in Patmos, and recording *ha eisi the things which are*, and anxiously awaiting the opening of the first seal, he was gratified with the apparition of this valiant archer, bow in hand, and bestriding the Roman world as its conquering rider, in a period of public prosperity and peace. This represented an existing fact, as we have seen, on the fall of Domitian, and before the death of John about A.D. 98. John "saw him thus produced in vision; and doubtless, by spiritual discernment, recognized him as his ancient and familiar companion in arms. John knew that hitherto they had been successful in their warfare against Judaism and idolatry; but what of the future? — what *ha mellei ginesthai meta tauta, the things that shall come to pass after these*, in relation to the archer? Shall his career of conquest be arrested? Shall the Dragon and his adherents break his bow, and silence his testimony; or shall he prove too strong for him, and hurl him like lightning from "the heaven" amid "the inhabitants of the earth and sea?" — 12:12. This was an interesting inquiry for John and all the

saints with him; for the issue of the cause for which they counted every thing but refuse was comprehended in this archer's fate.

3. The Coronal Wreath

How gratifying, then, to the spectator when he beheld a *coronal wreath* bestowed upon him — “and there was given to him a *stephanos*,” not a *diadema*. John “saw” the full import of this sign, which we who are confined to the English Version, do not. In the revelation communicated to him the Spirit was very exact in the use of words. When he desired to impart distinct ideas, he did not select one word-sign as representative of them all. For different ideas he chose different Greek words and phrases. This rule the translators of our English Version have not regarded; for, in numerous instances, they have used but one and the same word to express “the words which the Holy Spirit teacheth.” Thus, for *aion*, *kosmos*, *ge*, *oikoumene*, four widely differing word-signs, they have substituted our indefinite sign, *world*; for *machaira* and *rhomphaia* the word *sword*; and for *stephanos* and *diadema* the word *crown*. These are only a few instances, but sufficient to show that the English translation does not with critical accuracy represent “the things which the Holy Spirit teaches.” This defect we must endeavour to supply by interpretation and exposition.

As to *diadema*, *the diadem*, we see in Apoc. 12:3, the great red dragon in the heaven wearing *seven diadems*, one upon each head. In ch. 13:1, we behold *ten diadems* on the beast that rises out of the sea, one on each of his horns. And lastly, in ch. 19:12, *many diadems* are seen upon the head of Him, who conquered and possesses the kingdoms of the nations previously held by the ten horns — on the head of the King of kings and Lord of lords. These are the only places in the apocalypse where *diadem* occurs.

Diadema signifies a *band or fillet*, and comes from *diadeo*, *to bind round*. It was properly the band of the tiara or turban worn by kings. The diademed tiara was the badge of sovereignty among the Asiatics; hence it signifies in the symbolization of the apocalypse the royal dignity of the wearer. Kings used several diadems when they possessed several kingdoms. Thus, Ptolemy, having conquered Syria, made his entry into Antioch, wearing *two* crowns upon his head, that of Egypt and that of Asia. The seven heads of the Dragon were actually sovereign; so the Ten Horns; and so will the Faithful and True One be over the many kingdoms, when the time for the verification of the prefiguration shall have been fulfilled.

A *diadem* was not given to the Bowman of the first seal. He was therefore not a reigning sovereign; and could not represent a Roman

emperor, or a succession of emperors, as is supposed by the learned author of the *Horae Apocalypticae*. The Roman emperors, good, bad, and indifferent, were already *diademed* in the sixth head of the Dragon. The Bowman had nothing to do with the emperors but to obey them in all things not forbidden by the Spirit; and to contend against the superstition over which they presided as pontiffs supreme. The destiny of the rider of the white horse was not to wear the diadem, but *to win the stephanos* when the limit of his conquering should be reached.

We need not say much about the *stephanos* in this place, having dwelt upon it considerably in vol. 1. p. 386. It was a circlet of evergreen offered as a prize of honor and glory to the victor in the public games celebrated in the service of the gods. Before the combatant could receive the *stephan* he had to go on conquering according to the rules of the fight; then at the end of the conflict, he was adorned with the emblem of victory. The *stephan* may therefore be said to import, as a symbol, something to be obtained by conflict; or something that may have been obtained thereby. In Apoc. 4:4,10, the twenty-four elders are *stephaned* with each a *stephan*, which they cast down before the throne. Their *stephans* are golden or unfading, which they receive after having been invested with white garments — victors' wreaths, bestowed by the Spirit upon all *who overcome*.

In Apoc. 9:7, the locusts have something on their heads resembling *stephans* of gold — yellow turbans. In ch. 12:1, the woman in the heaven, from which the Dragon had been expelled, is encompassed about the head with a *stephanos* of twelve stars, indicating that she had obtained her position there by having conquered. Lastly in ch. 14:14, one resembling the Son of Man rides a white cloud, and wears a golden *stephan*. This indicates that he has a conflict before him, and at the same time is predictive of his conquering unto final victory.

From considerations, then, derived from the use of the word *stephanos* in general and particular, we “come” with John “and see,” that the valiant archer of the seal was not a ruler, or succession of rulers, of an established dominion, or royalty; but a combatant, an athlete, in that great public game, whose issue was his extermination by fire and sword; or his victory over Caesar, by which that god of the whole Roman earth should be displaced, and the Man-Child of the Star-wreathed woman enthroned as his substitute over all the nations of the Dragon empire. This was the grand proximate issue between the “One Body,” or Christ Mystical, to which John belonged, and the pagan Roman power that oppressed him and his brethren and companions in tribulation for the word of the Deity, and for the testimony

of Jesus Christ — ch. 1:9. They were gratified, comforted, and energized, by the testimony of this prophetic seal, that they would go on conquering for a purpose; and that purpose, not merely the converting of men and women from idolatry that they might obtain remission of sins and eternal life; this was only one department of their mission, great and important in itself; but “conquering that they might conquer” the great Dragon, that old Serpent, surnamed the Diabolos and the Satan, which deceived the whole habitable and persecuted them continually unto imprisonment, confiscation, and death — ch. 12:9. Hence, the mission of this body of believers in its manhood, with no other weapon than a bow, — the word of the Deity, or gospel of his kingdom, — was twofold; namely, “to take out from the nations a people for his name;” and secondly, and subordinately to this, so to indoctrinate society with their principles, as by its enlightenment to make it the instrument of a grand political revolution, by which its constitution in all departments of the body politic should be changed and thoroughly remodelled after a pattern altogether different from the old. This conquest of Rome pagan they saw foreshadowed in a *stephanos* being given to the rider on the white horse. They knew from the nature of the gift, and their own condition in the world as a proscribed people, that it was prophetic, and not the representation of an accomplished fact. When they reviewed their progress in the empire for the past sixty years, they perceived that they were a conquering people, but that they had not yet won the stephan, or victor’s wreath. They had therefore to go on “conquering that they might conquer;” and with this most satisfying consideration to strengthen and encourage them, that if in the conflict their blood were poured out under the Altar, and they might not be personal witnesses of the Dragon’s expulsion from the heaven, yet, “precious in the eyes of Yahweh is the death of his saints;” they would therefore not be forgotten, but at a remoter epoch would be raised from among the dead, and be associated with the Lamb as his companions in arms in the conquest of the Ten Horns, and in the binding and shutting up of the Dragon in the abyss for a thousand years.

Such, then, is the general import of the first seal. Although its period was most happy and prosperous for the generations ruled by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian and the two Antonines, yet the “we all who had come to a perfect man” had often to groan under the bloody despotism of those wise and virtuous heathen. Of Trajan, the historian saith, “There remains one panegyric far removed beyond the suspicion of flattery. Above two hundred and fifty years after the death of Trajan, the Senate, in pouring out the accustomed acclamations on the

accession of a new emperor, wished that he might surpass the fidelity of Augustus and the virtue of Trajan." Yet this virtuous emperor ordered his subjects to be capitally punished if convicted of the guilt of Christianity, as is clearly seen from his letter to Pliny. There is still a letter extant addressed by Tiberianus, of the province of Syria, to Trajan, which shows his persecuting spirit, and the boldness of his victims. "I am quite wearied," says he, "with punishing and destroying the Galileans, or those of the sect called Christians, *according to your orders*. Yet they never cease to profess voluntarily what they are, and to offer themselves to death. Wherefore I have labored, by exhortation and threatening, to discourage them from daring to confess to me that they are of that sect. Yet, in defiance of all persecution, they still continue to do it. Be pleased, therefore, to inform me what your highness thinks proper to be done with them."

Whatever answer was given to this, the sanguinary enmity of the government continued to be evinced during the whole of Trajan's reign; for it does not appear that the edicts which were in force against the christadelphians and their fellowservants when he ascended the throne, were ever repealed or revoked during his life, which was closed A.D. 117, while prosecuting his great military expedition into the East, having swayed the imperial sceptre nineteen years.

Trajan was succeeded by Hadrian, under whose reign the state of affairs in regard to our hero of the first seal-period was somewhat ameliorated. This ruler had decreed that "these people were not to be officiously sought after;" nevertheless, such as were accused and convicted of an obstinate adhesion to the faith, were to be put to death as criminals; a sentence from which there was no escape but by worshipping the gods and adjuring Christ. Nevertheless, Hadrian, according to Gibbon, was a wise and virtuous prince, under whom "the empire flourished in peace and prosperity. He encouraged the arts, reformed the laws, asserted military discipline, and visited all his provinces in person. His vast and active genius was equally suited to the most enlarged views and the minute details of civil policy; but the ruling passions of his soul were curiosity and vanity. As these prevailed, and as they were attracted by different objects, Hadrian was by turns an excellent prince, a ridiculous sophist, and a jealous tyrant." He reigned twenty one years, that is, to A.D. 138, when death caused him to give place to the Antonines.

According to Tertullian, he was in the highest degree curious and inquisitive. His knowledge is said to have been varied and extensive — he had studied all the arts of magic, and was passionately fond of the rites and institutions of Paganism. There could, therefore, have been

no sympathy in his heart for those who were handling the bow for the victor's wreath. Apologies, or vindications of christianity were addressed to him by two writers named Quadratus and Aristides, A.D. 126, which were supposed to have favorably affected him; but it could only have been slightly, as the imperial edicts were permitted to operate against them.

Concerning the period of this seal, Mosheim has remarked that such of the christians as could conceal their profession were indeed sheltered under the law of Trajan, which was therefore a disagreeable restraint upon the heathen priests, who breathed nothing but fury



The above coin was one of the first minted by Hadrian. In order to impress the Romans that he ruled by the authority of his predecessor, he is depicted as receiving the globe from Trajan's hands. He claimed to follow the policy of Trajan, but in fact, varied it where it suited him. Trajan extended the borders of Rome, Hadrian restricted them and consolidated the power of the Empire. He reigned for 21 years, and spent much of his time travelling throughout his realm. He was a shrewd and talented ruler, and did much to firm the peace that the empire enjoyed during the period of the first seal which depicted the rider on the white horse (Apoc. 6:2). Note that the Emperor is wearing a stephanos, the symbol of victory and authority.

against the disciples of Jesus. The office of an accuser was also become dangerous, and very few were disposed to undertake it, which put the priests upon inventing new methods of oppressing the christians. The law of Trajan was consequently artfully evaded under his successor Hadrian. The populace, set in motion by their priests, demanded from the magistrates, with one voice, during the public games, the destruction of the christians; and the magistrates, fearing that a sedition might be the consequence of despising or opposing these popular clamors, were too much disposed to indulge them in their request. During these commotions, Serenus Granianus proconsul of Asia, represented to Hadrian how barbarous and unjust it was to sacrifice to the fury of a lawless multitude persons who had been convicted of no crime.

This remonstrance was not without effect. Hadrian saw the propriety of the complaint, and his moderation in yielding to it is supposed to have been attributable to the "Apologies" before mentioned. Serenus having resigned, Hadrian addressed the following rescript to his successor:

"TO MINUTIUS FUNDANUS

"I have received a letter written to me by the very illustrious Serenus Granianus, whom you have succeeded. To me, then, the affair seems by no means a fit one to be slightly passed over, that men may not be disturbed without cause, and that sycophants may not be encouraged in their odious practices. If the people of the province will appear publicly, and prefer open charges against the christians, so as to afford them an opportunity of answering for themselves, let them proceed, but in that manner only, and not by rude demands and mere clamor. For it is much more proper, if any person will accuse them, that *you* should take cognizance of these matters. If, therefore, any should accuse the christians, and show that they actually break the laws, do you determine according to the nature of the crime. But by Hercules! if the charge be a mere calumny, do you estimate the enormity of such calumny, and punish it as it deserves."

But, during this seal-period, the swinish multitude and priests of pagan Rome, with the civil power of the state, were not the only enemy in the "outer darkness" with which the rider on the white horse had to contend in his conquering career. The Jews, whose state had been dissolved by the fervent heat of divine indignation, still were true to the character given to them by Paul, that "they pleased not God, and were contrary to all men" — contrary to the saints in Christ, and contrary to the Romans. Still, if the Gentiles made an onslaught upon the christians, the Jews were sure to throw in all their influence to aggravate the horrors of the situation. But the eye of the Deity was upon them, and his wrath ready to flame out anew.

During the half century that had elapsed since the destruction of

Jerusalem by the Roman Horn of the Goat, the Jews had wonderfully increased. They felt their importance in this respect, and became daring and ferocious, making violent attempts, as opportunity seemed to favor, to restore their government. Their first rebellion was about a year before Trajan's death. It extended through the Jewish population of Palestine, Egypt, Cyrenaica, Cyprus, and the neighboring coasts, and much blood was shed between them and Rome. A second rebellion broke out in the sixteenth year of Hadrian, A.D. 133. This was also very sanguinary, and continued to increase for about four years. In its suppression there was an un pitying destruction of the Jews, being more severe because they had long irritated and vexed the Romans. "But," as a writer has well remarked, "their sufferings were a just reward for their cruelty and unrelenting hatred toward the christians, whose principles would not allow them to unite in rebellion against the government." This ruin of Jewish affairs was of some advantage to the party of the Bow, which, though not delivered from their hatred, was liable to less annoyance from the diminution of their influence with those in power.

But, with the death of Hadrian, A.D. 138, and the accession of Titus Antoninus Pius, a senator of about fifty years of age, who filled his place in "the heaven," the state of the combatant for the victor's wreath was relatively improved. The emperor appears to have been a most amiable prince. He caused order and tranquillity to be maintained throughout the empire, and though a heathen pontiff, he was never guilty, so far as his own personal character and intentions were concerned, of wantonly shedding the blood of christians. They were, however, cruelly treated in some of the Asiatic provinces. The crimes laid to their charge by the priests were those of impiety and atheism from a pagan point of view. But Antoninus issued an edict in which he decided that the profession of christianity was not in itself either the one or the other. He addressed a letter to this effect to the magistrate, as follows:

THE EMPEROR OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF ASIA.

"I am quite of opinion that the gods will take care to discover such persons. For it much more concerns them to punish those who refuse to worship them, than you, if they are able. But you harass and vex the christians, and accuse them of atheism and other crimes, which you can by no means prove. To them it appears an advantage to die for their religion, and they gain their point while they throw away their lives, rather than comply with your injunctions. As to the earthquakes which have happened in past times or lately, is it not proper to remind you of your own despondency when they happened, and to desire you to compare your spirit with theirs, and to observe how serenely they confide in God? In such seasons you seem to be

ignorant of the gods, and to neglect their worship. You live in practical ignorance of the supreme God himself, and you harass and persecute to death those who do worship him. Concerning these same men, some others of the provincial governors wrote to our divine father Hadrian, to whom he returned answer, 'that they should not be molested unless they appeared to attempt something against the Roman government.' Many also have signified to me concerning these men, to whom I have returned an answer agreeable to the maxims of my father. But if any person will still persist in accusing the christians merely as such, let the accused be acquitted though he appear to be a christian, and let the accuser be punished." — *Set up at Ephesus in the Common Assembly of Asia.*

Eusebius informs us that letters to the same purport were written to other assemblies, and to all Greeks; and that the humane emperor took care that his edicts were carried into effect. He reigned twenty-three years, and it seems not unreasonable to conclude that during the greater part of that time the "we all who had come to a perfect man" were enabled still to go on conquering with the bow without very formidable molestation. But at length the senior Antoninus died, A.D. 161; and was succeeded by his colleague, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, an implacable persecutor of the faithful; yet, according to Gibbon, "just and beneficent to all mankind." These two Antonines governed the Dragon empire forty two years "with the same invariable spirit of wisdom and virtue. Their united reigns," continues this elegant apologist for paganism, "are possibly the only period of history in which the happiness of a great people was the sole object of government." Marcus detested war as the disgrace and calamity of human nature; yet he was forward to shed the blood of christians without a pang.

But Marcus Aurelius was a philosopher of the sect of the Stoics, the old opponents of Paul in Athens. His philosophy was his superstition. He fancied that he carried the Deity within him, and that to be good and virtuous was only to follow nature and to obey the dictates of the Deity — that is, of the human soul, which was divine and self-sufficient. Such was his wisdom — the wisdom of the world, which the wisdom of the Deity in its conquering progress proved to be folly. The collision of these systems brought the rider of the white horse into conflict with this imperial champion of deified human consciousness. His bow dashed it in pieces as a vain conceit; and as Dagon before the ark, scattered its fragments to the pity and contempt of myriads. This indignity was too much for the pride of a Stoic, wielding despotically the "dreadful and terrible" power of the Roman Dragon. The pride of the emperor was deeply wounded. He could not endure to be proved a fool by the logic of the truth twanging from the archer's bow in flights of missiles, darkening the air of his philosophy. Nothing but blood

could expiate the offence. Hence his cruel and exterminating policy against the christians, so opposite to that of his humane and noble predecessor.

In speaking of this ruler, Mosheim remarks, that “most writers have celebrated Marcus beyond measure on account of his extraordinary wisdom and virtue. It is not, however, in his conduct towards the christians that we are to look for the reasons of these pompous encomiums; for here the clemency and justice of that emperor suffers a strange eclipse . . . So that if we except Nero, there was no reign under which the christians were more injuriously and cruelly treated.” He commenced a persecution against them, and carried it on with merciless barbarity in those Asiatic regions which had been relieved by Antoninus Pius, whose tolerant principles, in the plenitude of his power, he dismissed altogether from his regard. Still, though the blood of the saints poured forth copiously afresh, the archer was not dismayed at the terrors of the fight. His career could not be impeded by an imperial professor and lecturer on Stoical metaphysics. He rode on, “conquering that he might conquer,” rejoicing in the honor of death, that being faithful thereto, he might receive the wreath of victory, and of the life that knows no end — Apoc. 2:10. But, though undismayed, voices were sometimes heard deprecating the cruelties inflicted by power. “Pious persons,” said Melito of Sardis to the emperor, A.D. 177, “aggrieved by new edicts published throughout Asia, and never before practised, now suffer persecution. For audacious sycophants, and men who covet other persons’ goods, take advantage of these proclamations openly to rob and spoil the innocent by night and by day. If this be done by your order, let it stand good, for a just emperor cannot act unjustly; and we will cheerfully submit to the honor of such a death. This only we humbly crave of your Majesty, that after an impartial examination of us and of our accusers, you would justly decide whether we deserve death and punishment or life and protection. But if these proceedings be not yours, and the new edicts be not the effects of your personal judgment — edicts which ought not to be enacted even against barbarian enemies — in that case we entreat you not to despise us who are thus unjustly oppressed.”

The reign of this “philosophic emperor” abounds with instances of unrelenting cruelty towards the christians. He made it a capital offence for any one to avow himself a christian; by which he afforded the world a striking illustration of the justice, mercy and beneficence, which flow from the mere reason and philosophy of the natural man! His theory deified what he called the soul; and this rational and philosophic god within him devoted all its divinity and power, inherent and acquired, to

the maintaining a system of superstition and idolatry, repugnant to every principle of reason enlightened by sobriety and truth. But, the Lamb who opened this seal, and who was now about to open the second, had tolerated this blind and ferocious philosopher's malignity, so much in accord with the fury of the besotted and brutal populace, to the utmost of his forbearance. He had afforded "philosophy" in purple an ample opportunity and a splendid theatre for the display of its "wisdom and virtue," in promoting the honor of the Deity, and real happiness of mankind. But it had been weighed in the divine balance, and proved by the conquering bowman of the seal, to be lighter than vanity. His cruelty upon the Brethren of Christ is an indelible disgrace to his memory; which, however, according to Gibbon on the authority of Dion, "was revered by a grateful posterity, and above a century after his death, many persons preserved the image of Marcus Antonius among those of their household gods." His death occurred A.D. 180, by which a period was put to the flaming of this firebrand, which, with little intermission, had continued in one quarter or another during a period of eighteen years.

4. Of Clerical Expositions

In concluding this section, I remark, that it is not within the scope of this exposition to occupy its pages in stating and examining the multitude of opinions and theories that have been broached by the many and various writers that have preceded me in attempts, all of which have proved futile attempts, at apocalyptic interpretation. To expose their speculative demerits would leave neither time nor space for the exposition of the text; and we should fall into the error of our predecessors, which has been a losing sight of the subject in the fog of their own "ripe scholarship," with which they have confounded and stultified themselves, in demolishing the vain imaginations of their opponents. If A prove B's position to be untenable, it does not therefore follow that A's is impregnable. The reader is interested to know, not how many views there are of our grand subject in general and detail, or in what their error consists; but what is its true scriptural and historic import. This "the natural man" can neither unfold, nor "see" when it is explained; for the simple reason that it is "spiritually discerned" — 1 Cor. 2:14. The clergymen and ministers who have mystified themselves and the public by their apocalyptic researches have all signally failed for this cause; not for want of an acquaintance with heathen authors in their original Latin and Greek, proficiency in which is the glory of the natural man; but for want of that spiritual discernment which is anchored to a comprehensive understanding and belief of the truth, as it is in the prophets and apostles. Not having this

light within them they cannot "see" that apocalyptic vein of pure gold, which is traceable amid the historic quartz and sands of the "great mountain," which is to become a plain before Zerubbabel. This vein cannot be prospected by any signs extant in the literature and philosophy of the natural man. Volumes of this learned lumber may be compiled, with the most amusing and curious notes, annotations, and addenda, and after all said, the first scriptural idea fail of having been elicited, as in the Rev. E. B. Elliott's *Horae Apocalypticae*. This accomplished "divine" of the Anglican Harlot as by Satan's law established, whose book is a monument of industry, literary and classical research, and Laodicean foolishness, informs us of the opinions of other "divine" naturals concerning the first four seals, which he rightly rejects as absurd; and then adds thereunto a palpable absurdity of his own. "Hence," says he, "the inadmissibility not merely of such directly antichronological explanations as that of the martyrologist Foxe and Mr. Faber, which interprets the four horses and horsemen of the *four successive military empires of Babylon, Persia, Macedon, and Rome*, the three first of which had already some centuries before St. John passed away: — but also of such as Dr. Keith's, which would interpret them to symbolize the four successive religions of *Primitive Christianity, Mohammedanism, Popery, and Infidelity*; though elsewhere insisting on the establishment of the reign of popery and the popes, as dating near a century before the rise of Mohammedanism." Having disposed of these, and very properly repudiated the notion of the horses signifying the church, he would have us believe that the first four seals in their figuration represent *the martial Roman nation and its emperors*. On this assumption, he expounds the figuration of the first seal of the Roman people in a happy and prosperous state, ruled by five successive emperors of extraordinary excellence; and characterized as the imperial riders by the *Stephanos*; and of the Nerva family of Caesars by the bow, the symbol of Nerva the founder of the *gens*; who sprang originally from Crete, celebrated of old time for the manufacture of bows, which thus became the symbol of the Cretans, and stamped upon their coins! This "crowned bow bearing rider," the Nerva family of emperors, "went forth conquering and to conquer;" "thereby," says Mr. Elliott, "assuring the general inviolability from foreign foes, and perhaps (for the words might seem to intimate as much) advancing the limits and the greatness of the empire" of Rome!

It is said, that there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous, and surely here it is. The figuration of the seal is the sublime; but this Elliott "commentary" thereon is certainly the ridicu-

lous. The reader, however, who now has the subject fairly before him, must judge for himself according "to the law and the testimony;" for, if we speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in us. Let him compare, if he will, these diverse and rival expositions; and according to the magnitude and grandeur of the things we have set forth, let him determine of himself, if their fitness be not more nearly allied to the heaven-born things of Deity than the learned and classical elaboration of the Nervan bow, by the antiquarian and excursive ingenuity of the "late Vicar of Tuxford."

SECTION 2 THE PERGAMIAN STATE

Vol. 1. p. 428,436

The Epheso-Smyranean State of the Ecclesias degenerates into the Pergamian. The doctrine of Balaam and the Nikolaitanes gaining the ascendancy. Celsus, a heathen opponent of the word, objects, that christians were now so split into sects, that the name, christian, only remained to them in common.

ACT II. — SEAL-PERIOD SECOND Apoc. 6:3,4

The rider of the Red Horse puts an end to the previous peace, and involves the populations of the Fourth Beast Polity in bloody civil wars.

A.D. 183

3. *"And when He opened the Second Seal, I heard from the Second Living One saying, 'Come and see!'"* 4. *And there went forth another, a fiery-red horse; and to him sitting upon him, to him it was given to take the peace from the earth and that they might slay one another; and there was given to him a great dagger."*

1. Preliminary Remarks

In my previous exposition I have shown that the Bowman of the first seal is emblematic of the spirit of the heavens manifested in the "we all" who had "come to A PERFECT MAN," who was engaged in an earnest contention for the faith against the superstition and infidelity of the world. This was that one styled by the Spirit in David, in Psa. 68:18, *adam*, "the man," for whom the Lord Jesus received official gifts when he ascended to the right hand of power — "thou receivest gifts *ba'adam for the Man*," or for the Adam. Paul styles Jesus, "made Lord and Christ," "the last Adam;" and says, that as the saints have born

the image of the first Adam, so also shall they bear the image of the last — 1 Cor. 15:45-49. They shall be in nature like what he is now. But, in a moral sense they are required to be now like to what he was while on earth "learning obedience by the things which he suffered." This tuition developed the moral image of Deity, as the creative energy of the Spirit did the material image after his resurrection. It is divinely predestined, therefore, (and the predestination is a necessity that cannot be dispensed with) that all who shall inherit salvation in the kingdom of the Deity shall be "conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the Firstborn (or Chief) among many brethren." Paul says to the Colossians, "ye have put off the Old Man," or moral image of the First Adam, "with his deeds; and *have put on the New Man,*" or last Adam, "who is renewed by knowledge after the image of him that created him" — 3:9,10. This they had done. They were in the last Adam, and conformed to his moral image, in hope of being conformed to his material image at the coming of their Chief.

Here then are two men, or Two Adams, occupying the arena of the Roman Habitable — the Old Adam and the New Adam. The former is an infidel atheistic sinner, declared by Paul to be *atheos en to kosmo, atheist in the world*. Read his summary of him in Eph. 2:12; and his description of his vices in Rom. 1:21-32. The whole world of unenlightened natural men of all ages and generations constitutes collectively the Old Adam, who is also "the Devil and Satan" in a certain relation of things. This man has long since come to a perfect man — to the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Antichrist. He is strong and lawless, doomed to perdition when the times apocalyptically "signified" shall be fulfilled.

The other Adam came upon the arena of the habitable in a later age and generation; and was regarded by him as an intruder, and an enemy to be ejected by all possible means, the end to be attained sanctifying everything, however criminal or ferocious. But, if he could not prevail by violence, it was within the scope of his policy to try and corrupt with flatteries; for if he could put to silence by these he would convert the New Man into a partizan, and all opposition would cease. So long, however, as each remained true to his principles, the Old Adam to those of the flesh, and the New Adam to those of the word, there could be nothing but war until the one or the other were subdued.

But, the New Man, though "perfect," did not in all the constituents of his body continue in all his conflicts undefiled. Much of his flesh became diseased and gangrenous, and perished by the way. This reduced his proportions considerably, and leaves him in his nineteenth

century existence feeble, emaciated and decrepid; while the Old Adam is still robust and powerful.

In the days of the first seal, the New Man of the spirit was healthy, vigorous, and formidable to the Old Man of the Flesh; who ruled in the Pagan Church and State, as he does now in all the Churches and States of what he ignorantly calls "Christendom." The conflict between the two was very earnest and bloody. Many lives or souls were ruthlessly precipitated under the altar, while many of the Old Serpent-Man's adherents fell from their allegiance, and became incorporated in the New Man. But, in this sanguinary strife all the desertions were not from the party of the Serpent; many relaxed their hold upon the Lamb, fell into the ranks of the enemy, and became, either implacable adversaries, or perverters of the truth, who pretended to have found a common ground, on which Jew, philosopher, vulgar Pagan, and christian might meet in the fellowship of the same essential opinions. Sects, formed of the factions who had become impatient of the restraints of the truth, had greatly multiplied. The seed sown in the first century by the seducers, evil men, and false prophets, of whom we read so much in the New Testament, was now in vigorous growth; multiplied, varied, complicated, and refined by endless subtleties and fancies, in which the poverty of taste and genius discovered itself abundantly.

There were at the time of the closing of the period of the first seal and the opening of the second, two classes among the professed adherents of the New Man, whose opposite characteristics were becoming daily more distinct. The one may be regarded as the vital and wholesome element of the man himself — Christadelphians; those who held fast the Spirit's Name, and had not denied His faith; and those of the Balaam class, who held the teaching of the Nikolaitanes, or Gnostics, and were multiplying considerably. Instead of holding fast the Spirit's Name, they were developing what in history is called the *Arnestitheos apostasia*, or *Deity-denying apostasy*, which affirmed that "Christ was no more than a man." The Spirit's Name is the Father by his spirit manifested in Sin's Flesh begotten and born, not of the will of man, but by his own creative energy, as was Adam the first: but, to say, that he was no more than a man, was to affirm, that he was begotten of blood, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man; which was to lay the basis of a name which the spirit not only will not recognize, but one which he hates. These Gnostics also, while they claimed the name of christian, denied the Spirit's faith, as do "the names and denominations" of modern times. These Nikolaitans sects amused and stultified themselves with the discussion of the merest trifles; such as, the proper

time of the observance of Easter; the pretended prophetic illuminations of fanatics, and the questions agitated by the Eclectics of Egypt. These sects were "the Mystery of Iniquity" working under the name of christians; the Synagogue of the Satan that aggravated greatly the difficulties of the genuine elements of the New Man in that department of his work, the "taking out from among the Gentiles a people for the Spirit's Name." Still, out of the evil of these sects some good was extracted. They became *a numerous and powerful political party*, which eventually acquired sufficient strength to contend with the pagan party sword in hand and to expel it from "the heaven" of the Roman world. While they had denied the Spirit's name and faith by their traditions, they still contended against the idolatry of the Gentiles; and in this contention they were, doubtless, very successful. The Christadelphians or true believers, and the heretics called Christians combined were too much for the heathen in their argument against their gods, and the worship with which they honored them; so that the New Man, notwithstanding all the discouragements which afflicted him on the right hand and on the left, still went on "conquering" under this second seal "that he might conquer" under the sixth, when his brethren and fellow servants who were to be slain should be filled up.

Now these Nikolaitan Heretics who were defiling the temple of the Deity with their traditions, were exhorted at this period to "repent; or else," said the Spirit, "I will come *unto thee* suddenly, and will fight against *them* with the sword of my mouth" — ch. 2:16. Hence the Spirit had a controversy with them as well as with the heathen populace, priests, and civil, and imperial rulers. He will not permit His name, His faith, and His faithful and true ones to be disregarded, denied, tormented, and destroyed with impunity. *Nemo me impune lacessit*, no one provokes me without punishment, is the Spirit's maxim with respect to his holy things. Retribution had therefore accumulated within the past eighty years upon the heads of two classes of offenders — upon the Roman people and government; and upon the sectarian or Pergamian apostates, who were neither pagan, Jew nor christadelphian; but, like our modern "names and denominations," Balaamite and Nikolaitan blasphemers of the truth yet "christians" so-called.

The retribution threatened against these apostatizing professors of christianity was that the Spirit would fight with them, and that the weapon he would wield against them would be "the sword of his mouth." That is, he would command a sword to be unsheathed against them. Such a sword would consist in something more practical and material than reason and testimony. These were fast becoming to them, what their brethren in modern times affirm the word of the

Deity to be now, "a dead-letter." Argument by the Spirit through the Angel-elderships of the Ecclesias had been exhausted; so that appeals to their intelligence being fruitless, it remained only to treat them as heathen men and publicans — mere creatures of sensation, brutish as the beasts that perish.

The sword, then, that was suspended over them was a sword of retribution, which, on smiting them, would also smite the heathen populace and its rulers, *and redden society with its own blood*. That this is the kind of sword "signified" by the Spirit's words, will appear from the use of the phrase in Apoc. 19:15 — "Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it he might smite the nations;" and in verse 20, "The remnant were slain with the sword of him sitting upon the horse, which sword proceedeth out of his mouth;" and the blood of those slain flowed to the horse-bridles of them who inflicted the vengeance.

"Repent," *metanoeson, change your minds*, "or else I will come unto thee suddenly, and fight with thee." But instead of such repentance as this, they hardened their hearts, and went on from bad to worse, until the patience and longsuffering of the Deity being exhausted, the Lamb opened suddenly the Second Seal, and a *fiery red condition of society* became the characteristic of the "Spirit of the Heavens" that ruled the passing hour.

2. The Opening of the Seal-Period

When the Lamb opened the first seal, John's attention was called to the fact by a voice "as of a voice of thunder;" but in the opening of the second, he hears a voice of the same import, only without the thunder. There was no hurling of the tyrant Marcus Aurelius Antoninus into the shades of death by the hands of an assassin, and the revocation of his edicts, and declaring his memory infamous, by the decrees of an indignant Senate, as in the case of Domitian. Though this imperial Stoic had shed so much christian blood, or permitted it to be shed when he could easily have prevented it, which is equally criminal with the Deity, the Lamb allowed him to depart to his own place without any signal personal vengeance being inflicted upon him. He died without violence, aged about fifty-seven, having reigned conjointly with Antoninus Pius twenty-three years, at the expiration of which he became sole emperor for thirteen, when he associated his son Commodus with him in the government. Four years after this he died, leaving Commodus, at the inexperienced age of about nineteen, the uncontrolled and irresponsible despot of the so-called "civilized world."

Commodus ascended the throne as sole ruler A.D. 180. "The

beloved son of Marcus," says Gibbon, "succeeded to his father amidst the acclamations of the Senate and armies, and when he ascended the throne, the happy youth saw round him neither competitor to remove, nor enemies to punish. In this *calm, elevated station*, it was surely natural that he should prefer the love of mankind to their detestation, the mild glories of his five predecessors to the ignominious fate of Nero and Domitian."

During the first three years of his reign, he reluctantly surrendered himself to the direction of those experienced counsellors whom his father had delighted to honor. By their influence his profligacy was confined to his private revels; and as his hands were yet unstained with blood, there was hope that he might become, if not the most virtuous, at least not the most "dreadful and terrible" of his kind. A fatal incident, however, dashed all hopes, and decided his weak and timid character for the worse, until cruelty degenerated into habit, and at length become the ruling passion of his soul.

One evening as Commodus was returning to the palace through a dark and narrow portico in the amphitheatre, an assassin, who waited his passage, rushed upon him with a drawn sword, loudly exclaiming, "The Senate sends you this." The menace prevented the deed; the assassin was seized by the guards, and immediately revealed the authors of the conspiracy. The conspirators, who, with the assassin himself, were senators, were all executed. But though relieved of their presence, the words of the assassin sunk deep into the mind of Commodus, and left an indelible impression of fear and hatred against the whole body of the Senate. Those whom he had dreaded as importunate ministers he now suspected as secret enemies. The Delators, a race of men discouraged and almost extinguished in the former reigns, again became formidable, as soon as they discovered that the emperor was desirous of finding disaffection or treason in the Senate. This great council of the nation was composed of the most distinguished of the Romans, and distinction of every kind soon became criminal. "The possession of wealth stimulated the diligence of the informers; rigid virtue implied a tacit censure of the vices of Commodus; important services argued a dangerous superiority of merit; and the friendship of Marcus Aurelius always ensured the aversion of his son. Suspicion was equivalent to proof, trial to condemnation. The execution of a senator of consideration was attended with the death of all who might lament or avenge his fate; and when Commodus had once tasted human blood, he became incapable of pity or remorse."

Such was the opening of the Second Seal, A.D. 183. It was a sign

in "the heaven," and the color of the sign was fiery red. The spirit that ruled the situation there was that of retributive vengeance, through a class of agents who were the blind executioners of a purpose which they knew not. Bloodshedding was the order of the day. The son-in-law of the late emperor was among the victims; and Arius Antoninus, the last representative of the Antonines, also fell by the axe of the executioner. Every sentiment of decency and humanity was extinct in the mind of Commodus. He abandoned the reins of empire to the most unworthy favorites, and valued nothing in sovereign power except the unbounded license of indulging his sensual appetites. He is said to have been the first of the Roman emperors totally devoid of taste for the pleasures of the understanding. From his earliest infancy he discovered an aversion to whatever was rational or liberal, and a fond attachment to the amusements of the populace, the sports of the circus and amphitheatre, the combats of gladiators, and the hunting of wild beasts. He entered the lists as a gladiator, and gloried in a profession which the laws and manners of the Romans had branded with the justest note of infamy.

He had now attained the summit of vice and infamy. Amidst the acclamations of a flattering court, he was unable to disguise from himself that he had deserved the contempt and hatred of every man of sense and virtue in his empire. History has preserved a long list of consular senators sacrificed to his wanton suspicion, *which sought out with peculiar anxiety those unfortunate persons connected, however remotely, with the family of the Antonines*, without sparing even the ministers of his crimes or his pleasures. His cruelty proved at last fatal to himself. He had shed with impunity the noblest blood of Rome; he perished as soon as he was dreaded by his own domestics. He was strangled while laboring with the effects of poison and drunkenness, A.D. 192, after a sanguinary reign of thirteen years.

This reign may be regarded as the opening period of the Second Seal. In its course divine vengeance executed through the wicked, as the sword of Deity, retributive justice upon the authorities, and upon the imperial family, who had shed the blood of the saints in the former reigns; and, when the work was consummated in their case, the imperial executioner was punished for his crimes by death at the hands of the infamous.

But, though Commodus had destroyed the peace and happiness of the Senate and patricians of Rome, his reign was remarkable for the peace granted to the Ecclesia of Christ in all the habitable. In this one particular point only, namely, in his conduct towards the christians, Commodus was more just and equitable than his philosophical father.

In this the change of emperors was propitious. The power, goodness, and justice of the Deity were evinced in making so vile a character at once his sword upon the persecutor and a check upon persecution, by which a breathing time was afforded after eighteen years of sufferings exceedingly cruel. The gospel, or what was called the gospel, is said to have "flourished abundantly, and many of the nobility of Rome, with their whole families, embraced it." At all events, they abandoned paganism; but whether or not they embraced "the truth as it is in Jesus," is beyond the competency of historians to testify.

THE OPENING OF THE SECOND SEAL



Seldom in history has so speedy and tragic a reversal taken place as that which followed the death of Marcus Aurelius, the last of the emperors of the first seal. At his death (A.D. 180), the empire stood at the zenith of stability; but in the hands of his successor, the gross and dull-witted Commodus, it entered into a sharp decline that approached disruption. He instituted a regime of terror, one so unjust and savage that many leading citizens looked to the armies for relief, and so laid the foundation of further bloodshed.

Commodus (see left) considered himself the incarnation of Hercules and had himself portrayed with the attributes of that god: a club and a lion's skin. He degraded himself by appearing in the arena as a gladiator, there to slay unarmed opponents. He slaughtered senators at will, and permitted his pampered favorites in the Praetorian Guard to run the affairs of state as they pleased. He sought out every form of perversion, his excesses causing disgust among the people over whom he ruled, until, finally a hired assassin put him to death by strangling. His reign commenced the epoch of bloodshed and evil that finally brought the empire to an end.

3. The Horse Fiery Red

In the first seal the horse was white — it was in peace and prosperity; but the horse in the second seal appears under an administration that “takes away the peace from the earth.” Hence the redness of the horse — a horse dyed with blood — with arterial blood the life of the flesh, and therefore its fiery rather than a purple hue. The same word is used by the LXX in 2 Kings 3:22, *purra hos haima, red as blood*. The word is very expressive; the root of it being *pur, fire*, it indicates in this emblem both the brightness of the red and the cause of the horse’s redness — the fiery indignation of the Deity. John beheld the horse in a state of fiery redness without any whiteness about it. Not that the *social horse* became all over red on the opening of the second seal, but that this would be its condition before the seal-period should be superseded by that of the third. While the horse represents Greek and Latin society, the color represents that society’s judicial condition. The judgments brought upon it in the reign of Commodus fell chiefly upon the uppertendom of the State. The lower classes, however, of the city Rome did not altogether escape. Pestilence and famine broke out among them there, so that two thousand persons died every day for a considerable length of time. The pestilence was attributed to the just indignation of their gods; but the famine they considered as owing to speculators, and among these principally to the emperor’s favorite, who had monopolized the breadstuffs of the city. The popular discontent, after it had long circulated in whispers, broke out in the assembled circus. The people quitted their favorite amusements for the more delicious pleasure of revenge, rushed in crowds towards the palace in the suburbs, and demanded with angry clamors the head of the public enemy. The obnoxious favorite ordered a body of praetorian cavalry to disperse the seditious multitude. The people fled towards the city; several were slain, and many more trampled to death. But when the praetorians entered the city, the foot-guards joined the people. The tumult became a regular engagement and threatened a general massacre. The cavalry at length gave way, and the tide of popular fury returned with redoubled violence against the gates of the palace, where Commodus lay dissolved in luxury, and alone unconscious of the civil war. It was death to approach his person with the unwelcome news. Two of his concubines, however, ventured to break into his presence, and revealed to the affrighted tyrant the impending ruin. He started from his dream of pleasure, and commanded that the head of his favorite should be thrown to the people. The desired

spectacle appeased their rage, and the tumult ceased.

This was a sort of earnest of the sanguinary aspect that awaited the whole social horse when the judgments of the seal should be fully developed. He would, in all his parts, under the administration of his bloodshedding rider, bleed from every pore, and become fiery red, as John saw him in the vision; so that when the seal-judgments should be complete, the Senate, the executive, the pagans, philosophers, and heretics, of Daniel's "dreadful and terrible" fourth beast, should be all fiery red from the sanguinary calamities their crimes, unbelief, and apostasy had brought upon them.

4. The Rider of the Horse

John refers to the rider by the phrase "him who sits upon him." This equestrian is a symbolical personage, not representative of an individual man, but of a class of agents blindly executing retribution upon those obnoxious to the Lamb's displeasure. He evidently represents a class of agents endued with the power of the sword, and who could wield it in the cause of peace or war. "It was given to him," says John, "to take away the peace from the earth." This shows, first, that the white period of the first seal was a period in which peace ruled the situation; and, secondly, that it was given to him to destroy public tranquility — to abolish "the peace," and to substitute tumult and confusion where it had previously reigned. But this state of public disorder might obtain without bloodshedding John was therefore informed that the reason why it was given to him to take away the peace, was that "they," the agents symbolized by the rider, "might slay one another." This was an intimation to the apostle that, when the second seal should be in manifestation, a period of civil commotion and bloodshed would have superseded "the most prosperous and happy era" of the first seal. A sanguinary revolutionary condition of things, in the presence of that generation of "the people of the mighty and the holy ones," symbolized by the second or Ox-headed Living One "full of eyes," was the signification of "mystery" of Roman society dyed fiery red and ridden by this "dreadful and terrible" equestrian.

In the English Version it reads, "Power was given to him to take peace from the earth." This is very indefinite unless it is distinctly understood what is "signified" by "the earth." In the original the phrase is, *labein ten eirenen apo tes ges*, to take THE peace from the earth. The relation of the first two seals shows that the definite article, *ten*, ought not to be omitted, whether it be so in some manuscripts or not. Public tranquility had obtained within the limits of the Dragon empire from the fall of Domitian to the alleged sending of a sword to

Commodus by the Roman Senate, a period of eighty-seven years. This was peace notably definite in the history of the imperial diademed head of the Dragon, and the taking of it away was very properly foretold in the definite form of the original. I have, therefore, not omitted it in my rendering of the text, but, after "the form of words" before me, instead of "take peace from," have given it "take *the* peace from the earth."

5. The Great Dagger

"And there was given to him (the rider) a great dagger." So I render the words, *kai edothe auto machaira megale*. In the English Version, *machaira megale* is rendered *a great sword*. My objection to this is, that in the symbolization of the Fourth Seal the *sword* is introduced in the English Version, although in the Greek the spirit has selected a different word, which, in fact, represents a weapon of a different kind. In verse 4, a *machaira* was given to the rider; while in verse 8, they kill with a *rhomphaia*. There must be a reason why two different words, both rendered *sword* in the English Version, are used by the Spirit in the second and fourth seals. A *machaira* and a *rhomphaia*, though both weapons of destruction, are such in the hands of different classes of destroyers. In Liddell and Scott's Lexicon, *machaira* is defined "a large knife or *dirk*; a short sword or *dagger*; but still rather an *assassin's* than a *soldier's* weapon." It was worn by the emperors as a symbol of their power, as magistrates-in-chief, over life and death. It was also worn by the praefects of the imperial guard. It was the *badge* indicating them as the constitutional authorities whose function it was to cause the laws to be obeyed on pain of death.

As a symbol, then, adapted to the representation of events peculiar to the bloodstained condition of things in the second seal-period, a *machaira* was very appropriate. In this symbolization, it was the emblem of the murder or assassination, committed by them, who wielded constitutionally the power over the lives of their contemporaries, commonly termed *the power of the sword*. It was a great dagger — symbolically *great*. It was great in the excessive and unconstitutional, or illegal use of it. Though a short, small, weapon in itself; yet in the hands of the class represented by the rider, it was *great*, or "dreadful and terrible." It was a weapon in the hands of imperial and military assassins of murder by wholesale in cold blood; and of bloodshedding in civil war to avenge assassination; or to retain sovereign power which had been acquired by the dagger's use. In giving therefore to this rider "a great dagger," he had power "given to him to take away the peace of the earth," and to cause its potsherds to slay one another

in civil wars. He would redden them with a fiery redness — the redness of a brother's blood.

6. "The Earth"

"It was given to him (the rider) to take the peace from *the earth*." "The earth" in this place cannot be the earth wherever men dwell, comprehending what we term Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australasia. The last two were unknown to the ancients; and may therefore certainly be excluded from "the earth" having relation to events being transacted in their time. The use of the phrase in this seal furthermore, could not have comprehended even all the territory known to them, for the prediction was "to take the peace" of the first seal "from the earth." Now, "the peace" of this seal was internal, not external, peace; for although it was a "most prosperous and happy" period for the Roman people, they still waged great wars against the Persians, Jews, Quadi, Marcomanni, &c., in the reigns of Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Antoninus. Hence, the territories inhabited by these peoples must be excluded also from "the earth" of this text. In other words, "the earth" was bounded and confined to the frontiers of the Greco-Latin Dragon of Daniel and John; extending two thousand miles in one direction, and three thousand in another; and inclosing within its circuit the Mediterranean sea. This was the sense in which "the earth" was understood by the Greeks and Latins in John's time. A writer named Dionysius speaks thus concerning it, *He de Rhomaion polis apases men archei ges, hose me anembatos esti pasis de kratei thalasses* — *the city of the Romans indeed governs the whole earth, as much as is not inaccessible, and holds possession of all the sea*. And Ovid sings,

Gentibus est aliis tellus data limite certo,
Romanae spatium est urbis et orbis idem.

that is, *to other nations territory is given with a defined limit; to the Roman the extent of the city and the orb is the same*; and in another place, he says, *Roma caputorbis*, — "Rome the head, or capital, of the earth." This will remind the reader of what John says of this city in his day under the figurative name of "Babylon the Great," in Apoc. 17:18, "that great city having dominion over the kings of *the earth*."

This formula, then, "the earth" in this prophecy of the six seals, is to be interpreted of the Roman territory — all that portion of the orb we inhabit subject to the dominion of Pagan Rome. Beside the text before us, we have it occurring in verses 8,10,13,15. In all these places "the earth" has the same limitation: and is to be interpreted only as the

arena of events happening to the peoples and government of Rome.

Having thus expounded the beautiful and expressive figuration of the second seal, I shall now proceed to lay before the reader a narration of events illustrative of the foregoing exposition. I shall condense it from Gibbon as the best historian who has compiled the history of the seal-periods. If I wrote for the learned, this would still be indispensably necessary; for, though they may be well acquainted with the transactions of the times, very few of them are able to trace the apocalyptic vein of the fine gold that runs through them; in other words, to run a parallel between the prophecy and its historical fulfilment. But, this exposition is for the same class of readers as that to whom John was ordered to send the prophecy — “to the servants of the Deity;” and these in all the ages and generations since his day, have been mostly of the poorer sort; and but little acquainted with what has happened in the world beyond what is written in the scriptures. It is necessary, therefore, for their sakes, not only to explain the symbols, but to give so much history as will enable them to “see” for themselves, the reasonableness of the explanation; so that, when they shall have the prophecy in symbol turned into the prophecy in signification, and the history before them, they may be able to conclude that it can only mean what is shown, and nothing else.

7. Fulfilment of the Prophecy

Commodus, the imperial sword-bearer of the Roman empire, was not poinarded, but strangled to death. He was succeeded by Pertinax, the praefect of Rome, a senator of consular rank, and conspicuous for his merit. He was chosen emperor by the Praetorian Guards, whose praefect, Laetus, had procured the murder of Commodus, and his election by the military. The election was ratified by the Senate, A.D. 193, which at the same sitting branded the memory of Commodus with eternal infamy.

Pertinax was a “virtuous” pagan, who sought to heal the wounds inflicted by the hand of tyranny. The innocent victims who yet survived, were recalled from exile, released from prison, and restored to the full possession of their honors and fortunes. The unburied bodies of murdered senators (for the cruelties of Commodus, an individual element of the rider of the fiery red horse, endeavored to extend itself beyond death) were deposited in the sepulchres of their ancestors; their memory was justified; and every consolation was bestowed on their ruined afflicted families.

Economy and industry he considered as the pure and genuine sources of wealth. The rapacious extravagance of Commodus had left

only about forty thousand dollars in the treasury. With this small sum he had to defray the expenses of the government, and to discharge the pressing demand of a liberal donative he had been obliged to promise the licentious and turbulent soldiery who had elected him. Yet under this pressure, he remitted all the oppressive taxes invented by Commodus, and cancelled all the unjust claims of the treasury; declaring, "that he was better satisfied to administer a poor republic with innocence, than to acquire riches by ways of tyranny and dishonor."

His thorough radical reform of state abominations secured to Pertinax the love and esteem of the people, who never would have acquired a fiery redness had they been ridden solely by rulers of his description. They already flattered themselves that they should long enjoy the benign influence of his administration. But his zeal to reform the corrupted state was too hasty, and proved fatal to himself and to his country. His honest indiscretion united against him the servile and swinish multitude, who found their private benefit in the public disorders, and who preferred the favor of the most vicious tyrants to the inexorable equality of the laws.

Amidst the general joy, the sullen and angry countenance of the praetorian guards betrayed their discontent. They dreaded the restoration of ancient discipline; and regretted the licence of the former reign. Three days after their election of Pertinax, they seized on a senator with the design of making him emperor. But he escaped their grasp, greatly alarmed at their purpose of thrusting upon him so dangerous a distinction. A short time after this, one Sosius Falco, a rash youth, conspired with the soldiery in the absence of Pertinax; but the conspiracy was foiled by his unexpected return to Rome. Falco was on the point of being condemned to death by the Senate, but escaped through the intercession of the emperor, who desired that the purity of his reign might not be stained by the blood even of a guilty senator.

These disappointments served only to irritate the rage of the licentious and brutal praetorians, who were the curse of the state it was their duty to defend. Only two months and twenty-six days after the death of Commodus, a general sedition broke out in their camp, which the officers wanted either the power, or inclination to suppress. They marched at noonday with arms in their hands, and fury in their looks, towards the imperial palace. Their companions on guard gave them free admission; and they were welcomed by the domestics of the old court, who had already formed a secret conspiracy against the life of the too virtuous emperor. Pertinax, disdaining either flight or concealment, advanced to meet those in whose fiery red hand was already brandished "the Great Dagger." He recalled to the minds of these



assassins his own innocence, and the sanctity of their recent oath. But all in vain. A barbarian levelled the first blow, and Pertinax fell, pierced with a multitude of wounds. His head was borne on a lance in triumph to the praetorian camp in sight, of a mournful and indignant people, who lamented the unworthy fate of an excellent prince, and the transient blessings of a reign the memory of which could serve only to aggravate their approaching misfortunes.

The praetorian bands, whose licentious fury was the first symptom and proximate cause of the decline of the Roman empire, numbered about fifteen thousand. They were instituted by Augustus for the maintenance of his usurped dominion. They enjoyed double pay, and superior privileges. After fifty years of peace and servitude, Tiberius for ever rivetted the fetters of his country by concentrating them at Rome, in a permanent camp without the walls, which was fortified with skill, on the broad summit of the Quirinal and Viminal hills.

Such formidable servants are always necessary, but often fatal, to the throne of despotism. But thus introducing the praetorian guards as it were into the palace and the senate, the emperors taught them to perceive their own strength, and the weakness of the civil government; to view the vices of their masters with familiar contempt, and to lay aside that reverential awe, which distance only and mystery, can preserve towards an imaginary power. In the luxurious idleness of an opulent city, their pride was nourished by the sense of their irresistible weight; nor was it possible to conceal from them that the person of the sovereign, the authority of the senate, the public treasure, and the seat of empire, were all in their hands.

The advocates of the guards endeavored to justify by arguments the power which they asserted by arms; and to maintain that *their* consent was essentially necessary in the appointment of an emperor. "Where," said they, "was the Roman people to be found? Not surely amongst the mixed multitude of slaves and strangers that filled the streets of Rome; a servile populace as devoid of spirit as destitute of property. The defenders of the state were the genuine representatives of the people, and the best entitled to elect the military chief of the republic." These assertions became unanswerable when the fierce praetorians increased their weight by throwing their swords into the scale.

The Praetorians (opp.) were an arrogant military elite created as the emperor's guard. They spent much of their time in Rome, and ultimately became tyrannical in their domination of the city, choosing and deposing several of the Emperors. They installed Pertinax as Emperor when he paid them a bribe, but after a few days murdered him. They had frequent recourse to the assassin's sword (the *machaira* of Ch. 6:4) to gain their way until disbanded by Severus who replaced the existing guard with his own legions. In the left background is a standard bearing the imperial eagle with which Rome was identified (see Matt. 24:28).

We have seen in the exposition of the first seal, how a *bow* may symbolize a multitude; it will not therefore be difficult for us to comprehend, how that the "great dagger," or *small sword*, of the second, may symbolize a multitude of bloodshedding assassins in the hand of the power that rides the people, or rules the state. The scripture in various places uses the sword as emblematic of a multitude in arms. The wicked are the sword of Yahweh (Psa. 17:13); the sons of Zion are compared to a sword — Zech. 9:13; all the tribes of Israel are styled Yah Elohim's battle axe and weapons of war, with which He will break in pieces the nations, and destroy kingdoms — Jer. 51:20. Hence, they are symbolized in the apocalypse by a sword proceeding out of His mouth with which he will smite the nations — 19:15. These praetorian assassins, who claimed to be the representatives of the Roman people, were the sword in the hand of power; and became signally "great" when their numbers were increased by Severus, "the military chief of the republic," to fifty thousand.

Having violated the sanctity of the throne by their atrocious assassination of Pertinax, the praetorians at once proceeded to dishonor its majesty by proclaiming, with a loud voice from the ramparts of their camp, that the Roman world was to be disposed of by public auction to the highest bidder. This infamous excess of military licence diffused grief, shame and indignation throughout the city. Two bidders presented themselves, Sulpicianus, father-in-law to Pertinax, and governor of the city, and Didius Julianus, a wealthy senator. The former offered £160 to each soldier; when the vain old Julian, eager for the prize, offered upwards of two hundred pounds sterling to each. This was irresistible; the gates of the camp were instantly thrown open to the purchaser. He was declared emperor; received their oath of allegiance, which would be regarded so long as convenient; and was conducted, in close order of battle, through the deserted streets to the senate-house where he received the imperial symbols from the obsequious and false-hearted council of the nation.

On the throne of the world, Julian now found himself without either friend or adherent. The praetorians even were ashamed of him, nor was there a citizen who did not regard his elevation with horror as the last insult on the Roman name. The streets and public places of Rome resounded with clamors and imprecations. The enraged multitude insulted the person of Julian, rejected his liberality, and called aloud upon the legions of the frontiers to assert the violated majesty of the Roman empire.

"*It was given to him to take the peace from the earth.*" The public discontent was soon diffused from the centre to the frontiers of the

empire. The armies in Britain, in Syria, and in Illyricum, lamented the death of Pertinax, as an old and favorite commander, and sternly refused to ratify the ignominious sale. "Their immediate and unanimous revolt was fatal to Julian, but *it was fatal at the same time to the public peace*; as the generals of the respective armies, Albinus, Niger, and Septimus Severus, were still more anxious to succeed, than to revenge the murdered Pertinax. Of these rivals, S. Severus was the most fortunate; and as the time of the seal-period had arrived, "*that they should slay one another,*" they all prepared for the arbitrament of the sword. Severus being a man of energy as well as a soldier of experience and capacity, and having the best troops of the service; and being also nearer to the capital had much the advantage over Niger of Syria, and Albinus of Britain. He speedily assembled his Pannonian legions; painted in the most lively colors the crime, the insolence, and the weakness of the praetorians, and animated his soldiers to arms and revenge. He concluded with the persuasive of about nineteen hundred and fifty dollars to every man; a donative double in value to the bribe with which Julian had purchased the world. The acclamations of the army immediately saluted Severus as emperor, who without delay marched them into Italy on the way to Rome.

Severus and his Pannonian legions were a "great machaira" in every sense of the phrase. His approach to the city made both Julian and the praetorians to tremble. They quitted, with a sigh, the pleasures of the baths and theatres, to put on arms, whose use they had almost forgotten, and beneath the weight of which they were oppressed. Every motion of Julian betrayed his trembling perplexity, which, with secret pleasure, was greatly enjoyed by the Senate. He insisted that Severus should be declared a public enemy; anon he entreated that he might be associated with him in the empire. He sent public ambassadors to negotiate, while he dispatched private assassins to slay him. He designed a solemn procession of vestals, and all the colleges of priests in their canonicals, and bearing before them the symbols of Roman superstition, to meet the Pannonian legions; and at the same time he vainly tried to interrogate, or to appease, not "the Lamb," but "the Fates," by magic ceremonies, and unlawful sacrifices. But Severus dreaded neither his arms, nor his enchantments, but took wise precaution against assassination. His emissaries, dispersed in the capital, assured the guards, that provided they would abandon Julian, and the assassins of Pertinax, to the justice of the conqueror, he would no longer consider that murder as the act of the whole body. The faithless praetorians complied with these easy terms, seized the greater part of the assassins, and signified to the senate that they no longer

defended the cause of Julian. That assembly forthwith, unanimously acknowledged Severus as lawful emperor; and pronounced sentence of deposition and death against the unfortunate Julian, who was beheaded as a common criminal in a private apartment of the baths of the palace, after an anxious and precarious reign of sixty-six days.

Having settled affairs in Rome upon the new basis, he left the city at the end of thirty days, and led his legions to the slaughter decreed for them and their compatriots under Niger and Albinus, in the second seal — “it was given to him to take the peace from the earth, and *that they should slay one another.*” In less than four years Severus subdued the legions of the east under Niger and the valour of the west under Albinus. He vanquished these two competitors of reputation and ability, and defeated numerous armies provided with weapons and discipline equal to his own. He was, as a legitimate imperial power, truly a “great machaira;” whose uncommon abilities and fortune had induced an elegant historian of that age to compare him with the first and greatest of the Caesars. He was a man of great craft and dissimulation. He promised only to betray, and flattered only to ruin. By these arts as well as by arms, his rivals fell singly and successively, an easy prey to their subtle foe. The sons of Niger had fallen into his hands at Rome. As long as the power of their father inspired terror, or even respect, they were educated with most tender care with his own children; but they were soon involved in Niger’s ruin, and removed — first by exile and afterwards by death — from the eye of public compassion.

As for Albinus, he was induced to accept from Severus the precarious rank of Caesar, as a reward for his neutrality in his conflict with Niger. Till this civil war was decided, he treated Albinus, whom he had doomed to destruction, with every mark of esteem and regard. Even in the letter in which he announced his victory over Niger, he styles Albinus the brother of his soul and empire. The messengers charged with the delivery of this were instructed to accost the Caesar with respect — to desire a private audience, and to plunge their daggers into his heart. The conspiracy was discovered, and the too credulous Albinus crossed over to the continent to meet Severus in arms for the work of mutual slaughter, according to the terms of the second seal. The battle of Lyons in France, where one hundred and fifty thousand Romans were engaged, was fatal to Albinus; and this second civil war was finished by that memorable day, A.D. 197.

Both Niger and Albinus were discovered and put to death in their flight from the field of battle. Severus’ unforgiving temper stimulated by avarice, indulged a spirit of revenge, where there was no room for

apprehension. The most considerable of the provincials who had obeyed the vanquished governor under whose authority they were accidentally placed, were *reddened with their own blood*, sent into exile, and lost their estates by confiscation. He sent the head of Albinus, with a threatening letter, to Rome, in which he announced that he was resolved to spare none of the adherents of the Caesar. He condemned forty-one senators to the *fiery redness* of the seal. Their wives, children, and clients attended them in death; and the noblest provincials of Spain and Gaul were involved in the same *fiery red* ruin. Such rigid justice — for so he termed it — was, in the opinion of Severus, the only conduct capable of ensuring peace to the people, or stability to the prince; and he condescended slightly to lament, that to be mild it was necessary that he should first be cruel.

Having thus become the “great machaira” of his age, Severus considered the Roman empire as his property, and proceeded to improve and cultivate so valuable an acquisition. In the administration of justice, his judgments were characterized by attention, discernment and impartiality; and whenever he deviated from the strict line of equity, it was generally in favor of the poor and oppressed. The misfortunes of civil discord were obliterated. The wrath of the Lamb was temporarily assuaged; and the judgments of the second seal were complete. The calm of peace and prosperity was once more experienced in the provinces. The fame of the Roman arms was revived by that warlike and successful imperial sword-bearer: and he boasted, with no little pride, that having received the empire oppressed with foreign and *domestic wars* — “slaying one another” — he left it established in profound, universal and honorable peace.

But, while “the peace” was taken “from the earth,” and the armies of the empire were engaged in “slaying one another,” what was the condition of those anti-pagan professors of christianity who had let go their hold upon the Spirit’s name, had denied his faith, and had embraced the dogmas of Nikolaitanism? And amid all the trouble of the times, was the Bowman of the first seal “conquering,” while the Imperial Machaira of the second was blindly executing rigid justice upon the pagan senate and public at large?

In the beginning of the third century, at which we have arrived, we find an unhappy mixture of metaphysical self-righteousness and superstition, now amply developed in “the names and denominations” of blasphemy, overshadowing and darkening the world, and greatly clouding and depraving the pure light of the gospel. This perverting the gospel of Christ, and preaching another gospel than Paul’s, had been progressing from his time; but recently it had been greatly promoted by

Ammonius, Pantaenus, Clement, Origen, of the Divinity School at Alexandria, the capital of Egypt; who were all eminent in the unhallowed work of making christianity palatable to heathen philosophers and admirers of the world's wisdom — a work that could only be successful by corrupting it. Would the Deity look with complacency upon this? Though they had renounced the gods of Greece and Rome, and contended against their existence and worship, as protestants now protest against the saints of the Romish calendar, and the worshipful honor paid to them, still this was only the negation of a particular superstition. The denial of this was not affirming "the truth as it is in Jesus." Hence, Alexandrian divinity was no more the doctrine of Christ, by which alone men can be saved, than modern protestantism. It was a protest against vulgar paganism without being also an earnest contest for the faith. It was protestantism, only with a different form of superstition for its adversary. Did the Deity esteem the overthrow of heathenism more highly than holding fast his name and affirming his faith. We know he did not; for he threatened this class of professors that he would "fight with them by the sword of his mouth," as he now fights against both papists and protestants by setting them to "slay one another" for their blasphemies and abominations. Zeal against an error or superstition does not sanctify the ignorance and unbelief of the zealots. They were vessels to dishonor in the master's house. I say in the master's house, for he had not yet "spued them out of his mouth," as he did afterwards. They had not yet arrived at "the mystery of iniquity" in its seventh, or Laodicean degree. Christ loved them still, and therefore he chastised them to bring them back "to the faith once delivered to the saints."

The great imperial machaira was the power employed in inflicting judgment upon "the house of the Deity" — 1 Pet. 4:17. In his younger days Severus had been a bitter persecutor of the christians at Lyons, where he afterwards fought his great battle with Albinus. But through the influence and kindness which he had received from Proculus, a christian physician, he became favorably disposed towards them for a time. It was not till about the tenth year of his reign, or A.D. 202, that his native ferocity of temper broke out afresh, and kindled a very severe persecution against them. He may have been provoked to this by some political demonstration against his administration on the part of heretical professors; who, taking advantage of the trouble of the times, may have given aid and comfort to Niger or Albinus, preferring them as rulers rather than Severus. Be this as it may, he visited Alexandria, formerly under Niger, with great severity. From various parts of Egypt professors were brought to that capital to suffer; and

they expired in torments. The justice of the Deity was very retributive in that city. It was the Oxford and Cambridge — the Andover and Princeton of spurious christianity; and there, consequently, the providential visitation was the most intense. From all I can see in the history of those times, the executions seem to have been chiefly of professors who coveted martyrdom, which was contrary to the teachings of Christ who told them that "when persecuted in one city they should flee to another." But, the reverse of this, they rushed into the mouth of the dragon, and provoked him to devour them with his "great iron teeth," and to rend them with his "brazen claws." After the death of John this practice soon began to prevail. Multitudes in Asia presented themselves to Arrius Antoninus for execution in Trajan's reign. He ordered a few of them to execution, and said to the rest, "Miserable people, if you choose death, you may find precipices and halters enow." As time rolled on, this folly increased to mania; and in A.D. 167, we find the ecclesia in Smyrna saying, in its letter about the execution of Polycarp, "we do not approve of those who offer themselves for martyrdom, for we have not so learned Christ." Among the Alexandrians, several were burned and destroyed in various ways. Of these Heraclides is mentioned, who had not been baptized, and was therefore certainly not a christian. Basilides, a soldier who had assisted at the execution of a professor, was converted by her appearing to him three days after her death; and on declaring that he was christian, he also was put to death. Such spurious conversions as these abounded; and christians (!) of this sort had an idea that "by one hour's torment they redeemed themselves from eternal punishment." Such "miserable sinners," styling themselves "christians," abound in our time; multitudes of whom, tired of the troubles of life, would joyfully suffer death under the delusion that by giving their worthless bodies to be burned, they would by a brief torment acquire posthumous notoriety, and hide a multitude of sins. All this voluntary martyrdom was the result of ignorance and misdirected zeal. It was no proof of the sufferers being Christ's Brethren. We may admit the piety and sincerity of many of them; but Paul has taught us that giving the body to be burned is no equivalent for the want of that "love," which he, after the teaching of the Christ, says is "the fulfilling of the law" — hoping and believing all the things testified in the truth — 1 Cor. 13. Martyrdom, then, is no proof of a man's being in Christ; and without being in him, he cannot be a christadelphian. The most it proves is the sincerity and devotion of the martyr to his profession, whatever that may be. Hence, the martyrdom of Huss, Jerome, Cranmer, Servetus, and such like, proved the sincerity of their anti-romish and anti-calvinistic opinions; it did not

alter the fact of their being eminently pious members of the Apostasy; the stain of which cannot be obliterated by body-burning, but only by an intelligent belief and obedience of the truth.

There were many such "fellowservants," who were tormented to death by order of Severus — fellowservants with the "brethren" (see the distinction made in the fifth seal), in the sense in which the Spirit spoke to Jeremiah of his "servant Nebuchadnezzar" — fellowservants in the work of "conquering the ruling superstition of their times." Whether any of "the brethren" fell in his exercise of "justice," as he called it, we can only conjecture. It is probable from the wording of the fifth seal that there were some. Ecclesiastical writers, being ignorant of the truth, are unable to discern between the two classes. They have not been able to "come" to the subject, "and to see." Having no scriptural waymarks, they are lost in the sectarian wilderness of the early centuries; and find it, therefore, impossible to enlighten their readers in the premises. They tell us that heretics abounded in these times, all of them claiming the name of christian. Of these they judge them to be heretics, whom they in our times would decree to be such, according to their own creeds and articles: but they are more likely to have been the true brethren of Christ, or Christadelphians, than heretics. Little has been handed down to us that is reliable upon this point. The writers contemporary with the seals were chiefly of the heretical classes. Modern "divines" style them "the Fathers." And so they were. They were the fathers of the Laodicean Apostasy, taught by that woman Jezebel to commit spiritual lewdness; and to speak according, to the depths of the Satan — Apoc. 2:20-24. They denounced all for heretics who rejected their teaching. But the Deity knows his own, if they do not. The real heretics of the leading factions of Satan's synagogue, doubtless, served for an earthwork upon which the dragon power expended much of his rage, before he reached the citadel of the four living ones' encampment. While therefore many fell under the severe justice of this reign, few of the truly faithful may have suffered; for it was not against them, but chiefly against those who repented not, that the Spirit declared he would fight with the sword of his mouth.

Though troubled with fears within, and fightings without, the Archer with his bow, still went on "conquering." Niger and Albinus had been conquered, and their rival parties torn up by the roots. The same imperial conqueror, or "great machaira," had made war upon him. The flood, however, though it dashed against him with roaring impetuosity, had not swept him away. Many had fallen around him, but he had not only not been conquered, but still was "conquering;" and his ranks were swelled with more deserters from the enemy than he

had lost by fire and sword.

But, after nine years of sanguinary conflict, "the Lamb" sent relief to his suffering people. After a reign of eighteen years, Septimus Severus died, A.D. 211. From this time, "the brethren and fellow-servants" found peace and tranquillity for the space of thirty-eight years. During this long period, a short turbulent interval under Maximin excepted, they enjoyed a continued calm. In this period, their sufferings were those of the third and fourth seals, of which they were partakers with the general public. What these were, we shall "see" in our further exposition of the prophecy.

SECTION 3 THE THYATIRAN STATE

Vol. 1, pp. 428, 439

The Pergamian with all its evils merging into the worse Thyatiran degree of apostasy. Christians so-called, as intensely nominal and worldly as sectarians of the nineteenth century. The prophetess Jezebel, and "the Satan," their representatives in the third century — Apoc. 2:20,24.

ACT III. — SEAL-PERIOD THIRD

Apoc. 6:5,6

The Greco-Latin horse, black with lamentation, mourning and woe.

A.D. 212

"And when he opened the third seal, I heard from the third living one, saying, 'Come and see.' And I saw, and behold a Black Horse, and one sitting upon him holding a Balance in his hand. 6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living ones, saying, 'A choenix of wheat a denarius; and three choinices of barley a denarius; but the oil and the wine thou mayest not act unjustly by'."

1. The Spirit not yet Withdrawn

Such is the expressive heiroglyphic by which the Spirit "signified" to "his servants" the nature of the situation which should succeed the period in which they would "slay one another," and "a great machaira" would appear to aggravate the strife. The Lamb also opens this third seal. It is an opening, not to give exit to blessedness upon Roman society; for that is not the nature of a seal; but, to loose those evils upon the world, which would be calamitous to pagan, Jew, and

Jezebel-professors of christianity, in all the empire. Though the evils would be general, "the Brethren," or as many as had not the Jezebel doctrine, would, doubtless, not suffer so severely as others; for in the time of the first four seals, it was certainly a ministration of Spirit in which retribution came upon ecclesias "according to their works." It was, I say, a ministration of Spirit, though not so amply manifested as when Paul wrote 1 Cor. 12, 13 and 14. The presence of the Four Living Ones, and the emanation of voices from them, as a part of the symbolization, proves this. When the fifth seal is opened, there is no invitation from a Living One to "come and see." Yet the Spirit still lingered among the Lightstands, as may be inferred from the saying, "it was said unto them."

The third Living One is the symbol of the ecclesia of the Deity in its Pergamo-Thyatiran declension. Its face was that of a man, and "full of eyes before and behind." The reader will remember, that in the apocalypse these four living ones are related to two states — the state of suffering in the flesh; and the state of glory in the resurrection; and that they are only introduced in the prophetic drama where there is direct and potential ministration and manifestation of Spirit.

2. The Black Horse

While it is true, that *black* is used in scripture in connection with scarcity and famine; I am satisfied that in this third seal *famine* is not indicated by the color of the horse. The reader will therefore be so good as to run his pen through the word "famine" in line 16 of our "Chronological Tableau of the Apostasy," on page 428, Vol. 1. The color indicates *mourning, distress, intense depression of mind*, from any kind of calamity that may befall. This appears from Job 30:26-31: "When I looked for good then *evil* came; and when I waited for light, there came *darkness*. My bowels boiled, and rested not; the days of *affliction* anticipated me. *Mourning* (*kodair*, darkening) I went without the sun My skin is *black* upon me, and my bones are burned with heat. My harp also is turned to *mourning*, and my organ into the voice of them that *weep*." We need not multiply examples. This from Job shows, that the outside blackness is caused by the inner heat of burning, or intense, affliction. So also in the case before us. the severe oppression to which the community represented by the horse, is subjected by them who ride, or rule it, gives it hieroglyphically, a black skin. It is therefore to be viewed as under the operation of great evil in days of affliction, producing lamentation, mourning, and great distress. The *horse* represents the same community as the white of the first seal, and the fiery red one of the second — the peoples subject to pagan

Rome; the different colors signifying their different condition in different periods.

3. The Balance-Holder

The rider of the black horse may be known by his badge. John saw one sitting upon him "holding in his hand a balance." The other riders of the first and second seals were identified by their badges — the bow and the great dagger; and so must this of the third by *the balance*, which is his. He represents a class of agents who, in relation to the Roman peoples, held the balance as their badge of office; the duties of which they performed so oppressively that they became a public evil, which like a noxious weed of most luxuriant growth, "darkened the Roman world with its deadly shade."

Among the Greeks and Latins, as also among the moderns, a balance was the symbol of *justice*. The scripture also adopts it as such: "Let him weigh me," says Job, "in the balance of justice" — 31:6. In the hand of an official it indicated a judge, or an administrator of justice, or properly, of law; which, in the mouth of a judge, is often times far removed from justice. In this seal, it is the symbol of agents, whose office it was to execute the laws — the imperial functionaries of the empire; both the emperors and their subordinates. There are Roman coins in the cabinets of the collectors of coins and medals, illustrative of this. Mr. Elliott has given copies of some in his work. Among these is an imperial coin of Alexander Severus. On one side is the head of an emperor; and on the other, a diademed figure holding a balance in the right hand and a measure in the other, with the legend *Aequitas Augusti, S.C.* It is the symbol of the equity of the emperor by decree of the senate in his levies upon the people in kind; for in imperial times the supreme judicial and financial, as well as supreme military power centred in the emperors. For this reason, the *balance of justice* is ascribed to them as well as the *machaira*, which, says Paul, "he beareth not in vain, for he is the minister of the Deity, a revenger to execute wrath upon them that do evil" — Rom. 13:1-4. So Shakespeare combines them in the address of Henry V. to the Lord Chief Justice, as the monarch's representative;

"Hold thou still the *balance* and the sword."

4. The Voice

John says, that when he saw this vision of the third seal, he heard "a voice in the midst of the Four Living Ones." *Voice* is sometimes used in scripture in the sense of the signification, or the thing signified



THE THIRD SEAL
 — A.D. 212-235:
FAMINE

The seal describes the rider on a black horse as holding a pair of balances in his hand (Apoc. 6:5). *Eureka* refers to medallions of Rome that depict this symbol. The above medallion was issued by Septimus Geta. It depicts three *Monetae* each holding a balance, and personifying the metals of gold, silver and bronze whilst at the feet of each is a pile of coins. *Juno Moneto* was the name given to Juno the Adviser, in whose temple at Rome money was coined, and by whom its value was guaranteed so as to create public confidence in the monetary system. But it is ironical that the invocation of such began at the very time that inflation and debasement of the coinage was well established. It is remarkable how the coinage and monuments of the Roman Empire illustrate the symbolism of the Apocalypse, and confirm the exposition of *Eureka*. Caracalla (left) whose reign commenced the epoch of this seal, is remembered chiefly for his treachery and cruelty. He murdered his brother Geta to obtain sole rule, but plunged Rome into greater distress.

by a sign; as in Exod. 4:8. Moses was to do certain *signs* before the people, to convince them that he was sent by Yahweh to deliver them. "If," said he, "they will not believe thee, neither hearken to *the voice of the first sign*, they will believe *the voice* of the latter sign." The voices, though not expressed in words, were, that he whose power turned his flesh leprous as snow, and restored it instantly; and changed the water of the Nile into blood, had sent Moses with power to deliver them. The sign was one thing, the voice of the sign another. *Voice* also is sometimes used for *law*; as "if thou shalt be obedient to his voice," *i. e.* to his law. It is also used for *proclamation*; as in Ezra 1:1, "Cyrus caused *qowl*, a *voice* to pass through all his kingdom;" that is he made a *proclamation* through all his kingdom.

This *voice* that John heard was edicts, decrees, or laws, proclaimed by authority; and to be executed by the class of agents who exercised the power symbolized by the balance — the praetors at Rome, and the governors of the provinces. John heard the voice "in the midst of the four living ones." These being emblematic of the brethren and their fellow-servants in all the Roman earth, an imperial decree, addressed to the agents symbolized by the rider holding the balance, would be, hieroglyphically speaking, "a voice in the midst of the four living ones."

The decrees of this voice caused to pass by authority throughout the Roman world were "a choinix of wheat a denarius; and three choinices of barley a denarius; but the oil and the wine thou mayest not act unjustly by." This was the voice in sign. It was the sign-voice. We are not to expect to find an imperial decree in these words, because the thing signified will be different from the sign. But when we come to understand the character of the sign, if it be an evil sign, we may expect to find the administration of the balance-holder evil; and productive of such results as would blacken the community over which he rules; or cause to it lamentation, mourning, and woe: but if the sign-voice were a good sign, it would have developed a different aspect. The horse would have been white; because the administration of the rider to whom the voice comes, would have been beneficent. The sign voice implies an intensely oppressive administration of public affairs in all the third seal period, with a brief intermission only. This was indicated by the words, "the oil and the wine thou mayest not act unjustly by." This implies that the edict-making power, or voice of the seal, would not in all its career be devoid of equity. The words *me adikesis* in the English version are rendered *hurt thou not*; but, I prefer the above translation as more in accordance with the etymology; for it is a compound of a negative, and *dike justice* ← a denial of justice, which is

unjust. There was one of the riders, or ruling class, who was ordered *not to act unjustly* in relation to "the oil and the wine" — "THOU mayest not act unjustly by the oil and the wine."

This injunction in regard to the oil and the wine, indicates that injustice would be done in the matter of the wheat and the barley. These were taxable articles from which a great revenue was derived for the use of the state. The decrees, or seal-voice of the senate, fixed the tariff, which the emperors and their subordinates carried into effect, justly or otherwise as it pleased them. The grain tax was levied in kind, or an equivalent was paid in money to the farmers of the revenue; who often sent the treasury at Rome what the law required, and retained for themselves the excess they had extorted from the taxpayers they oppressed. Thus, for example, if wheat were assessed by the senate at ten cents a bushel, they might extort thirty; send the treasury its due, and keep the twenty for their own use. According to this principle of robbery in Sicily, when the wheat-procurations were required from the islanders, the market price being not above one denarius the modius, Verres exacted three denarii from some of them as a money equivalent for each modius due. These extortionate proceedings of the farmers of the revenue were a cause of great public distress and irritation. They were appointed for an equitable administration of affairs, and the collection of revenue in kind and money according to the voice of the Senate. But, being pagans without enlightened conscience, they acted under the blind impulse of their natural organization, and plundered the people as far as they could do so with impunity. "Those," says Gibbon, "who had learning enough to read the orations of Cicero against Verres, might instruct themselves in all the various arts of oppression with regard to the weight, the price, the quality, and the carriage; and the avarice of an unlettered governor would supply the ignorance of precept or precedent." The emperor Alexander Severus used to style the revenue-collectors, "the robbers of the provinces;" it was with them as Hosea says of Ephraim, "the *balance of deceit* is in his hands, he loveth to oppress."

The Choinix

The voice made proclamation of a denarius the choinix of the wheat. There are various opinions concerning the *choinix*. The English version uses the word in its widest sense for *measure of capacity*, without defining the capacity. In Ezek. 45:10, the Septuagint translators are thought to have used the word in this generic sense, *Zugos dikaios, kai metron dikaiou, kai choinix dikaiou esto humin tou metrou*; this is translated to suit the idea, "let there be among you a just

balance, and a just measure, and a just choinix." But this is not true to the original; it should be, "a just balance, and a just measure, and let there be to you a *just choinix of the measure*." Here, the word does not stand for *measure in general* but for a specific *part of measure* called *choinix*. The general opinion of the learned is, that there were three choinixes in use among the Greeks and Latins, of the value of three, four, and eight cotyloe, of three gills each, respectively. The Attic choinix was the most common, and consisted of three cotyloe, or nine gills, or *one quart and an eighth*, and weighing about two pounds.

"A *choinix of wheat a denarius; and three choinixes of barley a denarius*." A denarius was a silver coin, worth about fifteen cents, or eight pence sterling. It was a coin of the Roman empire; and thereby indicates in its symbolic use, that the seal prophecy had relation to Greco-Latin affairs. In the English version it is "for a penny," or denarius. In the original, *denariou* is the genitive of estimation or value; which the English version supposes to be the price of the wheat and barley, and therefore inserts the word "for." I have omitted this word, and in my translation reduced it as near to the original as possible. It may have been the symbolic price of the grain before its assessment, which was to be added; or it may have been the tax assessed independently of the market price. In either view of the case, as emblematic of the financial extortion and all its attendant evils by which the body politic was made black, it was an enormous oppression of the people.

Wheat at fifteen cents, or eight pence, the two pounds, would be four dollars and fifty cents, or about twenty shillings sterling a bushel, estimated at sixty pounds weight. I believe it takes about four bushels to make a barrel of flour, weighing one hundred and ninety-six pounds. Hence, the first cost of the flour would be eighteen dollars, say in Egypt, Roman Africa, or Sicily. To this must be added exporting and importing mercantile profits, and freight to Rome; so that by the time it reached the consumers, it would more than double our New York prices after three years of civil war, in which our social horse has become red. But this would not be all the trouble. To this high price must be added the tax on every bushel, collected by "the robbers of the provinces," before the wheat was converted into flour; so that when the whole should be summed up it would make "a sign" indicative of great distress among the people.

But, if a denarius is to be taken as the price of the grain, three times the quantity of barley could be purchased for that coin — "three choinixes of barley a denarius" — twenty-seven gills, or three quarts and three gills. Hence, then denarii, or about one hundred and fifty

cents, would purchase a bushel of untaxed barley. This is high for barley; and indicates some calamitous condition of public affairs, causing the necessaries of life to range so high. It would affect all classes, rich and poor, bond and free; none would be exempt. When the tax was paid on the barley, what would be its price then?

But after all, a denarius may not have been the price of the choinixes; but the tax assessed on each respectively — a denarius on a choinix of wheat; and a denarius on three choinixes of barley. This, I am inclined to believe, is the signification of the voice. If so, a bushel of wheat would be assessed at four dollars and fifty cents; and a bushel of barley at one dollar and fifty cents. This superadded to the market-price would make the cost of the necessaries of life enormous; and cause whole tracts of country to be thrown out of cultivation, and so prepare the way for that famine which came upon the people as one of the miseries of their situation during the fourth seal — verse 8. The Emperor Trajan likened the undue enlargement of the taxation, with exacting procurators to collect it, to the morbid enlargement of the spleen, causing atrophy. And, after the failure of Alexander Severus, who responded to the Senate's voice, "not to act unjustly by the oil and the wine," in attempting to ameliorate existing fiscal evils, the history of the sequel illustrates fully the truth of Trajan's comparison. A general internal wasting of the Roman state resulted from it. Speaking of this seal-period, Gibbon remarks, that the form of the state was still the same as under Hadrian, "but the animating health and vigor was fled; *the industry of the people was discouraged and exhausted by a long series of oppression;*" and again, "that the general famine, which (soon after Philip's death) befell the empire, was the inevitable consequence of the *rapine and oppression*, which extirpated the produce (the wheat and barley) of the present, and the hope of future harvests." The agriculture of the provinces was insensibly ruined; and thus preparation was made for famine. "The injustice and avarice of the provincial governors," says Mosheim, "together with the rapacity of the publicans, by whom the taxes of the country were farmed, were the source and occasion of innumerable grievances to the people;" and another writer says, "the rapacity of the imperial procurators were among the causes that finally wrought the downfall of the empire."*

An edict by Aurelian shows what extortion had effected previous to his reign. It speaks incidentally of the desolation in Italy; and

* The "measure" or *choinix* was about a quart, and the "penny" or *denarius* comprised the ordinary day's wage of a labourer. So by assessing a labourer's wage today, the cost of a quart of wheat can be established, and the burden of the times better understood. — H.P.M.

urges agriculturists to plant vines on certain extensive *fertile* lands of Etruria, that had been *deserted*. With reference to a later period, Gibbon states that sixty years after the death of Constantine, and before a barbarian invader had been seen in Italy, an exemption from taxes was granted for 300,000 acres in the fertile province of Campania, that is, for one eighth of the whole province, as being by actual survey ascertained to be desert; and he ascribes it to *the long impoverishing effects of fiscal oppressions*; the chief era of which is the period of this third seal.

Thus, the rapine and oppression symbolized in the sign-voice "in the midst of the four living ones," involved both the depopulation and desolation of regions in themselves fertile. People do not abandon to the wild beasts of the forest such tracts of country, unless they are oppressed by their rulers, or left without protection against the barbarians without. The sign-voice in its operation reduced the inhabitants of the earth to despair, and banished every patriotic sentiment from their minds. Illustrative of the personal and family distress induced by official robbery and oppression which Constantine sought to remedy, Gibbon says: "The horrid practice of exposing and murdering their newborn infants was become every day more frequent in the provinces, and especially in Italy. It was the effect of distress; and the distress was principally occasioned by *the intolerable burden of taxes, and by the vexatious as well as cruel prosecutions of the officers of the revenue against their insolvent debtors*. The less opulent or the less industrious . . . instead of rejoicing in an increase of family, deemed it an act of paternal tenderness to release their children from the impending miseries of a life which they were themselves unable to support. The humanity of Constantine, moved perhaps by some recent and extraordinary instance of despair, engaged him to address an edict to all the cities of Italy, and afterwards of Africa, directing instant relief to those parents who should produce before the magistrates the children whom their own poverty would not allow them to educate."

The voice, then, of this third seal hieroglyphic, was not the voice of famine, but of an intolerable assessment for state purposes of the abundance already in store, and to be hereafter produced. The era succeeding the seal-period in which they were slaying one another under the generalship of the great machaira, was one of abundance of wheat, barley, oil, and wine. This appears from the testimony of Dion who lived in those times. He says that Septimus Severus celebrated the secular games with extraordinary magnificence, and at his decease, left in the public granaries a provision of grain *for seven years*, at the rate of 75,000 modii, or pecks, or about 10,000 bushels a day. This was a part

of the policy of S. Severus by a constant and liberal distribution of grain and provisions, to captivate the affections of the Roman people. But the policy of his son and successor, the fierce Caracalla, was "to secure the affections of the army, and to esteem the rest of his subjects as of little moment." The liberality and indulgence to the troops was tempered by the father with firmness, authority, and prudence; but the careless profusion of Caracalla's reign, the inaugural period of the sign-voice of the third seal, was, as Gibbon says, "the inevitable ruin both of the army and of the empire. The excessive increase of their pay and donatives, exhausted the state to enrich the military order, whose modesty in peace, and service in war, are best secured by an honorable poverty."

I take it, then, that the sign-voice may be expressed thus: "Let a choinix of wheat *be assessed* a denarius; and three choinixes of barley *rated at the same*; but the oil and the wine thou mayest not act so unjustly by." The signification of this, and the causes operating so grinding and blackening a despotism, will appear in the Lamb's opening of the seal hereafter to be expounded in the following.

6. Fulfilment of the Prophecy

The declining health and last illness of S. Severus, inflamed the wild ambition, and black and blackening passions of Caracalla. He attempted, more than once, to shorten Severus' life, and with as little success, to excite a mutiny among the troops. Severus deliberated, and threatened, but was too fondly parental to punish his son and colleague in the throne; and this last, and only instance of mercy he was ever guilty of, was more fatal to the empire than a long series of cruelty. At length he expired at York in Britain, A.D. 211, leaving his two mutually detesting and impetuous sons, Caracalla and Geta, the imperial chiefs of the Roman world.

Proclaimed by the army and cheerfully acknowledged by the Senate, the people, and the provinces, the two brothers commenced their reign, with equal and independent power. But they were implacable foes, who neither desired nor could trust a reconciliation. It was visible that only one could reign, and that the other must fall; and each of them judging of his rival's designs by his own, guarded his life with the most jealous vigilance from the repeated attacks of poison or the sword. They met only in public; and each surrounded by a numerous train of armed followers. Even on these occasions of ceremony, the dissimulation of courts could ill disguise the rancour of their hearts.

This latent civil war already distracted the whole government. To remedy this, it was proposed to divide the empire between them. But

this scheme was defeated by the influence of their mother; and Caracalla got rid of Geta by an easier, though more sanguinary process. He artfully listened to his mother's entreaties and consented to meet his brother Geta in her apartment, on terms of peace and reconciliation. In the midst of their conversation, some centurions, who had contrived to secret themselves, rushed with drawn swords upon him, and laid him lifeless at his mother's feet. The deed accomplished, Caracalla, rushed with horror on his countenance, to the praetorian camp, where he reported in broken and disordered words, his fortunate escape from attempted assassination. Geta had been the favorite of the soldiers, but complaint was useless, revenge dangerous, and they had still a reverence for the house of their "great machaira," Severus. Their discontent died away in idle murmurs, and Caracalla soon convinced them of the justice of his cause, *by distributing to them in one lavish donation the accumulated treasures of his father's reign.* The real sentiments of the soldiers alone were of importance to his power or safety. Their declaration in his favor commanded the dutiful *professions* of the Senate, which obsequiously ratified as usual the success of villany the most lawless and abandoned.

The anguish of remorse henceforth seized upon the haunted imagination of Caracalla, which prompted him to remove from the world whatever could remind him of the fratricide, or recall the memory of Geta. Seeing the empress Julia, his mother, in a company of matrons, weeping over his untimely fate, he threatened them with instant death; the sentence was executed against Fadilla, the last remaining daughter of Marcus Antoninus, the imperial stoick, and sanguinary persecutor of the christians, under the first seal. It was computed, that *under the vague appellation of the friends of Geta, above twenty thousand persons of both sexes suffered death.* His guards and freedmen, the ministers of his serious business, and the companions of his looser hours, those who by his interest had been promoted to any commands in the army or provinces, with the long connected chain of their dependants, were included in the proscription; which endeavored to reach every one who had maintained the smallest correspondence with Geta, who lamented his death, or who even mentioned his name. The particular causes of calumny and suspicion were at length exhausted; and when a senator was accused of being a secret enemy of the government, Caracalla was satisfied with the general proof that he was a man of probity and virtue. From this well-grounded principle he frequently drew the most sanguinary inferences.

Such was the opening of the third seal, A.D. 212. Through the mad ferocity of one of the basest of mankind, retribution fell upon the

heads of a people, who in their public pastimes clamored for inoffensive and non-resisting professors of the christian faith, to be brought out of prison to fight with savage beasts in the amphitheatres for their amusement. It is a remarkable fact, and deserves to be noted, that while this monster of wickedness was filling the families of pagans with lamentation, mourning and woe, christians found in him friendship and protection. His father Severus, we have seen, was a cruel persecutor; but in this son of iniquity, arose an avenger, who rendered the heathen public *BLACK with mourning and distress*. The education of Caracalla is said to account for his favor towards them. He had known Proculus his father's physician, who was a christian, if not a christadelphian, and maintained in the palace to his death; and he had himself been nursed by a professed christian woman. This gave him an early predilection in favor of the christians, insomuch that when he was seven years old, observing one of his playfellows to be beaten because he followed the christian religion, he could not for some time after behold with patience either his own father, or the father of the boy.

The tyranny of Tiberius, Nero, and Domitian, who resided almost constantly at Rome, or in the adjacent villas, fell principally upon the senatorial and equestrian orders. But Caracalla was the common enemy of his heathen subjects. He left the capital, and never returned to it, A.D. 213. The rest of his reign was spent in the several provinces of the empire, particularly those of the East, and every province was by turns made *black by rapine and cruelty*. The senators, compelled by fear to attend his capricious motions, were obliged to provide daily entertainments at an immense expense, which he abandoned with contempt to his guards; and to erect in every city, magnificent palaces and theatres, which he either disdained to visit, or ordered to be immediately thrown down. The most wealthy families were ruined by partial fines and confiscations and *the great body of his subjects oppressed by ingenious and aggravated taxes*. In the midst of peace, and upon the slightest provocation, he issued his commands at Alexandria in Egypt, the seat of paganized christianity, and where in his father's reign so much blood of professing christians had been shed, for *a general massacre*. From a secure post in the temple of Serapis, he viewed and directed the slaughter of many thousands of citizens, as well as strangers, without distinguishing either the number or the crime of the sufferers; since, as he coolly informed the Senate, *all the Alexandrians, those who had perished, and those who had escaped, were alike guilty — guilty of slaying the disciples of the Lamb; and therefore in opening the third seal, the Lamb retributively gave them blood to drink; and made the survivors, black with lamentation and*

distress; so fearful a thing is it to tamper with the truth, and to persecute its friends. Sooner or later, terrible vengeance overtakes the guilty, even by the wicked, who are the Deity's sword-bearers against all such evil-doers.

As long as the vices of Caracalla were beneficial to the armies, he was secure from the danger of rebellion. A secret conspiracy, however, provoked by his own jealousy, caused his assassination, and the election of the chief conspirator as his successor. The grateful soldiers forgot his vices, remembered only his liberality to them, and obliged the Senate to stultify itself and their superstition, by decreeing him a place among the gods. While living, Alexander the great was the only hero which this "god" deemed worthy of his admiration; but in no one action of his life did Caracalla express the faintest resemblance to him, except in the murder of a great number of his own and of his father's friends.

His extraordinary gifts to the army amounted annually to about two millions three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, or about 11,750,000 dollars. The prodigality of Caracalla left behind it a long train of ruin and disorder. But the policy of the house of Severus was to increase the dangerous power of the army, and to obliterate the faint image of laws and liberty that was still impressed on the public mind. In pursuing this policy, Severus and his son undermined the foundations of the empire, and hastened its decline. An important edict of Antoninus Caracalla, which communicated to all the inhabitants of the empire the name and privilege of Roman citizens, greatly contributed to this. *This edict made the limits of the city Rome, and the limits of the empire, the same.* His unbounded liberality, however, flowed not from the sentiments of a generous mind; it was the sordid result of avarice. Inattention, or rather, averse to the welfare of his subjects, he found himself under the necessity of gratifying the insatiate avarice which he had excited in the army. The favour of citizenship was lost in the prodigality of Caracalla, and the reluctant provincials were compelled to assume the vain title, and the real obligations of Roman citizens. *Nor was the rapacious Caracalla contented with such a measure of taxation, as had appeared sufficient to his predecessors.* Instead of a twentieth, he exacted a tenth, a *denariad* of all legacies and inheritances; and during his reign he crushed alike every part of the empire under the weight of his iron sceptre. The new citizenship brought with it only an increase of burdens. The old as well as *the new taxes* were, at the same time, levied in the provinces. This was an intolerable grievance, which found only a temporary remission in the reign of Alexander Severus, who *reduced the tributes to a thirtieth part of the*

sum exacted at the time of his accession. "In the course of this history," says Gibbon, from whose work I have condensed as before, "we shall be too often summoned to explain the land-tax, the capitation, *and the heavy contributions of grain, wine, oil, and meat, which were exacted from the provinces for the use of the court, the army, and the capital.*" Caracalla supplied the necessities of these insatiable consumers without any regard to the blackening effect produced upon the unhappy civilians, from whom the supplies were so oppressively obtained.

Caracalla was assassinated A.D. 217, after a reign of six years; and was succeeded by Macrinus, at whose instigation he was stabbed by a desperado, to whom he had refused the rank of centurion.

The reader will, perhaps, now be able to "see" the historical significance of the hieroglyphical "opening" and "voice" of this seal-period; and how, by the sanguinary and fiscal oppression of the rulers, the *horse-people whom they rode, were made black with anguish and despair.* The mad career of Caracalla, however, was only the opening sorrows of this third seal. He had sown tares which bore much evil fruit in the reigns of his successors. Macrinus, who had procured his assassination, was proclaimed by the praetorian guards, whom he had bribed by promises of unbounded liberality of indulgence, the head of the empire. Macrinus had now reached a height where it was difficult to stand with firmness, and impossible to fall without instant destruction. The mercenary and fickle loyalty of the soldiery, to whom, from his reforming tendencies, he soon became detestible, was his only support. But the necessity of financial reform was inevitable. The expenses of the government had to be reduced; and he might have succeeded if the numerous army assembled in the East by Caracalla, and which had made him emperor, had been immediately dispersed through the provinces. But they remained concentrated in the luxurious idleness of their quarters; where, from various causes, they soon became ripe for another revolution, by which they might recruit their exhausted treasure. To minds thus disposed, the occasion soon presented itself.

A new candidate for the honor and danger of the imperial *balance-holder* appeared in a pretended son of Caracalla, the high priest of the sun, at Emesa, in Syria. The soldiers accustomed to attend his ministrations, professed to recognize in his the features of Caracalla, whose memory they now adored. His emissaries distributed large sums among them with a lavish hand, which silenced every objection, and they declared the young pontiff the successor of Caracalla, by hereditary right, and their own good pleasure. Macrinus remained inactive at Antioch. At length he went forth to encounter the forces of the young

pretender. But, he was defeated and fled, and a few days after slain by his own guards.

Having been elected by the military, A.D. 218, Elagabalus, the high priest of the sun and the first Asiatic emperor of the Romans, without consulting the Senate, beside the *machaira*, assumed *the balance* in assuming the tribunitian and proconsular powers of the State. It was the prerogative of the Senate to confer these by its decree — by “a voice in the midst of the four living ones” — upon the imperial sword-bearers; a right which had hitherto been respected by the turbulent praetorians and the imperial puppets it was their pleasure to set up. “This new and injudicious violation of the constitution,” says Gibbon, “was probably dictated either by the ignorance of his Syrian courtiers or the fierce disdain of his military followers.”

The timid prudence of the obsequious Senate having acquiesced in what it could not remedy, Elagabalus was duly recognized both as bearer of the balance and the sword; and the most potent, grave and reverend senators confessed with a sigh that, after having long experienced the stern tyranny of their own countrymen, Rome was at length humbled beneath the effeminate luxury of oriental despotism.

The installation of the Sun in Rome as chief over all the religions of the earth, was the great object of the zeal and vanity of Elagabalus. The Sun's marriage with the Moon, and the display of superstitious gratitude to him for his elevation to the throne, were the only serious business of his reign. He called himself Elagabalus (though his real name was Bassianus) after the name of his god, an appellation dearer to him than all the titles of imperial greatness. He was an irrational voluptuary who abandoned himself to the grossest gratification of sense with ungoverned fury, and soon found disgust and satiety in the midst of his enjoyments. Whilst he *lavished away the treasures of his people in the wildest extravagance*, his own voice and that of his flatterers applauded a spirit and magnificence unknown to the tameness of his predecessors. To sport with the passions and prejudices of his subjects, and to subvert every law of nature and decency, were in the number of his most delicious amusements. No more beastly a sensualist could have been found in Sodom than this high priest of the Sun. The public scenes displayed before the Roman people attest that the inexpressible infamy of his vices and follies surpassed that of any other age or country. The corrupt and opulent nobles of Rome gratified every vice that could be collected from the mighty conflux of nations and manners. Secure of impunity, careless of censure, they lived without restraint in the patient and humble society of their slaves and parasites. Elagabalus, in his turn, viewing every rank of his

subjects with the same contemptuous indifference, asserted without control his sovereign privilege of lust and luxury.

But the licentious soldiers who had raised this dissolute pretender to the throne of the balance and the sword, blushed at their ignominious choice, and turned with disgust from the monster to contemplate with pleasure the opening virtues of his cousin, Alexander Severus, whom he had been induced to invest with the title of Caesar, that his own divine occupations might be no longer interrupted by the care of the earth. In the second rank, that amiable prince soon acquired the affections of the public, but not without arousing the tyrant's jealousy, who determined, but without success, to take away the life of his rival. Failing in this, he degraded him from the rank and honors of Caesar. This sentence was received in the Senate with silence, and in the camp of the praetorians with fury. These swore to protect Alexander, and to revenge the dishonored majesty of the throne. Elagabalus trembled, and begged for his life with tears; his prayer was granted, but the folly of the emperor brought on a new crisis, which was instantly fatal to his minions, his mother, and himself. Elagabalus was massacred by the infuriated praetorians, his mutilated corpse dragged through the streets of Rome and thrown into the Tiber. His memory was branded with eternal infamy by a decree of the Senate in the year of his death, A.D. 222, after a reign of three years, nine months, and four days.

With two such tribunes and proconsuls of the Roman Senate, or *Balance-Holders*, as Caracalla and Elagabalus, what but oppression and injustice could result? The *choenix of wheat* and the *choinices of barley* must have been heavily taxed to provide the means of perpetuating for ten years such wild and reckless extravagance as history attributes to their administration. Better to grow no wheat or barley, than, having produced it, to be subject to the visits of the rapacious farmers of the revenue of such monsters. As we have remarked already, they did abandon the labors of the field, and left thousands of fertile acres waste and desert, by which, as one among other causes, preparation was made for the intense famine of the fourth seal. Could any people be *white* — happy and prosperous — under such riders? Could they be anything else than *black* — overshadowed by the blackness of darkness that might be felt in all parts of the body politic.

But, for the sake of the four living ones (and concerning them whom they represent, Paul says, "All things are for their sakes" (2 Cor. 4:15) the Lamb, who presided over these seal-judgments, had provided temporary relief in the preparation of a balance-holder, who would "not act unjustly by the oil and the wine" — in other words,

whose rigid economy in every branch of the administration would seek to neutralize the injustice under which they had previously groaned. Alexander Severus, aged seventeen, and his mother, Mammaea, were the persons under whom this happy transformation of public affairs was brought about. On the death of Elagabalus, Alexander was raised to the throne by the praetorian guards. His amiable qualities and his danger had already endeared him to the people, and the eager liberality of the Senate decreed to him in one day — *the voice in the midst of the four living ones* — the various titles and powers of the imperial dignity, all summarily symbolized by the *Balance* and the *Sword* or *Dagger of the State*.

The regency of Mammaea was equally for the benefit of her son and the empire. With the approbation of the Senate, she chose sixteen of the wisest and best disposed senators as a perpetual council of State, before whom every public business of moment was debated and determined. The celebrated Ulpian was at their head, and the prudent firmness of this aristocracy restored order and authority to the government. Learning and *the love of justice became the only recommendation for civil offices*; valor and the love of discipline the only qualifications for military employments.

The uniform tenor of the emperor's life left not a moment for vice or folly. Since the accession of Commodus, the Roman world had experienced, during a period of forty years, the successive and various vices of four tyrants. From the death of Elagabalus, it enjoyed an auspicious calm of thirteen years. The provinces, *relieved from the oppressive taxes invented* by Caracalla and his pretended son, flourished in peace and prosperity, under the administration of magistrates who were convinced by experience that to deserve the love of the subjects was their best and only method of obtaining the favor of their sovereign. The *price of provisions* and the interest on money were reduced by the care of Alexander, whose prudent liberality, *without distressing the industrious*, supplied the wants and amusements of the populace. The dignity, the freedom, the authority of the Senate were restored, and every well-intentioned senator might approach the person of the emperor without a fear and without a blush.

In the civil or *balance-holding* administration of Alexander Severus, wisdom was enforced by power, and the people, *sensible of the public felicity*, repaid their benefactor with their love and gratitude. There still remained a greater, or more necessary, but a more difficult enterprise — the reformation of the military order, whose interest and temper, confirmed by long impunity, rendered them impatient of the restraints of discipline and careless of the blessings of public tranquil-

lity. By the most gentle arts he labored to inspire the fierce multitude with a sense of duty; but his prudence was vain, his courage fatal, and the attempt toward a reformation served only to inflame the ills it was meant to cure.

The administration of Alexander Severus was an unavailing struggle to "act justly by the oil and the wine." Mutinies of the troops perpetually broke out; his officers were murdered, his authority insulted, and his life at last sacrificed to the fierce discontent of the army. Every cause prepared, and every circumstance hastened a revolution which distracted the Roman empire with a long series of intestine calamities.

Alexander was one of the most moral heathens of the ancient world. His mother, Mammaea, who was cruelly jealous and avaricious, is called by Eusebius, a bishop of the Laodicean Apostasy, "a most godly and religious woman." There are many such in our day — Gentiles, who are "godly and religious" people, but as ignorant of the first principles of the truth as Mammaea and her son. While residing at Antioch, they invited that celebrated son of Jezebel, Origen, to visit them. They could have sent for one whose christianity would have been less offensive to imperial liberalism. Origen's christianity and theirs were not very remote, save that Origen did not bow down to imaginary deities. Alexander admitted into his own chapel all the deities of his wide empire. Jesus Christ, Abraham, Orpheus, Apollonius of Tyana, &c., were placed among them. It is almost certain that his mother had biased him in favor of philosophical christianity in which she believed. He had a desire to erect a temple to Christ, and to receive him regularly among the gods! The excellent qualities of this amiable and just ruler were, doubtless, attributable to the divine principles he so imperfectly understood. These caused him to treat professors of christianity with favorable regard. As an instance of this, it is related that the right of possessing a certain piece of ground was claimed by a tavern-keeper. It had been without owner or possessor for a long time, and the christians had occupied it as a place of worship. "It is fitter," said Alexander, "that God should be served there, in any manner whatever, rather than it should be used for a tavern." He frequently said, "Do as you would be done by." He obliged a crier to repeat it when he punished any one, and was so fond of it that he caused it to be written in his palace and in the public buildings. When he was going to appoint *balance-holders* of provinces, he proposed their names in public, giving the people notice that if they had any crime to accuse them of they should come forward and make it known. "It would be a shame," said he, "not to do that with respect to

governors, who are intrusted with men's properties and lives, which is done by Jews and christians when they publish the names of those they mean to ordain priests." His great desire was, not only that he himself should not, but also that the representative officials of the Roman majesty in all parts of the empire, should "not act unjustly by the oil and the wine."

There was no persecution of the christadelphians, nor of philosophical christians, under the Balance-Holders of this seal — to wit, Caracalla, Macrinus, Elagabalus, and Alexander Severus. The calamities they experienced befell them in common with the general public. Though primitive christianity was losing ground, the Archer with his bow was still "conquering" the popular superstition. An Alexander Severus, on the throne of the world, was evidence that philosophical christianity, the metaphysics of the Alexandrian School of "Divinity," was supplanting the grosser superstition of the heathen. Though christianity in the purity of its faith and practice, was succumbing to the rising and now rapidly maturing apostasy, there were very many christadelphians or Brethren of Christ, who still contended earnestly for the faith, as "the living ones" of the third Cherub of the seal. These were the salt which preserved the whole professing community from putrefaction. Little, however, is known about them, seeing that the writers of their times were the philosophicals of the Satanic synagogue, of which, by way of derision, the pagans named Alexander the chief.

SECTION 4 THE SARDIAN STATE

Vol. 1., pp. 428,443

Spiritual death overshadowing the ecclesias from long peace and the philosophical "divinity" which had, to a great degree, superseded the gospel. The things that remain not yet dead, "ready to die." The Thyatiran, or Jezebel-and-Satan, ethics, the seed which ripens into the Sardian — Apoc. 3:1.

ACT IV. — SEAL-PERIOD FOURTH

Apoc. 6:7,8

War, famine, pestilence, and barbarian invasion combined, sickly over the Roman Horse with the pale cast of death and corruption.

A.D. 235

"And when he opened the Fourth Seal I heard the voice of the Fourth Living One, saying, 'Come and see!' 8. And I saw, and

behold a pale horse, and he who sits upon him, the name for him is Death; and Hades follows with him: and there was given to them authority to kill upon the fourth of the earth with sword, and with famine, and with pestilence, and under the beasts of the earth."

The fourth living one full of eyes is likened in countenance to a flying eagle. The people represented by this were still "a habitation of the Deity through the Spirit," and witnesses of the judgments to be revealed in this fourth seal. The Spirit of this divinely inhabited community did not invite John to "come and see" till the Lamb had opened the seal; and this series of events did not occur till A.D. 235, when the auspicious calm that had pervaded the Roman world for thirteen years came to an abrupt and sanguinary termination by the assassination of Alexander Severus, and the massacre of his most faithful friends, by the fury of the soldiers.

When the opening was complete, John saw *hippos chloros*, a pale horse. The word rendered *pale* indicates *green* as the basis of the *pallor*. *Pallida mors* was proverbial among the Latins. Hippocrates enumerates the color of the facial skin fading into green and black among the symptoms of approaching death. Nothing could be more appropriate than the color which accompanies putrefaction as representative of the Italian body politic at this crisis of its "dreadful and terrible" history. It had suffered severely under the second and third seals; but what were these in comparison of the deathstrokes by sword, famine, pestilence, and beasts, speedily and of long continuance, to fall upon the Pagan Horse! A deadly paleness and livor would come over it — a hue emblematic of approaching dissolution, as most expressively represented by the *chloros* of the fourth seal.

1. The Rider "Death"

John says that the name of the representative personage he saw sitting above, over, or upon, *epano*, the pale horse, was "Death." The form of words in which he tells us this is according to the form of the previous seals. "The *rider* was not, as before," says Elliot, "the representative of *human functionaries* and *rulers*, whose distinctive emblems, though well understood at the time, might now require investigation to unfold them. It is a symbol of meaning as obvious to the reader now as it could have been then to the seer; for who it meant is expressly told us. It was the personification of Death! To mark that it was the actual King of Terrors — and not as otherwise it might possibly

have been construed, the destroyer merely of political existence — his badge, so to express it, is said to have been *Hades* following him, the recipient, with his opening jaws of the victims slain by Death.” But Mr. Elliott has not attempted to show why death should be personified in the fourth and not in the second seal, where the horse is fiery red, and they are engaged in slaying one another. The truth is the very reverse of Mr. Elliott’s supposition; for the rider, as before, represented, not death in the abstract, but human functionaries and men of power, so victimizing and victimized by assassination and war as to become, as it were, *the sons of death*, and, therefore, as a class, fitly represented by *the symbolical name*, “Death.” John does not say that the sinner upon the pale horse was death, but that the name bestowed upon him was death — “the name for him is Death.” Neither did the rider, Death, indicate “the destroyer of mere political existence;” for the agents, as a class, and the state, still survived the fourth seal. No interpretation of a fulfilled prophecy not in harmony with authentic history can be correct; therefore, this last idea of mere political destruction must be rejected. History will show that my interpretation is the only true one, namely, that the name “Death” was bestowed upon the class of agents riding, sitting upon, or affecting the dying horse or heathen people and empire, because *few of them died a natural death*. In the first fifty years of the period of this seal, there were thirty-nine claiming to be emperors, and *all of them died by violence*. One of them fell by pestilence, and the form of the death of another is uncertain; but, with these two exceptions, nearly all died by assassination, and two or three by the sword in battle. Let such a class of rulers, then, predetermined to death as sure as they obtained the imperial office, be symbolized in a hieroglyphic, by what could they be so fitly represented as by a man with the name of “Death?” This name was his *badge*; so that any ruler represented by this *class-man* entered on the imperial office under the sentence of death, as prefigured by “the name” of this seal.

2. Ho Hades

John says, that he saw *ho Hades*, following with Death. This word *hades*, or *hades*, is usually derived from a privative, and *idein*, *to see*; others regard it as “most clearly derived from *aeides*, “invisible.” It therefore means *that which is concealed from present vision*. This is the most common acceptance of the word — *the unseen*, whether as to place or state.

The expression *oikos Hadou*, corresponds both in form and sense, to the Hebrew *baith olam*, Ecc. 12:5, “man goeth to the *House of Olam*,” house of the unseen, instead of *long home*, as in the English

Version; that is, *the grave*. When men are therein deposited they are *invisible*; hence the grave becomes their house, *oikos*, in which they are *unseen*. They are then in *hades*. Xenophon in his life of Agesilaus, says: "And thus this man spent his life in the service of his country, and having at length died *he was carried down into the invisible dwelling*" — *eis ten aidion oikesin kategageto*. So also Diodorus Siculus, in his account of the Egyptians, says: "They call the habitations of the living, inns, because we dwell in them for a short time; but the abodes of the departed they style *hidden houses*, because in the unseen they remain the unknown cycle" — *aidious oikous prosagoreuousin, hos en Haidou diatelouyton ton apeiron aiona* — lib. 1.51. The word *Haidos*, in relation to world, time, place, can only signify boundless, eternal, everlasting, in the sense of heathen boundless inexperience and ignorance of invisible things. The phrase *eis Haidou*, is elliptical for *eis oikon hadou, into the house of the unseen*, or the grave; and is supposed to have been derived from the *baith Olam* of the Hebrews.

The *pulai hadou, the Gates of Hades*, or the gates of the unseen, is used in Matt. 16:18. To say as there, that they should not prevail against Christ's ecclesia, was to predict the resurrection of his saints; and that they should no more be shut in from the outside world by grave or sepulchre. The dead are truly themselves the unseen, as well as in the unseen. Open the graves of the generation of this seal, as an instance; lay them all into one vast unpartitioned area; let us descend and enter there, and view the mighty hollow, and *ask*, where are all the dead? They are all *invisible*. The grave, which is the mouth, or gate, of this vast subterranean hall, has eaten them up, and consumed their form. Ask for them; but you ask in vain; they are all there, but you *cannot see them*; therefore they are *in Hades*, or in *Sheol*.

"Our Saxon word *Hell*," says Lord King, "in its original signification, exactly answers to the Greek word *Hades*, and denotes a *concealed* or *unseen place*; and this sense of the word is still retained in the eastern, and especially in the western counties of England; to *helle* over a thing is to *cover* it." The modern, or Laodicean use of *hell* is not the scriptural use of *hades* or *sheol*; but the old mythology of the heathen — the fabulous theory according to which they fitted up and furnished, the vast subterranean we have supposed, with flames, sulphur, brazen-throated dogs, furies, and such like. Plato, speaking of all this mythological apparatus and the legends appended to it, says, "Which, under the name of *Hades* and similar titles, men (that is, pagans) greatly fear, and dream about living and *dissolved of bodies*." This last expression is explained by what he says elsewhere: "For be well assured, O Socrates, that when any one *is near that time in which*

he thinks he is going to die, there enter into him fear and anxiety. For then the old stories about Hades, how that the man who has here been guilty of wrong must there suffer punishments, torture his soul. Wherefore he who in the retrospect of his life, finds many crimes, like frightened children starting from their sleep, is terrified, and lives in evil forebodings." Thus, as Paul says, "through fear of death they were all their lifetime subject to bondage" — afraid, like the heathen of the Laodicean Apostasy, of what awaits them in the unseen. Hence, when they approach dissolution of body, terror seizes them, and they send for the priest of Plato, or some minor god, in ancient and modern times, to calm their panic by the pseudo-consolations of their respective delusions.

Such, then, is Hades abstract from this fourth seal; not "a place of departed spirits;" not a place divided into two grand compartments or chambers; in one of which the spirits of "virtuous heathen," ancient and modern, of "all names and denominations of professors" and christians, are provisionally cribbed, cabined, and confined, in a sort of dreamy blissfulness, awaiting their reunion, at some indefinite epoch, with their old grave-eaten mortalities, as a condition upon which they shall enter upon eternal fulness of felicity and joy, beyond the bounds of Hades, yea, "beyond the bounds of time and space," if any one can tell where that is! Not a place, in the other compartment of which, "the spirits of the damned" are in view of the dreamy blessed, heightening their felicity, with their torment-developed wailings and gnashing of teeth. It is no such pagan, papal, protestant, and sectarian "hell," "purgatory," "heaven," or "intermediate state," as this; but simply, the receptacle into which is carried down *all* the remains of a man when he is dead, with this single exception — *his character*. Before he is born he is in a sort of *Hades*, the womb of his mother; and when he is dead, he is deposited in the womb of his mother earth, a larger excavated *Hades*, in which, if one of "the faithful in Christ Jesus called saints," he sleeps death's sleep until awaked by the Spirit's power, when "in the beauties of holiness, *from the womb* of the morning, he has the dew of his birth," — Psa. 110:3. This is Hades abstract from the seal — Hades in the abstract.

In Isaiah 5:14, the Spirit speaks of *Hades*, by the name of *Sheol*, and as a female with a mouth that is insatiable — *Sheol* is never satisfied (Prov. 30:15,16). "My people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge; and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst; therefore *Sheol*, or *Hades*, hath enlarged herself, and *opened her mouth without measure*: and their glory and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall

descend into it.” Though metaphorical, this is very intelligible. It predicted *great destruction* of all ranks and classes in Israel; and consequently, a great shovelling of them into the never filled receptacle of the dead. This insatiable nature of *Sheol*, or Hades, is the reason of her being styled “cruel.” Thus, “love is strong as Death; jealousy, *cruel as Sheol*” — Cant. 8:6.

Again, in the Spirit’s prophetic address to Belshazzar, as the Lucifer of the Babylonish Heavens, he says, “Sheol or Hades, from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; *it stirreth up* the dead for thee. . . . who say, Art thou become *weak* as we? Thy pomp is brought down to Hades . . . the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee! Thou art cut down *to the ground*; thou art brought down to Sheol or Hades, to the sides of the pit. All the kings of the nations lie every one in his own house, but thou art cast out (violently excluded) from thy *kever*, sepulchre . . . as a carcase trodden under feet; thou shalt not be joined with them in burial” — Isa. 14:9-20. Here, this cruel subterranean unseen is personified. She has the dead in custody, all their individual graves and sepulchres being the houses or cells of her vast prison. She is metaphorically supposed to arouse all her prisoners to meet a great destroyer when he is about to be brought by bearers into his sepulchre; and to taunt him with his iniquity perpetrated above ground. She is that vast prison; and all whom she has swallowed, she devours with the worms spread under and over, “which cover,” the weak and helpless, and unconscious, unseen sleepers in their cells.

This *Hades* is a great and voracious destroyer, the cruel ally of Death. They are companions in nature, as they are made symbolical associates in the fourth seal. It is, however, comforting to know, that, though Death and Hades went forth on such “a dreadful and terrible” mission of destruction by sword, famine, pestilence, and beasts of the earth, in this fourth seal-period of apocalyptic development, yet both of them shall be destroyed when the purpose of the Deity shall have been fully apocalypted. “O Death,” saith the Spirit, “I will be thy plagues; O Sheol or Hades, I will be thy destruction” — Hos. 13:14. And the earnest of this we have in the manifestation of the Deity in our nature, as Jesus Christ; “who has prevailed,” as the Seven-Horned and Seven-Eyed Lamb, “to unroll the scroll, and to unloose the seven seals thereof;” and hath abolished death through death, and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel of the kingdom — Heb. 2:14; 2 Tim. 1:10. Still, we see Death reigning, and Hades following with him, on every side. True; but the Spirit tells us by Paul, that Death is the last enemy, and shall be destroyed; and apocalyptically by John,

that "there shall be no more death," and "no more curse" — ch. 21:4; 22:3. "Death, is," then, "swallowed up in victory," which victory is obtained through Jesus Christ. Temporarily, victory is on the side of Death and his companion Hades; but when he and she have come to "the End," their power and victory over the faithful will prove to have been without permanent results. Then, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where thy victory?" Both abolished with the abolition of every curse for sin will be served no more on earth; and therefore, "the wages of sin," which "is death" will no more be earned and paid; so that Hades having no more victims for her devouring maw, is herself destroyed — she dies for the want of sustenance.

What a glorious and blissful consummation is this of human affairs. Instead of generation after generation of our unhappy race, rushing like a torrent into the deep caverns of the unseen never more to see the light of day; instead of sword, famine, pestilence, and all the mishaps of fire, flood and field, sweeping them for seven thousand years into a subterranean prison-house, within whose gates they are barred up for ever; instead of this, the time will have arrived for every individual dweller upon the earth to be, what Jesus Christ is now — incorruptible, deathless, glorious, and powerful; Deity manifested in glorified nature — *ho Theos ta panta en pasin, the Deity the all things in all men.*

But from the contemplation of this brilliant and eternal future, we must return to the consideration of the fearful and gloomy past, when DEATH sat, as it were, the grim and livid occupant of the imperial throne: and HADES reigned with him, the cruel and voracious goddess of his dominion.

As the rider on the pale horse symbolized a class of ruling agents sold to the work of death, and in the midst of it to a violent death for themselves; so "Hades following with him," is representative of another class of destroying agencies which cooperate in the destruction of the horse-people, so as to bring their body politic to the verge of dissolution, as indicated by the color of the hieroglyphic.

3. "The Fourth of the Earth"

When John beheld these two symbolical powers, Death and Hades, he saw that "*exousia, authority* was given to them to kill upon *the fourth of the earth*, with sword, and with famine, and with pestilence, and under the beasts of the earth." The phrase, "the fourth of the earth," implies *other three fourths*. Did such a division of the empire obtain, as seems to be indicated here? There can, I think, be little doubt of such a division. The whole empire was one Roman

Sovereignty or Majesty, but, at a certain epoch of its history, for convenience of administration, there was a practical distribution of the imperial territory into *Four Proefectures*. Gibbon says: "According to the plan of government instituted by Diocletian (A.D. 292), the four princes had each their praetorian praefect; and after the monarchy was once more united in the person of Constantine, he still continued to create the same number of *four proefects*, and trusted to their care the same provinces which they already administered.

1. *The Proefect of the East* stretched his ample jurisdiction into the three parts of the globe which were subject to the Romans, from the cataracts of the Nile to the banks of the Phasis, and from the mountains of Thrace to the frontiers of Persia.

2. The important provinces of Pannonia, Dacia, Macedonia, and Greece, acknowledged the authority of the *Proefect of Illyricum*.

3. The power of the *Proefect of Italy* was not confined to the country whence he derived his title; it extended over the additional territory of Rhaetia as far as the banks of the Danube, over the dependent islands of the Mediterranean, and over that part of the continent of Africa which lies between the confines of Cyrene and those of Tingitania.

4. *The Proefect of the Gauls* comprehended under that plural denomination the kindred provinces of Britain and Spain, and his authority was obeyed "from the wall of Antoninus to the foot of Mount Atlas."

But previous to Diocletian, and in course partly of the fourth seal-period, the empire was subjected to four sovereignties; *first*, Syria and the East under Odenathus and Zenobia; *second*, Illyricum under Aureolus; *third*, Gaul, Spain and Britain, under Posthumus and then Tetricus; and *fourth*, Rome and Italy under Gallienus. The last was constitutionally emperor of the whole; but usurpations which he could not suppress, left the reigning power in actual possession of only *the fourth division of the Roman earth*, for nearly ten years previous to the death of Gallienus, A.D. 268.

Now, certain writers who have attempted an interpretation of the fourth seal, have doubted the correctness of the reading in the text. Those who perceive the time of the seal to be that interval between the death of Alexander Severus and the death of Gallienus, find the words, "there was given to them authority to kill upon the fourth of the earth," a difficulty in the way of satisfactory exposition. "The devastations," say they, "extended over all the Roman earth; how then are the history and the text to be reconciled? And how is the text to be reconciled with itself? For not a fourth part of the horse, but the whole

horse was sickly pale." Not being able to solve this enigma, they have fallen back upon the suggestions that *to tetarton tes ges*, is a spurious reading; and that the true reading conjectured by Mede is, *to tetradion tes ges*, *the quaternion* (or all four parts) *of the earth*. They strengthen themselves in this conjecture by the reading of the passage in Jerome's Latin Version, who has it, *super quatuor partes terroe*, "over the four parts of the earth." In commenting upon this, Mr. Elliott says: "The genuineness of this, as Jerome's own version, and not any mistake of a later copyist, is indubitable; and since his faithfulness to the Greek text is as unquestioned as his critical judgment in choosing between various readings in it, it follows that he must have had before him some correspondent reading in a Greek manuscript, or manuscripts, of authority, though our extant Greek manuscripts do not exhibit it; and which he deliberately preferred, as of all the best. Admitted, this reading makes the prophecy at once consistent with itself."

What Mr. Elliott says of Jerome is no doubt correct. He saw Greek copies, one or more, with such a reading; yet there is now no such reading extant. This is Greek against Greek; what then shall we do? I know of only one course — make it harmonize with history as it stands in our Greek text; and if this cannot be done, then adopt Jerome's testimony, and reject it for his emendation. Can this be done? Let us "see."

The prophecy of the fourth seal does not import that the devastations of Death and Hades were to be confined or restricted to the fourth of the earth; on the contrary, as the history shows, they would be coextensive with "the earth." What then the speciality in the premises? Why this; that, whereas in the second and third seals, the judgments peculiar to them did not notably affect "the fourth of the earth," or praefecture of Italy, as defined by our quotation from Gibbon: inasmuch as, that the riders on the red and black horses, had not received authority specially to distress that region; but that, in this fourth seal, the time had come in the wise providence of the Deity, to bring judgment home to the very heart and soul of the Italian body politic. "Authority was," therefore, "given to Death and Hades, to kill upon the territory of the Italian Fourth with sword, with famine, with pestilence, and by beasts of the earth," as well as upon the other three praefectures. But, if the authority had not been given with reference to "the fourth of the earth," the praefecture of Italy would still have remained exempt from the combined operation of the four plagues. Thus, then, there is no need of any learned emendation of the text; for rightly understood, there is no real difference in Jerome's Greek copies and ours. The reading, however, as it stands in our version is

preferable to his. In ours we have the enigma, which has so puzzled the learned Laodiceans of "christendom," that they have given it up; but in Jerome's reading the enigma is lost, and the prophecy, consequently, deprived of much of its ingenuity and force. The Fourth Beast empire originated with the city of Romulus and its Italian territory as the brain and heart of the future dominion; in order then to affect the body politic with a *mortal languor*, as represented by the deadly pallor of the horse ridden by Death, it was necessary morbidly to affect the vital organs of the state located in the original "fourth of the earth," or Italian Praefecture; for so long as this retained its vigor dissolution would be deferred — men do not die till the brain and heart have been stricken fatally by disease. Hence, the reason of the authority given. Death and Hades might have continued their work indefinitely upon the praefectures of the East, Illyricum, and the Gauls, the other threefourths of the earth, and by so doing have invigorated the Italian Fourth, seeing that a cause of the weakness of the Roman Body was its extreme magnitude. But this was not the purpose of the Deity. His purpose was to take *political paganism* out of the way, that the Man of Sin-Power, which the Lamb and his followers are to have the honor of destroying, might be revealed. The time had come, therefore, after the death of Alexander Severus, to begin the work of exhausting the seat of the pagan power of its vitality, that it might be paralyzed in all its members, and be prepared for the consummating events of the sixth seal, in the development of which it should be dethroned, or "cast out of the heaven." The authority was therefore given to Death and Hades to extend their operations into the "fourth of the earth," and to kill there with all the agencies at work in the other three fourths of the dominion.

4. Fulfilment of the Prophecy

A. *Death and Hades kill with Sword*

The *Sword* in the hands of Death and his companion Hades, is not *machaira*, as the second seal, but *rhomphaia*. The former was a *small sword*, or dagger, borne by imperial magistrates; the latter was a different weapon — "*a large sword used by the Thracians*" — *orthas rhomphaias barusiderous, strait swords heavy with iron*. A very expressive symbol of what is now to be related of Death and Hades killing upon the fourth of the earth with the Thracian weapon, heavy in its fall upon all it destroyed.

About thirty-two years before the death of Alexander Severus, Septimus Severus, "the *great machaira*" of the second seal, was in *Thrace*, celebrating with military games the birthday of his younger

son, Geta. Among the spectators was a young barbarian, whose gigantic stature exceeded the measure of eight feet. He earnestly solicited permission to contend for the *stephan* of wrestling. As the pride of discipline would have been disgraced in the overthrow of a Roman soldier by a *Thracian* peasant, he was matched with the stoutest followers of the camp, sixteen of whom he successively laid on the ground. Next day, having attracted Severus' notice, he ran up to his horse, and followed him on foot, without apparent fatigue, in a long and rapid career. "*Thracian,*" said the astonished emperor, "art thou disposed to wrestle after thy race?" "Most willingly, sir," replied the youth; and almost in a breath, overthrew seven of the strongest soldiers in the army.

This youth, whose name was Maximin, having been received into the imperial body guard, became in the reign of Alexander Severus, tribune of the fourth legion, which distinguished him as its favorite hero, by the names of Ajax and Hercules. From tribune he was successively promoted to the first military command; and, but for the fierceness of his savage origin which he still retained, he might have become the husband of the emperor's sister.

But the favors bestowed served only to inflame the ambition of the Thracian, who deemed his fortune unequal to his merit so long as he was constrained to acknowledge a superior. Selfishly cunning, he perceived that his emperor had lost the affection of the army and how their discontent might be turned to his own exaltation. The troops listened with pleasure to his emissaries. It was time, they cried, to cast away that useless phantom of the civil power, and to elect a real soldier, who would assert the glory, and distribute among his companions the treasures of the empire. One day, as he entered the field of exercise, the Army of the Rhine saluted him as emperor, and consummated their rebellion by the murder of Alexander Severus.

Maximin, now become *the straight heavy Thracian weapon*, or rhomphaia, in the hand of Death and Hades, was cruel as Sheol. His cruelty is said to have been derived from fear of contempt. He was conscious that his mean Thracian origin, his savage appearance, and gross ignorance, formed a very unfavorable contrast with the amiable manners of his unfortunate predecessor. He remembered that he had often waited before the door of the haughty nobles of Rome, and had been denied admittance by the insolence of their slaves. But those who had spurned, and those who had protected the Thracian, were guilty of the same crime — the knowledge of his original obscurity. For this crime many were put to death.

To be distinguished by birth or merit was to become an object of

suspicion to his dark and sanguinary soul. Alarmed by the sound of treason, his cruelty was unbounded and unrelenting. Without a witness, without a trial, and without an opportunity of defence, Magnus, a consular senator, with four thousand of his supposed accomplices, were given over to Death and Hades. The *Italian fourth*, and the whole empire were infested with innumerable spies and informers. On the slightest accusation, the first of the Roman nobles, governors of provinces, and commanders of armies, were chained on the public carriages, and hurried away into his presence. Confiscation, exile, or simple death, were esteemed uncommon instances of his lenity. Some of the unfortunate sufferers he order to be sewed up in the hides of slaughtered animals, others to be beaten to death with clubs, and others again, to be exposed *to wild beasts*, for "under" these the reigning authority was commissioned "to kill." During the three years of his reign, he disdained to visit either Rome or Italy, but dragged his victims from that "fourth" by his secret police to his camp on the Rhine or Danube, the seat of his stern despotism which trampled upon every principle of human law and justice, and was supported by the avowed power of the sword.

As long as the cruelty of Maximin was confined to the illustrious senators, and bold adventurers, who in the court or army expose themselves to the caprice of circumstances, the body of the people viewed their sufferings with indifference, or perhaps with pleasure. But the tyrant's avarice, stimulated by the insatiate desires of the soldiers, at length attacked the public property. Every city of the empire was possessed of an independent revenue, destined to purchase wheat and barley for the multitude, and so forth. By a single act of authority he acted unjustly by the wheat and barley, like the predecessors of Alexander Severus, and confiscated the whole mass of wealth to the use of the imperial treasury. The temples were stripped of their most valuable offerings of gold and silver, and the statues of gods, heroes, and emperors, were melted down, and coined into money. This retributive indignation of Heaven upon paganism by the blind instrumentality of this Thracian sword, excited tumults and massacres, as in many places the people chose rather to descend into Hades in defence of their superstition, than to behold in the midst of peace their cities exposed to the rapine of cruelty and war. Throughout the Roman world a general cry of indignation was heard, imploring vengeance *on the common enemy of mankind*; or, in view of the hieroglyphic of the fourth seal, on "Death" who rode them, and in "Hades who followed with him;" for these are "the common enemy of mankind."

At length a province of "the fourth" praefecture "of the earth,"

was driven into rebellion against this Thracian minister of Death and Hades. The procurator of Africa was a servant worthy of such a master, who considered the fines and confiscations of the rich as one of the most fruitful branches of the imperial revenue. The despair of this class roused them to arm their slaves and peasants for their protection, and to destroy the rapacious treasurer. Having assassinated him, they seized on Thysdrus, and there erected in the name of the two Gordians, the standard of rebellion against the Thracian despot. The Senate ratified their election to the imperial office, and thereby involved Rome and Italy in the guilt of treason against him. His hatred against the Senate was declared implacable; the tamest submission had not appeased his fury, the most cautious innocence would not remove his suspicions; and even the care of their own safety urged them to share the fortune of an enterprise of which, if unsuccessful, they were sure to be the first victims. They, therefore, boldly prepared for the issue, and without delay proclaimed Maximin, and his adherents, enemies of their country; and offered liberal rewards to whosoever had the courage and good fortune to destroy them.

The result of the secret sitting of the Senate soon manifested itself in the assassination of the praetorian praefect by their quaestor and tribunes, who, on their return from the camp, ran through the streets with their bloody daggers in their hands, proclaiming to the people and the soldiers the news of the happy revolution! The statues of Maximin were thrown down; the authority of the two Gordians and the Senate was acknowledged by the capital; and the example of Rome was followed by the rest of Italy. Thus, the whole "fourth of the earth" was prepared for the invasion of Death and Hades, who were divinely authorized "to kill upon it with sword, famine, pestilence, and beasts of the earth."

Having assumed the reins of government, the Senate selected twenty of their number to conduct the war against Maximin. To these the defence of "the fourth of the earth" was entrusted. A number of other deputies were sent to the provincial governors of the three other praefectures, earnestly conjuring them to fly to the assistance of Rome and Italy, and reminding the nations of their ancient ties of friendship with the Roman senate and people. The reception of these deputies, and the zeal of Italy and the provinces in favor of the senate, sufficiently prove that the subjects of Maximin were reduced to that uncommon distress, in which the body of the people has more to fear from oppression than from resistance. The consciousness of that melancholy truth, inspires a degree of persevering fury, seldom to be found in those civil wars which are artificially supported for the benefit

of a few factious and designing leaders.

But, in a conflict with Maximin's Mauritanian governors, the Gordians, after a reign of thirty-six days, lost both life and throne. The news of this filled Rome with just but unexpected terror. Silent consternation also seized upon the senatorial assembly, till a descendant of Trajan aroused them from their fatal lethargy. He reminded them that Maximin was advancing towards Italy at the head of the military force of the empire; and that their only remaining alternative was to meet him bravely in the field, or tamely expect the tortures and ignominious death reserved for unsuccessful rebellion. He then proposed two successors to the Gordians, named Maximus and Balbinus; one to conduct the war against Maximin; the other to direct the civil government in Rome. This was readily acquiesced in; and to appease the clamours of a seditious multitude, a third Gordian, a boy of thirteen years, was invested with the ornaments and title of Caesar.

While these events were transpiring "upon the fourth of the earth," Maximin was agitated with the most furious passions. He received the news of the rebellion, and the Senate's decree against him, with the rage of a wild beast, which threatened the lives of all that ventured to approach him. Revenge was the only consolation left him, and this could only be obtained by arms. But delays are dangerous to all but omnipotence. It proved so to the redoubtable Thracian, who did not reach the frontiers of "the fourth of the earth" till the ensuing spring, A.D. 238. This delay gave the Senate's lieutenants time for preparation; so that when his army arrived at the foot of the Julian Alps, they were dismayed by the silence and desolation that reigned on the frontiers of Italy. The villages and open towns were abandoned, the cattle driven away, and provisions removed or destroyed, the bridges broken down, nor was anything left which could afford either shelter or subsistence to an invader. Aquileia received, and withstood, the first shock of the invasion. Its citizens were animated by the extreme danger, and their knowledge of the Thracian's unrelenting temper. Their fears for the result were unexpectedly quieted by the appearance of the heads of Maximin, his son, his praefect, and principal ministers of his tyranny, paraded on spears before the walls. They threw open the gates of the city, and the whole army fraternizing with the citizens, gave in their adhesion to the Senate and people of Rome, having obeyed its decree in assassinating the tyrant, and thereby entitling itself to the promised liberality and reward.

While the fate of Italy was being contested under the walls of Aquileia, Death and Hades were actively engaged in scenes of blood and intestine discord at Rome. Distrust and jealousy reigned in the

senate; and in the temples where they assembled, every senator carried open or concealed arms. In the midst of their deliberations two veterans of the guards having intruded beyond the altar of Victory, two senators, drawing their daggers, laid them dead at the foot of the altar; and then advancing to the door, exhorted the multitude to massacre the praetorians, as the secret adherents of Maximin. Those who escaped the first fury of the tumult took refuge in the camp, which they defended against the attacks of the people, assisted by numerous bands of gladiators, the property of opulent nobles. Death and Hades held high revel here for many days, with infinite loss and confusion to the combatants on both sides. When the supply of water was cut off from the camp, the praetorians were reduced to intolerable distress; but, in their turn they made desperate sallies into the city, set fire to a great number of houses, and filled the streets with the blood of the inhabitants. The Emperor Balbinus attempted to reconcile the factions. But their animosity though smothered for a while, burnt with redoubled violence. The soldiers, detesting the senate and people, despised the weakness of a prince, who wanted either the spirit or the power to command the obedience of his subjects.

But distrust and jealousy reigned in the emperorship as well as in the senate. Maximus and Balbinus despised each other; and they both feared the praetorians as much as these turbulent military profligates hated them and the civil authority in general. The result was, that while Rome was celebrating some heathen games, a troop of desperate assassins invaded the palace, seized both ‘the Emperors of the Senate,’ as they contemptuously styled them, stripped them of their robes, dragged them in insolent triumph through the streets of the city, in which they left their bodies, mangled with a thousand wounds, exposed to the insults or to the pity of the mob.

Thus, in the space of a few months, *Death and Hades* had killed *with the sword*, six emperors. The third Gordian, officially styled *Caesar*, still survived. The praetorians, who asserted the authority of the sword, saluted him *Augustus* and Emperor, in which election the Senate and people acquiesced, rather than hazard the renewal of war in the capital. In A.D. 242, Gordian, who was only nineteen, marched his forces against the Persians; but while engaged in this war, his praetorian praefect, Philip, an Arab by birth, and a robber by original profession, was made emperor by the soldiers; and the unfortunate Gordian was sent down into Hades by the sword, which had destroyed so many of his more guilty predecessors.

In A.D. 248, Rome had attained the venerable age of one thousand years from its foundation by Romulus. Philip, whom Euse-

bius styles *a christian* (!) solemnized with infinite pomp and magnificence, the secular games, which were skilfully adapted to inspire the superstitious mind with deep and solemn reverence. To the undiscerning eye of the vulgar, Philip appeared as powerful a monarch as Hadrian or Augustus. The form of the dominion was still the same, "but the *animating health and vigor* were fled." This is Gibbon's remark without alteration or condensation by me. When the animating health and vigor of bodies have departed, they are *pale* with the paleness of death, as the *horse* in this fourth seal. "The industry of the people was discouraged and exhausted by a long series of oppression. The discipline of the legions was corrupted by the ambition of the emperors; the strength of the frontiers was insensibly undermined; and the fairest provinces were left exposed to the rapaciousness or ambition of the barbarians," or "*beasts of the earth*," who, under the inspiration of the opener of the fourth-seal, of "the authority given to Death and Hades to kill," soon discovered the decline of the pagan empire of Rome.

B. Death and Hades kill with Wild Beasts of the Earth

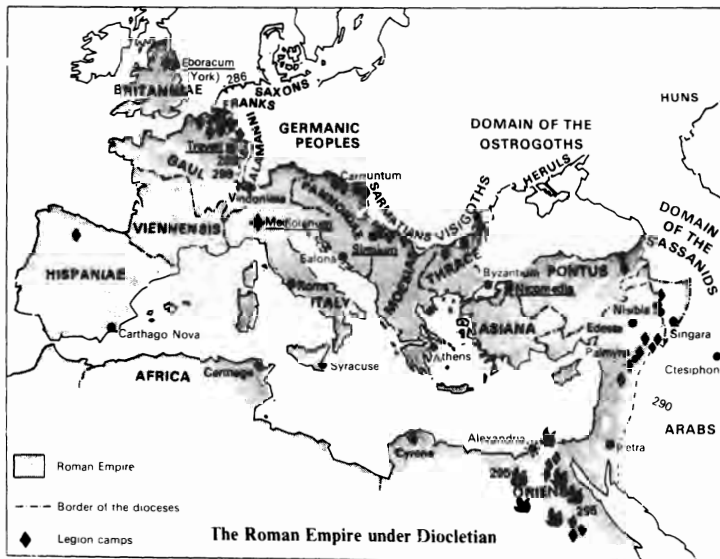
John informs us, that "authority was given to Death and Hades to kill by wild beasts upon the fourth of the earth." In commenting upon this, Mr. Elliott says: "There is just one of the destroying agencies mentioned in the vision that is passed over without notice by the historian — that of the *wild beasts* of the earth." This idea of Mr. Elliott's is quite a mistaken one; and he is led into the assumption by supposing that the *theria* which we agree to render *wild beasts*, or beasts of prey, are quadrupeds and reptiles. He enters into an argument to show, that these creatures must have been extensively employed in the service of Death and Hades, as one of the plagues with which the land was then afflicted, because one Arnobius about A.D. 296, says: "Men complain, there are now sent us from the gods pestilence, drouths, wars, scarcities, locusts, hail and other things noxious to man; but, was it not so in ancient times also?" Again: "If every species of corn be now devoured by locusts, or if floods destroy the human race, was it not so before? Were there not wars with wild beasts, and battles with lions, and destruction from venomous snakes, before our time?" The christians, who were able to "*see*" the fourth seal while being fulfilled, were, no doubt, arguing that the calamities of the times were sent upon the pagan world by the displeasure of "the Lamb;" which caused Arnobius to rebut the idea with the above argument, beyond which our contemporaries have not advanced. There may have been trouble with beasts of this kind in parts of the

empire. But, I am satisfied that they were wild beasts of a different sort sent "to kill upon a fourth of the earth."

Paul in Titus 1:12, styles the Cretans *kaka theria, evil wild beasts*. They had all the characteristics of men without understanding in divine things, who, the Spirit testifies, are "as the beasts that perish." Apocalyptically, this term is used emblematically for the *wild savage men* who should invade the empire, and carry death and destruction into the central "*fourth of the earth*" itself. Instead of Gibbon passing over the plague of wild beasts unnoticed, the tenth chapter of his history is a remarkable illustration of the fulfilment of this specification of the seal. We learn from him, that the "wild beasts of the earth" were the Franks, the Alemanni, the Goths, and the Persians; comprehending adventurers of less considerable tribes, whose obscure and uncouth names would only serve to oppress the memory and perplex the attention of the reader.

Illustrative of this part of the seal, we learn from this historian that from the celebration of the secular games by Philip in A.D. 248, to the death of Gallienus, A.D. 268, there elapsed *twenty years of shame and misfortune*. During that calamitous period, every instant of time was marked, every province of the Roman earth was afflicted by *barbarous invaders and military tyrants*, the "wild beasts of the earth;" and the ruined empire seemed to approach *the last and fatal moment of its dissolution*. Gibbon had no understanding of this seal, and all his sympathies were with the adversaries of the christians. He cannot therefore be suspected of giving a prophetic coloring to the history of these twenty years. He speaks of the empire as ruined, and death-stricken, and of being in the article of death — the last and fatal moment of dissolution. Let the empire, then, be represented by a horse, with what color should we paint him; and what kind of a rider should be placed upon him; and by what name should he be called; in order to represent on canvas the state of the dominion as history reveals it? The only answer is, that no hieroglyphic would be so appropriate as that given to John a hundred and fifty years before in the imagery of the fourth seal.

In the fifth year of his reign, retribution fell upon the head of Philip for the murder of the third Gordian. A senator named Decius, whom he had sent to quell a military insurrection in Maesia, was saluted *Augustus* by the insurgents; upon this he marched them into "*the fourth of the earth*," and there met Philip in battle near Verona, under the inspiration of "*Death and Hades who followed with him*." Philip went down into Hades there, by sword or dagger; while in Rome his son and associate was hurried after him by the sanguinary prae-torians.



The above map, taken from *The Penguin Atlas of World History* illustrates how heavily the barbarians (the "wild beasts of the earth" — Ch. 6:8) pressed on the borders of the Roman Empire. Ultimately the Empire collapsed under the pressure.

A few months after these events, the Emperor Decius was summoned to the Danubian frontier to repel an invasion of *wild beasts*, rude and warlike barbarians, known in history as *the Goths*. This is *the first considerable occasion* in which history mentions that great people, who afterwards broke the Roman power, sacked the capital, and reigned in Gaul, Spain, and Italy. They migrated from Sweden into Prussia, and thence to the Ukraine. From this region they poured through Dacia, now Hungary, and appeared at length under the walls of Marcianopolis, the capital of the second Maesia, now called Bulgaria. A large sum of money ransomed the city; but they soon returned with increased numbers, and scattered devastation over the country. They took Philippopolis, a city of Thrace, by storm; and 100,000 persons were massacred in the sack of that great city. Thus, Death and Hades killed by wild beasts on this first meeting between the Romans and the Goths. Not long after this slaughter, Decius encountered the barbarians in a terrible battle; it was the conflict of despair against grief and rage. The fortune of the day was adverse to the Romans. Their army was irrecoverably lost, and Decius was slain in the overthrow, A.D. 251. He was succeeded by Gallus, and Hostilianus, his only surviving son.

The policy of Gallus was to get these wild beasts out of "the earth" into their native dens at any sacrifice. He consented to leave in their

hands the rich fruits of their invasion, an immense booty, and a great number of prisoners of the highest merit and quality. He plentifully supplied their camp with every convenience that could assuage their angry spirits, or facilitate their departure; and even promised to pay them annually a large sum of gold, on condition that they should never afterwards infest the Roman "earth" with their incursions.

This ignominious treaty, although it gave the Romans peace for a year, did not secure their repose. The dangerous secret of the wealth and weakness of the empire had been revealed to the world. New swarms of "wild beasts," encouraged by the success of their brethren, invaded "the earth," and spread desolation through the Illyrian provinces, and, passing into "the fourth of the earth," carried terror to the gates of Rome. The defence of the monarchy, which seemed abandoned by the emperor, was assumed by Aemilianus, governor of Pannonia and Moesia. He attacked them unexpectedly, chased the "wild beasts" beyond the Danube, and distributed the money for the tribute among the soldiers, who forthwith proclaimed him emperor. Gallus hearing of this, advanced to meet him in battle on the plains of Spoleto, about seventy-five miles from Rome. The assassination here of Gallus and his son interrupted briefly the work of *Death and Hades killing on the fourth of the earth with sword*; these were, however, hewing down the people with a raging pestilence, according to history and the seal, by which Hostilianus had been swept into Hades. The Senate gave a legal sanction to the triumph of Aemilianus over Gallus, and were blindly assured by the victor that he would, in a short time, deliver the Roman Horse from Death and Hades, who were killing and devastating by the wild beasts of the north and east. Of course, he did not give the assurance in these words; but what he said was in substance the same. "Hercules the Victor, and Mars the Avenger," as he is styled in medals struck in honor of him, did not, however, execute his purpose. Death and Hades did not grant him time to fulfil his splendid promises; for less than four months intervened between his victory and his assassination. Valerian at the head of the legions of Gaul and Germany arrived in "the fourth of the earth," with the resolve to avenge the murder of Gallus, by sending Aemilianus and his adherents down into Hades to be devoured with her myriads of worms. The issue was tried by the sword on the plains of Spoleto, and decided against Aemilianus. The fortune of war had spared him. Death and Hades, however, would not be cheated of their prey; and the usual course of the praetorians added him by the assassin's dagger to the long, but still unfinished, list of victims sacrificed to their avarice and rage.

Valerian was now recognized as emperor; and consulting only his affection or vanity, he immediately associated with him in office his worthless son Gallienus. The whole period of their reigns was *one interrupted series of confusion and calamity*. This was in strict conformity with the imagery of the seal. The Roman empire was at the same time, and on every side, attacked by the blind fury of foreign invaders, the "wild beasts of the earth," and the wild ambition of domestic usurpers, Death and Hades' "sword." The Franks broke in upon "the earth." Their rapid devastations spread from the Rhine to the foot of the Pyrenees. Spain was unable to resist. During twelve years it was the arena of destructive hostilities. Taragona was sacked and almost destroyed; and as late as the fifth century, wretched cottages, scattered amidst the ruins of magnificent cities, still recorded the ferocity of these *wild beasts* from what is now Hesse, Brunswick, and Lunenburgh. From Spain they transported themselves into the Mauritanian province of "the fourth of the earth." The fury of these "wild beasts of the earth" astonished these Roman Africans, who regarded them, from their name, manners, and complexion, as a destroying storm from a world unknown.

But Death and Hades had work for their wild beasts to do "upon the fourth of the earth" nearer to the seat of empire. The Alemanni burst into Gaul, upon the rich provinces of which they inflicted severe wounds, and afterwards were the first who removed the veil that covered the feeble majesty of Italy. A numerous body of them crossed the Danube, and penetrated through the Rhaetian Alps into the plains of Lombardy, as far as Ravenna, and displayed the victorious banners of barbarians almost in sight of Rome. Valerian being in the East, and Gallienus on the Rhine, the hopes and resources of the Romans were in themselves. In the emergency the Senate became courageous, and prepared to meet the foe, who found it prudent to retire, to save the spoil with which they were incumbered. But, under the reigns of these emperors the frontier of the Danube was perpetually infested by the inroads of German and Sarmatian "wild beasts." The Goths renewed their incursions, which were diverted into a new channel. They acquired ships, by which they were enabled to ravage the coasts of Asia Minor. They took Trebizond, and put the inhabitants to the sword. The booty they acquired was immense, and the number of captures incredible. The rich spoils of Trebizond filled a large fleet of ships found in that port. The robust youth of the Black Sea-coast they chained to the oar; and satisfied with the success of their first naval expedition, returned to their new establishments in the kingdom of the Bosphorus.

In their second expedition, they captured Chalcedon, well stored with arms and money; and then proceeded to the plunder of the luxurious and wealthy cities of Bithynia, of which they gave Nice, and Nicomedia to the flames.

In their third naval expedition they made their appearance among the numerous island of the Aegean Sea, and at length anchored in the Piraeus, five miles distant from Athens, which they sacked. A general conflagration blazed out at the same time in every district of Greece; and the temple of Diana at Ephesus, was finally burned by the Goths. It would be interesting to us to know something of the affairs of Christ's ecclesia there while these wild beasts of the fourth seal were doing the work of Death and Hades in their midst. It would give them no pain to see this "wonder of the world" in flames. They might regret its destruction as a work of art; but, as a stronghold of superstition, in which Jupiter's image that fell from heaven, was enthroned, and revered by all Asia and the world, its destruction would afford them much satisfaction. It had been seven times destroyed before, but from this last catastrophe it never recovered; for he that was destined "to conquer" was still "conquering," and consummating the work begun by Paul, who persuaded and turned away much people, not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands — Acts 19:26. To them, as to us of the household of faith, the destruction of the temple of Diana, and those other temples of St. Peter's at Rome, and St. Paul's at London, not from an architectural, but from a scriptural standpoint, would be a glorious earnest of the approaching downfall of the several superstitions they represent. Ephesus was once famous for the bright lamp burning with oil of the spirit in her midst but Nikolaitanism, as an extinguisher, put out the light, and she became dark as the heathen catholicism, fashionable episcopalianism, gloomy presbyterianism, shallow congregationalism, and fanatical methodism, and so forth, of our day: therefore Death and Hades had authority to kill and destroy with wild beasts of the earth; these began their work with wild devastation, and all that remains of Ephesus in our time is a few families of Turks, and a Mohammedan mosque.

While the wild beasts of the north were slaying and plundering the heathens of the Roman earth, a wild beast of the east, by Daniel styled *a Bear with three ribs in its mouth*, spread devastation and terror on either side of the Euphrates. The Persians, under Sapor their king, had crossed that river in great force. Valerian marched against them, was defeated, and captured with his whole army. Sapor then moved against Antioch, the metropolis of the Roman East. Its splendid buildings,

private as well as public, were pillaged or destroyed; and its numerous inhabitants were put to the sword, or led away into captivity. The conquest of Syria and Cilicia scarcely interrupted the progress of the ravenous bear. Sapor invaded Cappadocia, and besieged Caesarea, a city of four hundred thousand inhabitants; many thousands of whom were massacred, and those made prisoners treated with wanton and unrelenting cruelty. In the conquest of Armenia, a state beyond the Roman earth, Sapor treated the people mildly; but when, as one of the wild beasts of Death and Hades, he ravined in "the Great City," he displayed only the stern features of a conqueror. He sought only to leave behind him *a wasted desert*, while he transported into Persia the survivors and the treasures of the provinces.

The captivity of Valerian, A.D. 260, ended only with his death. Being relieved of his paternal colleague's censorial severity, Gallienus reigned for eight years without restraint. When exasperated, Death and Destruction characterized his rule; till, satiated with blood, or fatigued by resistance, he insensibly sunk into the natural mildness and indolence of his character. Owing to the looseness of his government, a crowd of usurpers started up in every province of the empire against him. These had all been born of peasants and served as soldiers in the ranks, except two. They were Valerian's lieutenants, who disdained to serve his unworthy son. Of all these nineteen usurpers of imperial power there was not one who enjoyed a life of peace or a natural death. As soon as they were invested with the bloody ensigns of royalty, Death and Hades marked them as theirs. Encompassed with domestic conspiracy, military sedition, and civil war, they trembled on the edge of precipices, over which, sooner or later, they fell, and were inevitably devoured by the cruel and insatiable Hades. Italy, Rome, and the Senate, constantly adhered to the cause of Gallienus. The transitions during this fourth seal-period from the cottage to the throne, and from the throne to the grave, or Hades, were rapid and perpetual. The election of these precarious emperors, their power and their death, were equally destructive to their subjects and adherents. The price of their fatal elevation was instantly paid to their troops, by an immense donative drawn from the bowels of *the exhausted people* — the pale horse. When they fell, they involved armies and provinces in their fall. How dreadful and terrible the significance of the saying of this seal, "there was given to Death and Hades authority to kill." Illustrative of this still further, it may be remarked, that there is extant a most savage mandate from Gallienus to one of his ministers after the suppression of Ingenuus, who had assumed the purple in Illyricum. "it is not enough," says he, "that you exterminate such as have appeared

in arms: the chance of battle might have served me as effectually. The male sex of every age must be extirpated: provided that, in the execution of the children and old men, you can contrive means to save our reputation. Let every one die who has dropped an expression, who has entertained a thought against me, against *me*, the son of Valerian, the father and brother of so many princes. Remember that Ingenuus was made emperor: tear, kill, hew in pieces. I write to you with my own hand, and would inspire you with my own feelings."

Such were the "wild beasts" and such the "sword" which, in the period of the fourth seal, dismembered the provinces, and reduced the heathen dominion of Rome to the lowest pitch of disgrace and ruin, from which it seemed impossible that it should ever emerge. There still remain some particular facts which may serve to reflect a strong light on the horrid picture of this seal.

The situation of Sicily preserved it from the "wild beasts of the earth," whose dens were beyond the limit of "the Great City." The sufferings of that once flourishing and still fertile island were inflicted by baser savages within its own limits. A licentious crowd of slaves and peasants reigned for a while over the plundered country and renewed the memory of servile wars of more ancient times. The agriculture of Sicily was ruined; and as the principal estates belonged to the opulent senators of Rome, who often enclosed within a farm the territory of an old republic, this private injury probably affected the capital more deeply than all the conquests of the Goths or the Persians.

After the captivity of Valerian and the insolence of Gallienus had relaxed the authority of the laws, the Alexandrians abandoned themselves to the ungoverned rage of their passions. Philosophical Christianity had done no more for them than it has for Russians or Poles, or for Americans of the North and South. They made their unhappy country the theatre of civil war which continued (with a few short and suspicious truces) above twelve years. This was a commercial city of about six hundred thousand inhabitants on "the fourth of the earth," as well as Sicily. All intercourse between the several quarters of this afflicted city was cut off, every street was polluted with blood, every building of strength was converted into a citadel; nor did the tumult subside till a considerable part of Alexandria was irretrievably ruined, and reduced to a state of dreary solitude.

C. Death and Hades kill with Famine and Pestilence

It was revealed to John that among the agencies cooperating in the development of deadliness in the enemy with which the Bowman of the first seal would have successfully to contend, there would be famine

and *pestilence* — so we render with Mr. Elliott the word, *thanatos*, on the authority of the Septuagint, in 2 Sam. 24:13,15 — “Or shall it be three days *dever*, *pestilence*?” where the LXX, translation is *thanatos*.

What the Spirit revealed to John, history informs us came to pass with a destructiveness by no means exaggerated in the imagery of the fourth seal. Death and Hades killed the people with famine and pestilence with terrible fatality. Gibbon tells us that there was a long and general famine of a very serious kind, and that it was the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression, which extirpated the produce of the present and the hope of future harvests. Then, in the order of the seal, which places famine before pestilence, he proceeds to inform us that the famine generated pestilence. Famine, says he, is almost always *followed* by epidemical diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food. Other causes must, however, have contributed to the furious plague, which, from the year 250 to A.D. 265, raged without interruption in every province, every city, and almost every family of the Roman empire. The *fourth of the earth* was not exempt. During some time *five thousand persons died daily in Rome*, and many towns that had escaped the sword and wild beasts of Death and Hades, were entirely depopulated. Above half the people of Alexandria had perished in their calamities; and if the analogy might be extended to other provinces, it might be concluded that war, pestilence and famine had consumed in a few years the half of the human species.

In conclusion of our exposition of this seal, though not the full end of the seal-period itself, which continued yet a few years developing results of Death and Hades' mission similar to those already before the reader, we may record in this place the testimonies of Sismondi, Schlegel, and Niebuhr concerning the deadly paleness of the Roman body politic consequent upon the judgment of this seal. Sismondi says, as quoted by Mr. Elliott: “Diocletian put an end to this long period of anarchy. But such a succession of invasions and civil wars, and so much suffering, disorder, and crime, had brought the empire into a state of *mortal languor* from which it never recovered.” The apocalypse which enables one to “see” below the surface of events, teaches me that “the Lamb,” not Diocletian, put an end to the long period of anarchy caused by Death and Hades by opening the fifth seal. Diocletian was only the instrument by which He effected it. The *mortal languor* was represented in the *pale color* of the horse ridden by Death. Speaking of the state of things after Diocletian's accession, A.D. 285, Niebuhr says: “After the cessation of the plague (which *began* to decrease in the time of Probus, between A.D. 276 and A.D. 282) the empire was suffering from general distress; and its condition was very much like

that which followed after the cessation of the *Black Death* in the middle ages." And Schlegel says: "The division of the empire among several sovereigns appeared then (in the reign of Diocletian) as afterwards, an inevitable and necessary evil. In other words, the several parts and members of the vast body of the Roman empire, *which approached nearer and nearer to dissolution* began to fall to pieces."

The rest of the events of this seal-period fall under the reigns of Claudius, Aurelian, Tacitus, Probus, Carus and his sons, and the first eighteen years of Diocletian, embracing a period of thirty-five years in which the blood of the people was poured out like water. Thus, the whole period of the fourth seal would be sixty-eight years, the result of which was the establishment of a new system of government, which was afterwards completed by the family of Constantine.

SECTION 5 THE PHILADELPHIAN STATE

Vol. 1., pp. 428, 446

The Sardian state of the Ecclesias, in which things spiritual were "ready to die," merged into that in which the "few names," representative of those who were not "dead," were the "little strength" — the Philadelphian. The philosophical christianity and superstition of Satan's synagogue everywhere prevalent. The "little strength" the salt that preserves the christian community from utter corruption — Apoc. 3:7.

ACT V. — SEAL-PERIOD FIFTH

Apoc. 6:9,10,11.

A period of great resistance unto blood on the part of the arrowless Bowman engaged in the conquest of the paganism of the Fourth Beast.

A.D. 303

"And when He opened the Fifth Seal, I saw underneath the Altar the souls of them who had been slain on account of the word of the Deity, and on account of the testimony which they held. 10. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'Until then, O thou who art the Despot holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood upon them who dwell upon the earth? 11. And to them each were given white robes, and it was answered to them that they should repose yet a short time while both their fellow-servants and their brethren should be filled up, who are about to be killed even as they."

1. Why the Four Living Ones do not Appear

This fifth seal comes in between the expired political judgments of the fourth and the renewed judgments of the sixth. While, in the previous four seals, the Roman heathen were the subject acted upon in their visions, in this, the fifth, it is those who profess the faith of Christ who are the object against which the seal-judgment is directed. The horses and their riders have disappeared from view, and, what is more remarkable, the four living ones also. John no more hears a voice from them inviting him to "Come and see." He is not called upon to "see" or contemplate the judgments of the Lamb upon the heathen people. He had been invited to "see" the fourth seal; and he might still see the result of those calamities working evil upon "that which hindered," and preparing for it the last struggle which would eventuate in casting it out of "the heaven." This was an object to be beheld by one of the eyes of the fourth living one — an object external to itself; but, in the fifth seal, those "brethren" and "fellow-servants," of which he was a representative, were the subject of its judgments, and therefore an object to be beheld, and not spectators of the scene.

As already remarked, it is remarkable that neither of "the Four Living Ones full of eyes" is introduced into the imagery of the fifth and sixth seals. In the first four seals, they occupy a conspicuous place; but in the fifth and sixth they are not found. This peculiarity is certainly not accidental. The omission must be significative of something real in the situation of affairs pertaining to those engaged in "conquering" that which hindered the manifestation of the Man of Sin-power. We know, that the Four Living Ones are symbolical of the *Heavenly Encampment*, the *imperium in imperio*, the aggregation of the company separated from among the Gentiles for the Name; as opposed, or in active hostility, to that other encampment, or *imperium*, represented by the four horses under divers colors. The heavenly camp was the habitation of the Deity by his Spirit; not that his spirit was in all the individuals of the encampment; but that His Imperial Pavilion was in their midst, as the tent of the commanding general was in the midst of the Roman military camp. The Seven Asiatic Ecclesias as representative of all the militant ecclesias in the Greco-Latin Habitable, constituted this Heavenly Camp, with its divinely appointed standards of the Lion, the Ox, the Man, and the Eagle faces; and, I doubt not, that in the whole period of the first four seals, a period of two hundred and five years, "the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus," understood that their body, nation, community, or militant association, in the general, was "signified" by those four remarkable figures. I am strengthened in this

conviction by the following notable passage in a letter from the presbyters of the church, or ecclesia, in Rome to Cyprian and his brethren in Carthage. "Let us pray," say they, "that those who have fallen (or lapsed from the faith) may become sensible of the greatness of the crime . . . and that they may not disturb the yet fluctuating state of the Ecclesia — lest they should appear to aggravate our distresses by exciting internally seditious and inflammatory commotions. Let them knock at the doors, but not break them. Let them go to the threshold of the Ecclesia, but not leap over it. Let them watch *at the gates of the Heavenly Camp*, but with that modesty which becomes those who remember they have been *deserters*. Let them arm themselves indeed with the weapons of humility, and resume that shield of faith which they dropped through fear of death; but so that they may be armed against the Devil, not against that very Ecclesia, which laments over their fall." This was written in the middle of the third century, and in the fourth seal-period. The writers regarded the Ecclesia throughout the Roman world as "the Heavenly Camp" with gates. This idea they would derive from Apoc. 21:12, where "the gates" are revealed as twelve in number, and emblematic of the "twelve tribes of the children of Israel." These gates are grouped in threes, according to the encampment of the tribes, *four square*, each three symbolized by the standard of Judah, Ephraim, Reuben, and Dan; or, the Lion, the Ox, the Man, and the Eagle, as exhibited in the Four Living Ones full of eyes. They regarded this Ecclesia-Camp as militant, and all its combatants as armed with "the shield of faith," which those who became apostates, or "deserters," threw away.

But, why is this Heavenly Camp not symbolized in the fifth seal? *First*, I conceive, because its work was done at the expiration of the fourth seal; *secondly*, because its unity had been destroyed under that seal; and, *thirdly*, because in default of that unity, the Deity no longer resided in it by his Spirit.

First, the work of the Spirit through the undivided Christ in convincing pagans of "the truth as it is in Jesus" was finished. The agency employed in separating the heathen from the Roman superstition, consisted of philosophical disquisitions on idolatry, and denunciations of the terrors of the law upon them. They were exhorted to "believe and live;" and at the same time told to "even in the very exit of life pray for remission of sins, and implore the only living and true God with confession and faith: pardon is granted to him who confesses his sin; and saving grace from the divine goodness is conferred on the believer; and thus may a man pass from death to immortality in his very last moments." This extract is from a letter of Cyprian, a model christian

of the fourth seal-period, to Demetrian, a persecuting pagan in the Roman Africa; and given by Milner approvingly, as a specimen of his preaching to men, although profane and unconverted. Such preaching would do very well for the conversion of pagans to the Laodiceanism of the third or nineteenth centuries; but it would be of no use in regard to "the great salvation" — it could put no one in possession of the faith; and through the obedience of faith, of a right to eternal life in the kingdom of God. Such preaching might do for a cathedral, church, or conventicle, pulpit of our times; but not for preaching to be endorsed by the Spirit. The Spirit could not sanction such eloquent trash, and therefore he withdrew from the camp, and left it in the gloom of its own darkness. For this cause, the symbol of the Heavenly Camp is not found in the fifth seal. The Spirit had withdrawn from it as no longer fortified with the truth. The untraditionized word was not taught; and it had become the synagogue of the Satan, "after whose energy, and with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness," the Lawless One was to be developed. Where the truth is not, there the Spirit is not; for "the Spirit is the truth." This is the reason why the Spirit is not now with "the names and denominations of Christendom" in whole or part. They are destitute of the truth. It is not preached among them, nor known to them; and therefore not believed and obeyed. Hence, the churches of Christendom could not be represented by the Four Living Ones, as under the four seals. They do not constitute a Heavenly Camp; but "the Great City" to be besieged and taken when the Four Living Ones shall plant their standard-faces against it, in the resurrection and regeneration. They brought the Great City to ruin — *to pale-horse distress*, in the period of the four seals; and again, under the Seventh Vial, the same "great city" under its papal and ten-horn constitution, will be demolished by them, and finally superseded by their Heavenly Camp, from which there will then be no deserters who have dropped the shield of faith; and none within to be more zealous for traitors, than the truth.

Secondly, the symbol of the Spirit in the midst of the saints does not appear in the imagery of the fifth seal, because the unity of the camp had been broken up in the fourth seal period. In this period there were several severe persecutions of the christians; and also, prosperous intervals in a worldly sense. In peaceful times, multitudes forsook the temples of the gods, and joined the ecclesias under the influence of their families, and of such preaching as Cyprian's. Some, doubtless, through study of the scriptures, and the aid of faithful men, came to an intelligent faith and obedience. These were the "few names" of the fourth seal period, on account of whom, and with whom, the Spirit still

occupied the encampment. They were the salt by which the lump was seasoned; and in whose absence the camp was no longer tenable by the Spirit.

The multitudes who forsook the gods very much resembled the multitudes who forsake the world (!) when, in modern times, they "get religion," and become papists, protestants, and sectarians. The one and the other forsake not the gods and the world with the intention of enduring torments, or of holding on to their profession at the cost of liberty, chattels, or life: but so long as it is safe and pleasant, or not too inconvenient, they are willing to rejoice in a more reasonable and decent calling, than in a declining and vulgar superstition like the Roman, or in the wickedness of what they call "the world." The persecutions of Maximin, Gallus, and Valerian, all occurred under the fourth seal. When any of these befell the encampment, multitudes turned traitors and deserted to the enemy. They dropped the shield of faith, and were pierced by the fiery darts of the wicked. The emperors ordered all who had become christians to sacrifice to the gods, and to renounce and curse the Lord Jesus; or to be tormented and put to death, if they refused. This was a trial multitudes were unequal to. The ecclesia in Carthage was numerous. At the beginning of the Decian persecution Cyprian says, "It stands firm in the faith in general;" but when it was over its declension was most deplorable. It had been sifted by the storm so much that the greatest part of its professors had apostatized. The case of Carthage will exemplify that of very many other ecclesias. The apostates were innumerable; they forsook the Heavenly Camp in crowds, and sought safety and protection in the pardon offered by the magistrates to all who should recant.

But, when peace was restored to the Heavenly Camp, multitudes of these deserters besieged its gates for readmittance. Within the camp, there were two classes of professors; one, consisting of "the few names in Sardis which had not defiled their garments;" the other, consisting of all the rest, who "had a name that they were living, but were dead" — Apoc. 3:4,1. The latter class was favorable to the readmittance of the deserters, or "lapsed;" the minority was determinedly opposed to it. The head of the majority was Cornelius the bishop of the ecclesia in Rome; and the leader of the "few names" in the Sardian state, was Novatian, who was elected bishop in Rome in opposition to him about A.D. 251. He is acknowledged by his opponents to have been no heretic; and to have excelled in genius, learning, and eloquence. No immoralities have been proved against him, though he did not escape the evil speeches and maledictions of the majority; though it is certain, that while he continued a presbyter of the ecclesia in Rome, his fame

was not only without a blot, but very fair in the camp. He was put to death for the faith in the reign of Valerian.

It will be well here to sound in the ears of the reader the voice of history concerning the state of the majority which the Spirit says had a name that it was living, while it was really dead; and the division of which is charged upon Novatius as a crime.

“The most respectable writers of that age,” says Mosheim, “have put it out of the power of an historian to spread a veil over the enormities of ecclesiastical rulers. For, though several yet continued to exhibit to the world illustrious examples of primitive piety and Christian virtue (these were “the few names even in Sardis”), yet many were sunk in luxury and voluptuousness; puffed up with vanity, arrogance, and ambition; possessed with a spirit of contention and discord, and addicted to many other vices that cast an undeserved reproach upon the holy religion of which they were the unworthy professors and ministers. In many places the bishops assumed a princely authority, particularly those who had the greatest number of churches under their inspection, and who presided over the most opulent assemblies. They appropriated to their evangelical functions the splendid ensigns of temporal majesty. A throne, surrounded with ministers, exalted above his equals the servant of the meek and lowly Jesus; and sumptuous garments dazzled the eyes and the minds of the multitude into an ignorant veneration for their arrogated authority. Presbyters followed their example, neglected their duties, and abandoned themselves to the indolence and delicacy of an effeminate and luxurious life. Deacons imitated their superiors, and the effects of a corrupt ambition were spread through every rank of the sacred order.”

In support of this statement, we have the testimony of Eusebius, who was contemporary with what he describes. “Through too much liberty,” says he, “the Christians grew negligent and slothful, envying and reproaching one another — waging, as it were, civil wars among themselves, bishops quarrelling with bishops, and the people divided into parties. Hypocrisy and deceit were grown to the highest pitch of wickedness. They were become so insensible, as not to think of appeasing the divine anger, but, like atheists, they thought the world destitute of any providential government or care, thus adding one crime to another. The bishops themselves had cast off almost all concern about religion; they were perpetually contending with one another, and did nothing but quarrel, and threaten, and envy, and hate one another; they were full of ambition and tyrannically used their power.”

Such was the state into which the ecclesias had fallen in the second

half of the third century, against which Novatian protested. Many, in all the Roman empire — Christadelphians, in contrast to “Christians,” a name disgraced then as now — united with him in bearing a noble testimony against the prevailing corruption in the camp; and by so doing acquired the name of Novatianists. They were also termed *Puritans*, or in Greek, *Cathari* — a name bestowed on them by their adversaries, who reproached them for what they considered their excessive severity of discipline and exclusiveness.

The ecclesiastical historian, Socrates, says that “Novatius separated from the Roman Church because Cornelius the bishop received into communion believers who had sacrificed during the persecution which the emperor Decius had raised against the ecclesia. Having seceded on this account, on being afterwards elevated to the episcopacy by such prelates as entertained similar sentiments, he wrote to all the ecclesias insisting that they should not admit to the sacred mysteries those who had sacrificed; but exhorting them to repentance, leave the pardoning of their offence to God, who has the power to forgive all sin. These letters made different impressions on the parties in the various provinces to whom they were addressed, according to their several dispositions and judgments. The exclusion from participation in the mysteries (Lord’s Supper) of those who after baptism had committed any sin ‘unto death,’ appeared to some a cruel and merciless course; but others thought it just and necessary for the maintenance of discipline, and the promotion of greater devotedness of life. In the midst of the agitation of this important question, letters arrived from Cornelius the bishop, promising indulgence to delinquents after baptism. On these two persons writing thus contrary to one another, and each confirming his own procedure by the testimony of the divine word, as it usually happens every one identified himself with that view which favored his previous habits and inclinations. Those who had pleasure in sin, encouraged by the license thus granted, took occasion from it to revel in every species of criminality. The Phrygians, however, appear to be more temperate than other nations, and are seldom guilty of swearing. The Scythians and Thracians are naturally of a very irritable disposition, while the inhabitants of the East are addicted to sensual pleasures. But the Paphlagonians and Phrygians are prone to neither of these vices; nor are the sports of the circus nor theatrical exhibitions in much estimation among them even to the present day (A.D. 445). And this will account, as I conceive, for these people, as well as others of a similar temperament and habit in the West, so readily assenting to the letters written by Novatius. Fornication and adultery are regarded among the Paphlagonians and Phry-

gians as the grossest enormities; and it is well known that there is no race of men upon the face of the earth who more rigidly govern their passions in this respect."

This testimony of Socrates shows that morality and virtue were on the side of the Novatians; and even their catholic adversaries did not accuse them of unsoundness in the faith. Cornelius, the bishop of the church in Rome, styles Novatius, "that artful and malicious beast;" and denounces him in his letters for his artifice and duplicity, his perjuries and falsehoods, his dissocial and savage character. But this proves nothing against Novatius or his friends, and is *prima facie* evidence that the spirit in him, Cornelius, was the spirit of the flesh, which afterwards became so rampant in his successors the Popes. From Eusebius' account, Novatius and his adherents appear to have been excommunicated by a council assembled in Rome; and the course pursued against him there evinces more of party malignity than of zeal for the truth in faith and discipline. But it did not succeed in suppressing the Novatians, who prospered in Rome considerably. Socrates says, that A.D. 421, Cornelius' representative was one Celestinus. "This prelate," says he, "took away the churches from the Novatians at Rome also, and obliged Rusticula their bishop to hold his meetings secretly in private houses. Until this time that sect had flourished exceedingly in the imperial city of the West, possessing many churches there, which were attended by large congregations. But envy attacked them also, as soon as the Roman episcopate, like that of Alexandria, extended itself beyond the limits of the jurisdiction of priesthood, and degenerated into the present state of secular domination. For thenceforth the Roman bishops would not suffer even those who perfectly agreed with them in matters of faith, and whose purity of doctrine they extolled, to enjoy the privilege of assembling in peace, but stripped them of all they possessed. From such tyrannical bigotry the Constantinopolitan prelates kept themselves free, inasmuch as they not only permitted the Novatians to hold their assemblies within the city, but treated them with every mark of Christian regard."

The position assumed by the Novatians was perfectly scriptural. Sins unto death disqualify for inheritance in the kingdom of the Deity, and therefore for fellowship with those who are "the Heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to them who love him," or obey him; which is the same thing, for "love is the fulfilling of law." There can be no sin more deadly than that of a christian sacrificing to other gods, and cursing Christ, for the sake of present ease and comfort. Paul settles this clearly enough to the minds of all who receive the word as the end of all controversy. "If they who were once enlightened," says he, "shall

fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto a change of mind — *eis metanoian*, seeing they crucify again for themselves the Son of the Deity, and expose him to public shame." This is bearing thorns and briars; and such, Paul saith, "is rejected, and nigh to cursing; whose end is to be burned" — Heb. 6:4-8. For an enlightened man to sacrifice to the gods of Greece and Rome, was for him to "sin wilfully" — a sin for which no sacrifice is provided in the system of righteousness devised by the Deity. It is therefore "a sin unto death;" and for that — for pardon of that, John discountenanced all petition: "there is a sin unto death; I say not that ye shall pray for it" — 1 John 5:16. Of sins of this sort, Paul says: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of the Deity, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace" — Heb. 10:26. The christian who sacrificed to the gods of the Gentiles, in so doing, "trod under foot the Son of the Deity, and counted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing." The gospel of the kingdom has no good news for such. They have denied Christ; and Paul saith again, "If we deny him, he also will deny us" — 2 Tim. 2:12; and Jesus himself says, "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 10:33).

It is clear, then, in relation to "the lapsed," apostates, or deserters from the Heavenly Camp, the Novatians were in the right, though they were in the minority. Cornelius and his Council who excommunicated them, in so doing, turned the truth into the streets a houseless wanderer. Having ejected Christ, who, when on earth, said, "I am the truth," the Spirit who spoke to the ecclesias, forsook them, and left them to their own waywardness. Having things now all their own way, they received again into the bosom of what they called "Mother Church," apostates, adulterers, drunkards, lovers of pleasures, &c., upon profession of sorrow, but without amendment of life. Well might the Spirit say to such "churches:" "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." The institutions and worship of such a dead body could be of no worth. The "few names in Sardis," called Novatians, were satisfied of that, and therefore they rejected the baptism, and ordination of the so-called "*Mother*." They repudiated Jezebel and all her ordinances; so that they reimmersed and reordained all who came over

to them from the majority, which now began to designate itself the HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Here then were two leading and rival divisions in antipagan society, both claiming the christian name, with the addition of *Catholic* and *Puritan*, as the names distinguishing their several hosts in the long warfare waged between them. These antagonist camps were in active conflict during the fifth seal; how then could the Four Living Ones, who symbolized the undivided heavenly camp, be introduced into the imagery of the fifth seal, inasmuch as in that and the sixth seal period, the original organization of the camp no longer obtained? The time was rapidly advancing after the close of the fourth seal, when the Spirit would fulfil his threat of *spuing them out of his mouth*; and of organizing a new advocacy of the truth — a protest, not so much against paganism, as against Laodiceanism incorporated in the Synagogue of Satan, styled in the language of the Apostasy, THE HOLY APOSTOLIC CATHOLIC CHURCH — Mother and Mistress of all the churches of Antichristendom.

Thirdly, the unity of the Heavenly Camp having been broken by this great schism, the blame of which before the Lamb would rest on them who sympathized with the deserters who denied him, and who excommunicated the friends of purity and good morals, the Deity could no longer reside in it by his Spirit; the symbol of the four living ones consequently could not be introduced into the imagery of the fifth seal. But though as a community they were dead, yet we learn from the epistle to Sardis, that “even” in that dead community there were a few living ones who had not defiled their garments. These were Christadelphians. The Deity walked in these. His spirit was in them, because Christ was in them by faith. “Know ye not,” saith the apostle, “that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates,” or without judgment. “I am the truth,” saith Jesus. “Let Christ dwell in your hearts by faith,” saith Paul: from all which it is manifest that every real christian has Christ in him; and that he has Christ in him when he intelligently believes the truth, and by obeying that truth, puts on Christ, and walks in him by walking in the truth. Now, as “*the spirit is the truth*,” and “my words are spirit and life,” it follows that the spirit of the Deity resides in all in whom the truth and His words influentially resides. In this sense, the spirit may have dwelt in a few among the Sardian dead, who did not actually separate themselves with the Novatians. As the Spirit had not till the sixth seal-period spued the ecclesias out of his mouth, there would till then continue to be some living among the dead; and according to the proportion and quality of these living, would be the spirit-possession of each ecclesia. The Sardian state under the fifth seal

merged into the Philadelphian; and the "few names" of the former, became the "little strength" of the latter. This little strength was derived from the truth believed, as before explained. For there to be a little strength in the Philadelphian state was for there to be a little spirit still; for there is no christian, spiritual, or moral strength where there is no spirit or *power*. The gospel is the *power* of the Deity for salvation; but it is not power to numb or deaden the pain of torment inflicted upon the bodies of the saints when tortured by the cruel pagans, and afterwards by the more savage Laodiceans. It is probable that with the "little strength" there was also a little physical power still possessed by the subjects of that little strength by which the torture they were called on to endure was deadened. The only evidence of the spirit being possessed in the fifth seal-period in any other than a doctrinal sense as before explained, is the question and answer it contains. Had the four living ones been in the imagery, we should have known that the Spirit, or "the Lamb," still occupied the camp, plaguing from thence the Roman Horse, and fortifying the bodies of his servants to the patient endurance of the most cruel torments inflicted upon them in the good fight. But they are not there; so that we can only infer that His "grace" was not entirely withdrawn, and was still sufficient for the emergencies of the few, who, in the fifth seal period "kept his word, and denied not his name."

I may remark here, that in the first four seals, the four living ones were all present in the arrangements of each, though only one is specially indicated by ordinal number. This presence of all the four in each seal is intimated in the first verse, "I heard from one out of the four living ones, saying:" and though only one is named in the second seal, yet in the third a voice is said to be sounded in the midst of the four about the taxation of wheat and barley. They were all four present in reality; and the Lamb, or Spirit, was in the midst of them, attacking the Roman people and empire with sword, taxation, famine, pestilence, and beasts of the earth. And the pagans were not altogether unaware of this, for *they charged the miseries of the times upon the christians*. And they had unquestionably to do with them as being associated with the Lamb who opened and supervised the seals. Cyprian, in his letter to Demetrian, a heathen, endeavored to persuade him of the unreasonableness of the charge. But there was more reason in it than Cyprian knew; and if he had known, he might have made a powerful argument in favor of christianity, on account of so reasonable a fact.

Treating of the first eighteen years of Diocletian's reign, and therefore the eighteen concluding years of the fourth seal-period,

Milner says, after Eusebius: "During this period he was extremely indulgent to the christians. His wife Prisca and his daughter Valeria, were christians in some sense secretly. The eunuchs of his palace and his most important officers were christians; and their wives and families openly professed the gospel. Christians held honorable offices in various parts of the empire; innumerable crowds attended christian worship; the old buildings could no longer receive them; and in all cities wide and large edifices were erected."

The rider of the first seal was still "conquering" paganism; and a state of things had obtained indicating that the time was not far off when the coronal wreath or *stephan*, would adorn his brow. If the strength and beauty of christianity were to be measured by secular prosperity, here might be fixed the era of its greatness. "But, on the contrary, the era of its actual declension must be dated in the pacific part of Diocletian's reign. During the whole third century the work of God, in purity and power, had been tending to decay. The connection with philosophers was one of the principal causes. Outward peace, and secular advantage completed the corruption. Ecclesiastical discipline was now relaxed exceedingly. Bishops and people were in a state of malice. Endless quarrels were fomented among contending parties; and ambition and covetousness had in general gained the ascendancy in the christian church. *Some there were who mourned in secret, and strove in vain to stop the abounding torrent of the evil.*" These were the "little strength," and "the brethren" of the fifth seal. For the space of thirty years no bishop, or priest, among the catholics appeared eminent for piety, zeal, or labor. Eusebius, indeed, mentions the names and characters of several bishops; but he extols only their learning and philosophy, or their moral qualities. "Notwithstanding this decline, both of zeal and of principle; still christian worship was constantly attended; and the number of nominal converts was increasing after the fashion of our time; but the faith of Christ itself appeared a mere ordinary affair. And "*here terminated,*" says Milner, "*or nearly so, as far as appears, that great first effusion of the Spirit of God which began at the day of Pentecost.*" Human depravity effected throughout a general decay of godliness; and one generation of men elapsed with very slender proofs of the spiritual presence of Christ with the church."

2. The Altar

John informs us, that when the Lamb opened the fifth seal he saw THE ALTAR and souls underneath it. There are two apocalyptic altars pertaining to the apocalyptic temple — the *thusiasterion* of the priest's court, and of the Holy Place. The one seen by John in this seal was the

thusiasterion of the Court of the Priests, where sacrifices were burnt, and the blood thereof poured out at the altar's base.

A *thusiasterion* was a structure of earth, unhewn stone, or brass, elevated in an area, upon which the bodies of slain animals were burned. The burned bodies consumed into smoke were whole burnt offerings; and typified, or represented the utter destruction of Sin's Flesh, which sin had been condemned in the flesh of the victim, by the abstraction therefrom, or the pouring out of the soul of the flesh in the slaughter of the victim. "The soul of the flesh is in the blood." The blood covers upon the soul, or life; therefore in pouring out the blood, the soul, or life, of the animal was poured out unto death; and the blood being poured at the base of the altar, the soul was there, and the altar was considered as covering it; hence the phrase "underneath the altar the souls of the slain." The only difference between *soul* and *blood* sacrificially, is blood flowing in the veins and arteries; and blood in the sacrificial bowl. In the latter, it is a coagulated mass unfit for the purpose of the body; in the former, it is a fluid maintained in fluidity by the electro-nervous, or vital, energy generated by the processes of digestion and respiration. When the blood is shed it soon loses its fluidity. The electro-nervous energy, soul, or life evaporates, and the blood becomes solid, or concrete. It is physiologically decorous, therefore, in hieroglyphic writing to make a distinction between soul and blood, and to give the intellectuality of the scene to the soul, as in the fifth seal.

In patriarchal and Mosaic times, when things instituted possessed a typical significance, altars were designated by divine and highly expressive titles. In Gen. 33:18-20, we learn that Jacob erected one at Shalem, and called it AIL-ELOHAI-YISRAAIL — the *Strength of the Mighty Ones of Power's Prince*. As Jacob did not consider the work of his own hands was this STRONG ONE; in its being testified that he called the altar by this name, we are instructed that the prophet (and Jacob was a prophet as well as Abraham and Isaac) erected it as a type, or symbol, of Him the Strength or Power, who promised him such great things with his Seed — the Mighty Ones of Jacob.

Again, Moses built an altar after the battle with Amalek at Rephidim, and named it, *Yahweh-nissi*; "and he said, Because *his* hand is against the throne of Yah, *there is* war for Yahweh with Amalek from generation to generation" — Exod. 17:15. Here, the altar's name is *He shall be my banner*. Who shall be? He who shall be the Deity manifested in flesh, the Mighty One of Jacob. He shall be Israel's Banner against all the Powers that lift the hand against *kais Yah*, the throne of Him who shall be; for there shall be war against

such till their thrones become the conqueror's.

But, in the building of altars the will of the Deity was that they should be of earth; or if of stone, that the stone should not be hewn. "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings . . . ; in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon — Exod. 20:24. The permanent altar was made of wood, overlaid with brass; and when cleansed, anointed, and sanctified, it was Most Holy; and whatsoever touched it was holy.

Now, all this was significant of the substance, Christ, who was "the end of the law." The Holy Spirit signified something that he regarded important in his system of wisdom, in commanding an altar to be made of earth, or of unhewn stone; and in forbidding a tool to be lifted upon it. The things commanded were "a *parabola* for the time then present" — a riddle, the meaning of which would be found in the realities developed in the Christ. He is declared by Paul to be the christian altar. "We have an altar," says he in Heb. 12:10, which in being cleansed by the blood of Jesus is made identical with him. He was the altar of earth, or of unhewn stone; and in his making, or generation, he was begotten, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of the Deity." To affirm, that in his generation he was begotten of Joseph, is to "pollute him." In admitting his altarship, and at the same time affirming his paternity to be of Joseph, and not of the Deity, as related in Luke, is to make Joseph the builder of an altar of hewn stone — a polluted altar, upon which a man's nakedness had been discovered.

Jesus being set forth by the Deity a propitiatory for the remission of sins that are passed through faith in his blood (Rom. 3:25) exhibits him in relation to the believer of the truth as an Altar — the real *Ail-elohai-Yisraail* and *Yahweh-nissi*. The Word made Flesh was at once the victim, the altar, and the priest. The Eternal Spirit-Word was the High Priestly Offerer of His own Flesh, whose *character* was without spot — "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;" "who knew no sin;" yet whose *nature* was in all points like ours — "sin's flesh," in which dwells no good thing — Heb. 9:14; 7:26; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:3; 7:18; Heb. 2:14-17. The Flesh made by the spirit out of Mary's substance, and rightly claimed therefore in Psalm 16:8; Acts 2:31, as His flesh, is the Spirit's Anointed Altar, cleansed by the blood of that flesh when poured out unto death "on the tree." This flesh was

the victim offered — the sacrifice. Suspended on the tree by the voluntary offering of the Spirit-Word (John 10:18), "sin was condemned in the flesh," when the soul-blood thereof was poured out unto death. The Spirit-Word made his soul thus an offering for sin (Isa. 53:10); and by it sanctified the Altar-Body on the tree. It was now a *thusiasterion* — an Altar Most Holy; and all that touch it are holy; and without touching it none are holy.

This then is the Altar that decorates the Court of the Priests in the temple-system of apocalyptic symbols. It is the mystical Christ-Altar, to the horns of which the sacrifice is bound (Psa. 118:27). The magnitude of this altar is equal to the One Body of which the Lord Jesus is the head; so that all who are "in him" "wait at the altar, and are partakers with the altar," because they "eat of the sacrifice" (1 Cor. 9:13; 10:17,18): they "eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, which is meat indeed, and drink indeed." This eating and drinking is intellectual. What we read, or hear and understand, and believe, we eat, and digest, and assimilate, and grow thereby. "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood," saith Jesus, "dwelleth in me, and I in him" — John 6:56. Here is a mutual indwelling between Christ and the believer. When the enlightened believer has got into Christ, he dwelleth in him, and feeds upon his flesh and blood — *he is within the Altar*, and partaking with it. He has touched the Most Holy, and is therefore holy, or a saint.

But how doth a sinner get into the Altar so as to be within it, and to be a worshipper therein? (Apoc. 11:1). The only way is by his "believing the things concerning the kingdom of the Deity, and of the name of the Anointed Jesus;" and, if he believes these things with a "faith that works by love" and "purifies the heart," by being immersed into the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:12; Matt. 28:19). In passing through this process, the sinner, who is by nature "dead in trespasses and sins," is quickened by the word understood and believed; word-life, or a new spirit, has entered into him, which is the spirit of a ready and willing obedience to all that is commanded; and the first command for such an enlightened sinner is, "be immersed upon (*epi*) the name of the Anointed Jesus into (*eis*) remission of sins." In doing this, his love-working faith is counted to him for repentance and remission of sins, and he is inducted into the Altar. In passing through the water he passes through the Laver to the Altar; and in the passage, he becomes sprinkled in heart by the blood of sprinkling, which is the blood of the Altar-Covenant, through the faith which he has in the doctrine concerning it (Heb. 10:22; 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2:24). Such an one is no longer a sinner because he has

touched the Altar; and "whatever toucheth it is holy," or a saint. Now, to saints within the altar the apostle saith, "all sons of Deity are ye in the Anointed Jesus through the faith; for as many as *into Christ* have been immersed, have *put on Christ* . . . and if ye be Christ's then ye are Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to promise (Gal. 3:26-29). They are in the Altar-Name. There is a remarkable sentence in one of Ignatius' epistles, indicative of this subject being better understood in the reign of Trajan, A.D. 107, than contemporary with the fifth seal, or now. "Let no one," says he, "mistake; if any man is not *within the Altar*, he is deprived of the bread of the Deity;" which is equivalent to saying, if any man be not in Christ — if Christ be not the covering of his nakedness, he cannot obtain eternal life in the kingdom of God.

From these premises, then, the reader will easily comprehend the phraseology of the fifth seal concerning "souls underneath the Altar." When "the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus," and therefore "within the Altar," die, and return to their parent earth without violence, they are "underneath the Altar," sleeping in Jesus," "dwelling in the dust," "sleeping in the dust of the earth:" but if they are made to lie "underneath the Altar" by the blood-shedding cruelty of the enemy, their souls are said, as in the language of the fifth seal, to cry with a great or loud voice for judicial vengeance on the murderers, who poured out their soul-blood unto death. Abel's blood shed by Cain is said to have a *voice*, and to *speak* — "the voice of the bloods of thy brother *cry to me from the ground*" (Gen. 4:10); and the blood of Jesus, shed by his brethren of the flesh, "*speaks* better things than the blood of Abel" speaks. It speaks according to the teaching of the revealed mystery, pardon to the guilty, and life eternal to the pardoned; but the blood of Abel only speaks of vengeance against Cain, not of pardon even to him. Now, if this about Abel had been hieroglyphically represented as in this seal, "the *voice* of the bloods" would have been styled "the *soul* of Abel who had been slain, *saying*, until when dost thou not judge and avenge *my blood* upon Cain?" John, with the eyes of his understanding enlightened by the Lamb's messenger, two hundred and five years before the seal, saw the souls of them that had been slain, lying underneath the Altar, and heard their great voice. This of course, was a shadowy representation of what would be; for multitudes of the souls had no existence when he saw the vision. The voice of their blood was great, for, contrary to Gibbon's supposition, their number was great, who had "resisted unto blood striving against the sin" of apostasy in sacrificing to the gods and in denying Jesus.

3. "Until When?"

The soul underneath the Altar, though really dead and therefore unconscious (for "the dead know not anything" Ecc. 9:5), are represented as speaking. They are supposed to utter a demand for vengeance upon their enemies, whose death-dealing power had, after a long interval of peace, broken out against the "partakers with the "Altar" afresh. "UNTIL WHEN, O Despot, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood, on them that dwell on the earth?" They desired to know *the time when* he that went forth *conquering* with the *bow* should be *stephaned with conquest* over the "Great Red Dragon" in the heaven; "red" with the blood of them "slain for the word of the Deity, and for the testimony which they held" against paganism, and the corruptions in the world through lust. The religious war between their Camp and the Dragon had continued over two hundred years since John's exile; how much longer, they are hieroglyphically supposed to inquire in the interest of their camp, was the sanguinary conflict to endure before "the Dragon and his Angels," who rent them with his "Iron teeth," and "Brazen Claws," should be ejected from "the heaven?" How long till their *travailing* community should appear in "the heaven?" to give the *stephanizing* blow to the blood-stained adversary, that, being bruised, he might no more send souls with cruel violence underneath the Altar? Their inquiry had no reference to the time when the Lord Jesus should destroy the Man of Sin-power with the spirit of his mouth, and with the brightness of his presence; for it was not believed by those living in the first five seal-periods, that the Man of Sin-power had yet been born of the Woman. Their supposed anxiety was about the issue of the conflict, which had placed them "as souls slain" underneath the Altar — the fall of political paganism, and the substitution of a power that would feed and nourish them in civil, ecclesiastical, and social prosperity and peace. They called for divine vengeance "on them who dwelt on the earth," in the period of the fifth seal; not on those who dwelt in Persia, Germany, or in other countries beyond the Euphrates, Rhine, and Danube; for these were beyond the limits of "the earth" at that stage of apocalyptic development. It was the Dragon's earth, or territory, that was pre-eminently the arena of their conquering unto victory; and they sought hieroglyphically to know for the encouragement of the living saints, when that victory would be?

The answer they received was truly encouraging to all at the time, who, in studying the seals, were able to "see," or discern, the signs of the times. The purpose of the Dragon authorities during the fifth seal-

period was to extinguish the name of christianity. Indeed, so satisfied were they that they had given it its quietus, that two pillars were erected in Spain, on one of which was the inscription: "Diocletian Jovian, Maximian, Herculaeus, Caesares Augusti, for having extended the Roman empire in the East and West, and *for having extinguished the name of Christians, who brought the Republic to ruin.*" On the other thus: "Diocletian, &c., for having adopted Galerius in the East, for having everywhere abolished the superstition of Christ, for having extended the worship of the gods." The idea of these emperors was, that the terrible calamities that had befallen the Roman people in the years previous to the celebration of their triumph commemorating their success in rescuing the distressed empire from tyrants and barbarian "wild beasts," Nov. 20, A.D. 303, styled by Gibbon "that memorable era," — they judged, I say, that the pale-horse ruin had been brought upon the State by the christians. And, when we consider into what extreme degeneracy of faith and practice — as appears from the seven epistles descriptive of as many states typified by each ecclesia, and by history already quoted — they had fallen; it is not at all unlikely, that multitudes of them had plunged into the roaring waters of Dragon politics, and by their influence, like the equally demoralized abolitionists of our day, increased the confusion of the times. These emperors regarded them as a sort of copperhead faction among politicians, who only waited a favorable opportunity to seize sovereign power, when they would abolish the worship of the gods, to which they were themselves devoted. This was, no doubt, a correct view of their political relations. They had become like our modern pietists — political pietists. The professors of our day all pretend to be christians, yet they are as intensely devoted to politics as the old heathen. What popish, protestant, and sectarian politicians now are, the professed christians were in the fifth seal-period under these emperors. Of course, we except from this remark, the "Little Strength" that "kept the word, and denied not the name" of the Spirit, who addressed the ecclesias. Of this sort there are none, and from the very constitution of modern names and denominations of pietists, there can be none, among papists, episcopalians, lutherans, presbyterians, methodists, and such like. These are all Sardian and Laodicean. They have a name among themselves that they are living, and are dead; in fact, they never were anything else but dead — "dead in trespasses and sins;" they say, "they are rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked;" though with hypocritical words in the exercise of their stereotyped formalism, they claim brotherhood with every criminal

they inter, and confess that they are "miserable offenders" in whom "there is no health." There is not an atom of life or strength in such "christians" so-called as these. During the fourth and fifth seals professors of this type abounded in the military and civil service of the Dragon; and their presence there was a source of irritation and annoyance to those emperors, who were fanatically devoted to the gods. They persecuted them, and sought to exterminate the hated name they bore; and if we were to believe the Spanish pillar-inscriptions, and that of the Diocletian medal "*no mine christianorum deleto*," we should conclude, that the judgments of the fifth seal had accomplished the sanguinary work. But, they did succeed in turning multitudes to the gods, and so extending their worship; and, in a like sense to the extinguishing the name of *Whig* from the executive, legislature, and armies of the North; so the name of christian was extinguished from the court, and military, and civil service of Diocletian, Maximian, and Galerius. Whigs and Democrats became Federals and Abolitionists according to the safety and profitableness of the change; so the servants of these emperors, became Jovians and Herculeans, worshipping the fortunes of their imperial masters, rather than incur the dangerous liabilities that pertained to a loyal and faithful adhesion to the "Despot" who is "holy and true."

But, the souls underneath the Altar, slain, and reposing in the dust — those of the slain in previous times who were in very deed saints and faithful in the anointed Christ-Altar, and who had been killed by the Dragon authorities — "them dwelling upon the earth;" — are hieroglyphically represented as desiring to know, "until when" the sanguinary conflict was to continue undetermined — that conflict, in which they had been "conquering" though they had fallen in the war, but in which their camp had not yet succeeded "to conquer?" This question is figuratively suggested in fulfilment in the period of the ten day-years tribulation succeeding, A.D. 303 — Apoc. 2:10. This has to be remembered that the reply may be appreciated. It was not how long from the time of John's exile in Patmos; but how long from the termination of the fourth and the opening of the fifth seal to the judicial avengement of their blood upon the Dragon and his angels then in the heaven of Daniel's Fourth Beast; and making such sanguinary havoc upon those within the Altar, but not then as yet underneath it as to cause three Dragon imperial friends aforesaid, to declare that "the name of the christians was extinguished." "It was answered to them," says the Spirit, "that they should repose yet *a short time, chronon mikron, while heos hou*, both their fellow-servants and their brethren should be filled up, who are about to be killed even as

they." This indicates that from the opening of the seal there was to be a period of *soul-blood shedding* by the Dragon power; and that when this sanguinary work should be over — a work that would be finished in "a short time," then the judicial vengeance should be manifested. History shows that this "short time," reached to A.D. 312-13, when this severest of all persecutions of christians by the power of the pagan government of the Fourth Beast, was put an end to, by the deposition and death of Maxentius and Maximin by the victorious Constantine and Licinius.

4. White Robes

"And there were given to them each *white robes*," says John, *stolai leukai*. These were symbolically given to the souls already slain, and reposing underneath the Altar of Sacrifice. They were *stoles*, or external vestments reaching to the feet, like to that with which the Son of Man was invested, when John saw him in the midst of the Seven Lightstands burning with spirit-oil (Apoc. 1:13; Dan. 7:9); and like to those holy garments worn by the High Priest in which he appeared before the Ark in the Most Holy Place. Kings and priests were arrayed in white robes "for glory and for beauty;" they are therefore symbols of worthiness on the part of those who receive them; of their being exalted to kingly and priestly honors and glory; and consequently, in the case before us, of the deliverance of these symbolical souls from prostration underneath the Altar, by resurrection, and of an incorruptible investiture, when they shall be "*clothed upon* with their house" or white robe "which is from heaven . . . that mortality may be swallowed up of life" — 2 Cor. 4:2-4.

This was especially promised to the "few names in Sardis," because they had "not defiled their garments" — "they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy" — Apoc. 3:4. This shows that the *white* is symbolical of the worthiness of the clothed. And again, in the same place, "He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment" — showing that the *white robe* is emblematical of *victory*. Hence, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory? Thanks be to the Deity who giveth us the *victory*," or white robe, "through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:55,57). When, therefore, in the Apocalypse, personages are emblematically clothed with white raiment, it signifies that they represent persons who have been raised from among the dead to incorruptibility and life, which have become to them the "spiritual body" of the eternal state. Thus, the twenty-four elders sitting upon their thrones are "clothed in white raiment" (ch. 4:4). These are a symbolical twenty-four; and among those they

represent are the souls underneath the Altar to whom the white raiment is promised, and therefore emblematically given. A soul underneath the Altar and a soul sitting upon a throne, though one and the same person, is that soul in two different states and in times far apart. A soul, whose blood is poured out at the bottom of the Christ-Altar of sacrifice in the fifth seal period, to whom a white robe is dramatically given, fifteen or sixteen hundred years after, as we may suppose, is seen by John alive again and reigning with Christ a thousand years (ch. 20:4); and this conjunction of souls with Christ in preparation to assert their rights, and to take possession of their millennial thrones, is symbolized by the twenty-four presbyters in white, in association with the Heavenly Camp, as “signified” by the Four Living Ones full of eyes.

These same souls and elders are represented in Apoc. 7:9, as “a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, *clothed with white robes*, and palms in their hands.” In this scene, the emblematic and acted-promise of the fifth seal is fulfilled. They are actually clothed, and as the “palms” indicate, have gotten the victory over all their enemies. They were in full possession of the great salvation, to which they have attained through great tribulation. Their robes are made white by washing in blood, and that not their own blood, but the blood of the Lamb. In their soul-body existence, or life-time, they believed the promises covenanted to the fathers and “the faith” which came by Jesus — in other words, in “the things concerning the name of Jesus Anointed,” among which, the cleansing from sin by his sprinkled blood, the blood of the Abrahamic covenant, holds an indispensable and prominent position; they believed this gospel, and were immersed in water into Christ, and so put on their holy garments, which are therefore said to be “washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb” — ch. 7:14. “*Therefore* are they before the throne of the Deity, and serve him day and night in his temple and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters; and the Deity shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” Such is the *white-robed* “holy nation” of the Deity — “the Israel of God,” sealed by his truth to eternal glory.

Concerning this holy and mighty people, Paul says: “All things are for your sakes” — 2 Cor. 4:15. “Ye are the holy temple of the Deity . . . All things are yours; whether the world, or life, or death, or things

present, or things to come: all are yours; and ye are Christ's and Christ is the Deity's" — 1 Cor. 3:16-23. This is all said to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus; and it shows what an important and honorable people they are considered to be by the Deity who are christians of the ancient and original stamp — Christadelphians. There are very few of them to be found in the year of grace 1864 — so few that one would be justified in saying almost none; for, certainly, these bloodshedding parsons and their flocks, who are on both sides of the line hounding on chaplained armies of their fraternal potsherds to mutual slaughter and devastation, committing all kinds of depredations and profligate abominations upon the helpless and unoffending victims of their lusts, can have no scriptural claim to the name christian. What are they but heathen of the blindest species! Assuredly they are not the holy temple of the Deity. Though they have got the world — for they are the world — the world is not theirs; nor is any thing that exists for their sake. No; it is for that poor and despised company — that "contemptible few," who are "rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which the Deity hath promised to them;" it is for the sake of these that all things consist.*

This important testimony, that all things are for the sake of the true believers, is presented symbolically throughout the Apocalypse. Because the things represented in the seals were for the sake of believers of the original Abrahamic type, the Lamb and the Four Living Ones are introduced as the ruling spirit of the scenes. The Lamb with Seven Horns and Seven Eyes, all-seeing and all-powerful, was superintending and working together all things for the good of them who love the Deity, and who are the called according to his purpose; so that, suffering with him when that purpose is effected, they may all be glorified together — Rom. 8:28,17. The Lamb, the Spirit, opened the seals and worked their invisible machinery for the good of these sufferers unto death, if need be, represented by the Eyes of the Four Living Ones. He subverted the pagan constitution of Daniel's Fourth Beast for their good and his own glory, and made a present of its dominion to those degenerate adherents who had fought against it, who, though they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, as modern papists and protestants almost, were an improvement upon the blind and dissolute worshippers of the gods. He gave the beast's dominion to the self-styled and self-glorifying "catholics," who said they were "rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing;" but to the true and faithful, who doctrinally, and not in mere form or

* The reference to the "bloodshedding parsons . . . on both sides of the line" relates to the American Civil War that was raging at the time.

sacrament, kept the word and denied not his name, he gave no part in that dominion, but, emblematically, gave them the glorious and beautiful "white robes" of the Royal Priesthood, which shall inherit "under the whole heaven" a more magnificent dominion, when its holy kings and priests shall have destroyed the Fourth Beast with the burning flame of divine fury, even the dominion of all nations, enlightened, regenerated, and truly civilized, for a thousand years.

Furthermore, as with the seals so with the trumpets. The judgments of these fell not upon the worshippers of the Greco-Latin gods, nor upon "the servants of the Deity, sealed in their foreheads" with the truth, but upon the Laodiceans of "the Holy Catholic Church," the enemies and persecutors of the faithful and true, since they had succeeded pagans in the sovereignty of the Dragon. The trumpet-judgments were for the sake of the sealed servants of the Deity, the machinery of them was engineered by the Lamb for their good. The prayers of all these saints ascended as a cloud of incense for divine intervention in their behalf. The Deity heard their cry, and answered them by casting fire from the golden altar into the Greco-Latin Catholic earth. The voices, thunderings, lightnings, and earthquake which ensued, and the trumpets which sounded afterwards, in their results, were all for the good and for the sake of the Woman and her seed, who kept the commandments of the deity and had the testimony of Jesus Christ (Apoc. 8:3; 12:17).

And when, again, we descend to later times, the period of the first six vials, the contemporary existence of faithful ones is admitted by the exhortation addressed to them in ch. 16:15. They are represented by the Spirit as *watchers with garments well kept* — watching the Vial-Signs, and preparing, by trimming their lamps, for the thief-like incoming of the Ancient of Days. "All things" enacted in the vial-periods "are for their sakes." Not, certainly, for the sakes of papists, Mohammedans, and protestants, upon whom the wrath is poured out, but for the sake of "the saints and prophets," and of those within the Altar of Sacrifice, alluded to in verses 6 and 7. Devotees of the various "names and denominations" of religionism — the "names of blasphemy," of which the scarlet-colored politico-ecclesiastical beast is "full" — these are not within the Altar, neither are they watchers with garments well kept. They are all fast asleep, snoring in midnight darkness. Nothing is being done for their sakes; only for the sake of those who obtain a change of raiment in putting off the filthy rags of their theological factions, coming out from among them, and putting on Christ as their white robe of righteousness, through an intelligent induction by faith and immersion. By doing this they join the Heavenly

Camp, and become “eyes” in the Four Living Ones, for whose sake every thing is done. For this cause it is, that, in ch. 15:7, one of the Four Living Ones is represented as giving the seven vials full of the wrath of the Deity to the seven angels. This signifies that the outpouring of the seven vials is for the sake of those represented by the Four Living Ones, some of whom are contemporary with all the vials, and all of whom, to whom “white robes” shall be given will be engaged in the execution of the seventh, which exhausts in their destruction the indignation of the Deity against Babylon the Great Mother, the National Ecclesiastical Harlot, and all the Sectarian Abominations of the Earth, which have directly or indirectly sprung from their adulterous commerce with the world.

For further remarks upon the white robes of the faithful, the reader is referred to Vol. 1, pp. 169, 356, and to what will be said hereafter when treating of the Bride of Apoc. 19.

5. Souls

“When he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the Altar *the souls* of them who had been slain” — *tas psuchas ton esphagmenon*. Clerical metaphysicians, with rare exceptions, declare these hieroglyphic souls seen by John in vision to be the disembodied immortal spirits of saints with Christ in heaven. The Alexandrian and Origenic philosophy — the exceedingly thin and innutritious fluid supplied them by what they call their *Almoe Matres* — knows no other souls, and can make no other disposition of them than this. With this heathen theory of souls darkening their understandings, the Apocalypse is for them a sealed book. Their attempted interpretations have all failed because they have sought an exposition in harmony with this dogma, which is the rope of sand by which the whole edifice of their Laodicean superstition is bound together. What they call “religion” is for the conversion, and salvation from eternal torment in flaming brimstone, and from the Devil, of immortal and *post-mortem* disembodied spirits, by sending them at death on angels’ wings to heavenly kingdoms beyond the realms of time and space! But there is no such soul; and, therefore, the “religion” invented for it by the Laodicean Apostasy is vain — a mere invention for the salvation of a nonentity, or, in the expressive language of Paul, “a lie” — 2 Thess. 2:11. But, being divinely and judicially deluded “because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved,” they seek support for “the lie” they believe in this fifth seal. They think it is a proof of the existence of a part of man in a conscious state altogether independent of body. That the dead are not dead, but, freed from “mortal coil,” exceedingly

elastic and lively; that “the dead” is a phrase only to be applied to body; that, beyond this, there is really no such thing as death; so that “the dead” is only a conventionalism, by which *the living freed from mortal coil in the world of spirits* is to be understood; and that, though divided from us by the veil of flesh, they are highly intellectual and well informed of all that is transacting among the sons of men; and many more absurdities they teach, styled by the Spirit “the depths of the Satan as they teach,” which are so well known by all who are familiar with pulpit traditions that it is needless to encumber our pages with any more details.

In addition to what we have already said about souls underneath the Altar, we may remark that all the corporeal organizations of the animal world are denominated *souls* in the scripture. A few references will sufficiently prove this. “And Elohim said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly *sheretz nephesh khayyah*, ‘swarming soul of life’ ” — Gen. 1:20. In the next verse all fish are termed *souls*; and, in verse 24, all creatures produced from the earth are styled *nephesh khayyah*, “soul of life.” In verse 28, the creatures thus called are summed up as *kol-khayyah* “everything of life;” and, in verse 30, every beast, fowl, and reptile, are said to have “in” them “soul of life.”

What the Spirit, who made them all, says of these creatures, he affirms also of man. He, even as they, has in him “breath of lives” and “soul of life,” and is “a soul” or body “of life.” Thus, in Gen. 2:7, it reads, “And Yahweh Elohim formed the man, dust of the ground; and breathed into his nostrils *breath of lives*; and the man was FOR A BODY OF LIFE” — *le nephesh khayyah*. If we come to the word with our minds free from tradition, there is no difficulty in understanding this simple statement. The man is put on the same footing with all other creatures. They are bodies or “souls of life,” and so is he; they all have “the breath of the spirit of lives,” and so has he; they are all “dust of the ground,” save those from the waters, and so is he; the only difference between him and them is the same thing that constitutes the difference between the dog and the lion, or the elephant and the camel — *organization of the dust*.

The same “breath of the spirit of lives,” I say, is common to all animals and man. This will be evident to those who can consult the original of Gen. 7:22,15. They know that in the English Version it is not correctly rendered “breath of life;” the words “the spirit of” have been unfaithfully omitted. In verse 15, the words rendered “breath of life” are not the same as those similarly rendered in Gen. 2:7. In this, it reads *nishmath khayyim*, “breath of lives;” and in that, “from all the flesh which has in it *ruach khayyim*, spirit of lives.” So that man is

affirmed to have “the *breath* of lives” in his nostrils, and all other flesh “the *spirit* of lives” in theirs; hence, as *spirit* is regarded as of a higher dignity than *breath*, we might, on such premises, conclude that the “lower” animals are really demiurgically superior to man. And, indeed, when we compare the doings of said animals with the conduct of men, lay and clerical, we might suppose that the stupidity and brutishness of brain-flesh was truly their distinguishing characteristic, and that the so-called “brutes” were essentially their superiors. But said premises are not sound; *for the superiority of the one race over the other is not predicated on the matter of which they are made, and by which they are vitalized, but on the organic formation of the same.* Hence, there is no natural demiurgic difference between an Archbishop of New York or of Canterbury, or a Bishop of Natal, and the serpent and monkey tribes of the forest; the Spirit, therefore, by Moses (and this perhaps, may be the reason why the Bishop of Natal is so hostile to Moses) has been careful in Gen. 7:22, to give us to understand that the *nishmah* and *ruach*, “breath” and “spirit,” are common to all kinds of human brutes, both “lower animals” and men. I say *human* brutes, for the word *human*, which one class of brutes has appropriated to itself exclusively, really or demiurgically pertains to all the earthborns or formations from the ground*. The text reads, after mentioning all the creatures, “and every man, *all which has breath of spirit of lives, kol asher nishmath-ruach khayyim*, in their nostrils, out of all which is in the dry land, died.”

We have seen that man and the other creatures are all termed *nephesh*, and are said to have *nephesh* in them; and in Gen. 9:4, we are informed by the Spirit what *nephesh* elementally, or in concrete essence, is, in the law given to Noah. “Flesh with its *nephesh*, or soul, its blood, ye shall not eat.” From these premises, then, we learn, that men and their brethren of the ground are all of them souls — human or ground-souls; that they have all got souls in them; and that these souls are the blood of their flesh. For further remarks upon *soul in blood* see what we have written concerning the Altar.

Now, by this Mosaic testimony the Eternal Teacher proclaims the doctrine that man, though created in the image and likeness of Elohim, as Seth was in the image and likeness of Adam, hath nevertheless “no preeminence over a beast.” And this testimony is doubtless true, and in perfect harmony with man’s developments when abandoned by his creator to his own instincts and lusts. But, we are not left to inference. The Spirit has endorsed our inferences by positive testimony. In

* *Homo*, a man or woman, for *humo*, from *humus*, h. e., made of earth. Hence, *humanus*, human — Lat. Dict.

speaking by Solomon of the *divrah*, or *cause for adjudication*, termed “*estate of the sons of the man*,” the old man of the flesh, the king is caused to say, “would that the Elohim would purify them, so that they might see for themselves that they are beasts. For that which befalleth the sons of the man also befalleth the beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as dieth the one, so dieth the other; for there is one spirit for all; so that excellence over the beast the man hath none; for the whole are a vapour (Psa. 78:39). The whole go to one place: the whole was from the dust, and the whole return to the dust. Who knoweth the spirit of the sons of the man that it goeth upwards? Or the spirit of the beast that it goeth downwards to the earth? Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better than that the man rejoice in his works; for that is his portion: for who shall cause him to see what shall be after him?” (Ecc. 3:18).

Leaving the reader, then, to adjudicate the traditions of the Apostasy by this divine teaching, I proceed to remark that the Spirit has favored us with a comment upon his own words in Gen. 2:7, in what he caused Paul to write in 1 Cor. 15:44,45. “There is a *natural body*,” saith he; *a soma psuchikon*: and he proceeds to prove the assertion by quoting the words of Moses, saying, “And so it is written. The first man Adam was made *into a living soul* — *eis psuchen zosan*. These words are parallel with *le-nephesh khayyah*, and are explanatory of them. If the Spirit be asked, what is a *nephesh khayyah*, he answers in Greek, *psuche zosa*; and if it be further inquired, what is *psuche zosa*? the English version replies, *a living soul*, or a *natural body*; but as *khayyah* is not an adjective, but a substantive, it should be rendered *a body of life*.

And what, then? say “the merchants of the earth,” who auction off their spiritual merchandize from the pulpits of all lands. Are not “bodies and the souls of men,” *somata kai psuchai anthropon*, the most precious of our wares? But wherein is the preciousness of souls, which we proclaim to be immortal jewels, whose estimation is incalculable, if men have no preeminence over monkeys; and bishops, deans, and ministers, no excellence over the reptiles of the wilderness? The supposition is downright atheism and infidelity! (Apoc. 18:13,11).

Doubtless, in the opinion of the soul-merchants of the earth the Spirit’s teaching is both atheistic and infidel, for it is destructive of their whole system. He has, to speak apocalyptically, “spued them out of his mouth;” how, then, could there be any harmony between his word or teaching and their theologies? They teach that there are in men “immortal souls;” souls which are immaterial, and therefore immortal; and which when their bodies die, exist without bodies: that the value of

a single such soul is incalculable; and that it is the possession of this divine incorporeal entity angelized at death, which constitutes the preeminence of men over all other created things. But to such, the Spirit rejoins, "Fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" — "Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish" (Psalm 49:12,20). One such divine oracle is worth incalculably more than whole shiploads of university logic and collegiate "bodies of divinity."

This, then, is the grand principle upon which the immortality of man is based — *a scriptural comprehension of the truth developing a faith that works by love and purifies the heart in the obedience it commands*. A man with such an understanding heart is a "spiritual man;" but before he had the understanding of the truth, he was like bishops, deans, ministers, reptiles and monkeys, without preeminence demiurgically on any other speciality than form. The "natural man," the Spirit saith, is a beast; a mere "body of life." He may be decorated with all imaginable titles of honour, and humbly worshipped by his fellows; nevertheless, if he "understandeth not," he is a mere natural still. There is no seed of immortality in him.

Now, the scriptures teach that the seed of immortality in a believing man is Christ; and therefore he is styled by Paul in writing to saints in Colosse, "Christ our life." "I am," said Christ, "the truth and the life." "Let Christ," says Paul, "dwell in your hearts by faith;" hence, "the truth and the life" dwell in the heart by faith, by an intelligent comprehension and conviction of the truth. A man of such an understanding has life in him in this sense; and in the same sense it is, that "he believing into the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36); for "my words," saith Christ, "are spirit and life" (John 6:63).

From this testimony, it will be perceived, that the principle of a man's immortality is not physical or material, but doctrinal — the truth revealed and believed. Faith such as Abraham had, gives a believer "a right" to eternal life; and in so doing makes him "an heir of life," and "joint heir with Christ of all things." Hence, it is written, Apoc. 22:14, "*Blessed are those who wash their robes* that they may have *right* to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." So Tregelles' text. It is equivalent to the words in the Common Version; for no believer can "wash his robes white in the blood of the Lamb" unless he "do his commandments," which say to him who believes the gospel of the kingdom "*metanoete*, change the mind, and be immersed upon the name of Jesus Christ for or into the remission of sins" — Acts 2:38). To obey these commandments is to wash the robes white in the blood of Christ, and to obtain a right to life when he shall appear in

glory (Col. 3:4). By such a washing, he lays hold of the horns of the Altar, and is safe, if he continue within the Altar, otherwise not.

But, the right obtained may be forfeited by misconduct. Hence, Paul says to certain who had obtained the right, "If ye walk after the flesh, ye shall die;" that is, if ye obey the instincts and lusts of the natural man ye shall die, or forfeit your right. He therefore exhorted them to keep down these lusts by the power of the truth; and assured them that, if they sought for glory, honor, incorruptibility, and life, by "a patient continuance in well doing," the Deity would render them eternal life (Rom. 2:7); and thus, the right obtained would merge into *actual possession*.

Now, when actually possessed the possessor is a "spiritual man" in the highest sense. He becomes such after resurrection from among the dead. Before he died he differed from all natural men and other animals, in that he was "filled with the knowledge of the Deity's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Col. 1:9); and thus became "a partaker of the divine nature," in a moral sense: and in this sense also he was a spiritual man. But, though wise and understanding, he was still encumbered with a "vile body." This needed to be changed, "that it might be fashioned like to the body of Christ's glory" — like to that which He now has — Phil. 3:21. In other words, he needed to be invested with the white robes symbolically given to the souls underneath the Altar; a robe, which clothes one to the feet with the incorruption of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the promise is, "When Christ shall appear, *we shall be like him*; for we shall see him as he is" — 1 John 3:2. The saints shall be like him. "I was dead," says Christ, "but I am alive for evermore" — Apoc. 1:18. Paul styles him, "the Lord the Spirit," "a Quickening Spirit," "the Lord from heaven," "the Heavenly Man," "the last Adam." The wise shall be like what he now is. They will therefore be partakers of the divine nature in a substantial material sense; in other words they will be spirit; "for that which hath been born of spirit is spirit" (John 3:6).

From this condensed view of the subject, it will, then, be perceived, that, according to the scripture teaching, there are in the arrangements of Deity, *two bodies of life*; that is, two kinds of body through which life is manifested: the one body in its organization is essentially perishable; the other, essentially imperishable. Each body is formed, or organized, before it is made the medium of the life peculiar to it. At this crisis, they are simply *nephesh psuche* or *soul*; but when the mechanism of each body is put into motion, the one becomes *nephesh khayyah*, *psuche tzosa*, living soul or natural body; and the other, *soma pneumatikon*, a spiritual body, "spirit;" *pneuma agio-*

sunes, spirit of holiness, or holy spirit nature. But these bodies of life are not absolutely independent of one another. Their relationship is similar to that between the wheat standing in the field in winter time, and the same plant in harvest. The perishable body is projected from the earth in the resurrection period, when it stands a body of life, waiting for the Deity to give it a body according to his own good pleasure (1 Cor. 15:30; John 5:21) to give it a white robe if approved. No *body of life* is resurrected except such an one, whose organization will give expression to a *character extant before death*. Such a corporeally expressed character is the restoration of personal identity. The resurrected body of life, thinks, remembers, feels and acts, like Paul, or, it may be, Judas; therefore, it is Paul or Judas to all intents and purposes. But, in this stage of the affair, the resurrected body of life, so named because of identity, is a body capable of perishing again, if left to itself; or, of becoming imperishable eternally if acted upon by the power of Deity. This alternative, then, has to be determined by the Judge. Paul informs the saints of both classes — of that class who have “walked worthy of their high vocation,” and of that, who have “walked after the flesh,” since their immersion — he says to both these “Every one of us shall give account of himself to the Deity;” “for we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive *dia tou somatos, through the body* the things according to that he hath done, whether good or bad” (Rom. 16:12; 2 Cor. 5:10). Hence, Paul and Judas will both be there to tell the story of their lives in a previous state of existence. While they are giving account of themselves they are both of them *bodies of life*, like two plants of the same species in the field, the one may perish by frost or other cause; the other may be unaffected by evil, and yield fruit in harvest. The fate of Paul and Judas will depend on the nature of the account given by each. The rule by which the causes will be adjudicated is laid down by Paul in Gal. 6:7,8 — “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” A man sows before death; he reaps after rising from death. “He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” This is the rule, which is also illustrated by Paul himself and Judas. The last “sowed to his flesh;” and in his account he will abundantly show it. The sentence upon him in the resurrection-period will therefore doom him to “reap corruption of the flesh” — to “receive through the body according to what he had done;” and as this was bad, he will, through the body he acquires in the future, receive “bad,” or corruption. The body of life, then, named Judas, as a type of his class, remains perishable, and “when cast into outer darkness,” reaps all the

evil of which it is susceptible.

But Paul's case is differently disposed of. He also may represent a class. In his previous state of being, instead of betraying the truth, or perverting it to his own fleshly purposes, he "sowed to the Spirit." By reading the New Testament, it is easy to see how he did this. He will give account of himself in accordance with what is written of him; and he had great confidence that it will be accepted. Being accepted, then, he will "of the Spirit reap everlasting life." A white robe, as it were, will be presented to him. The power of the Deity will change, or transform, the body standing at the tribunal in the twinkling of an eye; even as Paul testifies, the saints living at the advent, who may be approved, shall be changed without tasting of death (1 Cor. 15:51,52). Thus, the body by this transformation is "clothed upon" with incorruptibility and immortality, by which "mortality is swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. 4:4); and thus will be verified in his own experience, his own testimony, that "this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal must put on immortality," when "death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:53,54); and when this process is completed, Paul in victory, is spiritual in the highest sense, *a body of life eternal*.

The scripture teaching, then, concerning *souls* and *immortality*, has no affinity with the teaching of pulpiteers on these subjects. The scripture defines immortality to be *life manifested through incorruptible body*; and declares, that the only being in the universe that has it underived is the Deity (1 Tim. 6:15,16). It also declares, that it is a part of the reward promised to the righteous to be given to them exclusively after the advent of Jesus in power, and his resurrection of them from the grave. Men attain to immortality, or deathlessness, in recompense for character, conformed to the moral image of the Deity, as he shines forth in the example of Jesus Christ. Faith and obedience are the basis of this character. Men are alienated from the life of the Deity through the ignorance that is in them (Eph. 4:18). Hence, there is no immortality for those who understand not the gospel; and this can be believed by none who believe the foolish rhapsodies and rhodomontade histrionically dispensed from the pulpits of the world. There is no immortality out of Christ; and they only are in him, who "believe the things concerning the kingdom of the Deity, and of the name of Jesus Christ, and are immersed unto him, both men and women" (Acts 8:12).

John says, in ch. 20:4, "I saw *the souls, tas psuchas*, of them who had been beheaded on account of the testimony of Jesus, and on account of the word of the Deity . . . and *they lived* and reigned with Christ a thousand years." As we have remarked before, among these

beheaded souls were those of the fifth seal which he saw underneath the Altar, and to whom white robes were given. When he sees them in ch. 20 they were, hieroglyphically, resurrected souls; for he says "they lived." Those in the fifth seal were, emblematically, in the death state, where nothing is really known, for "the dead know not anything" — "for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, *b'sheol* (in the land of forgetfulness — Psa. 88:12), whither thou goest" (Ecc. 9:5,10). But, in the fifth seal symbolization, a white robe is given to each, with an injunction to *repose*. This repose continues till the Messenger descends from heaven with power. He then awakes them, and they stand again on their feet above ground. This is *anastasis*. At this crisis they are "souls" or *bodies of life, prepared for investiture with the white robe of incorruption*. When John saw these beheaded souls alive again he also saw thrones — "I saw thrones," says he, "and they sat upon them." But, says Paul, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of the Deity; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:50). Now, as I have shown, bodies of life projected from the grave, with antecedent personal identity, are perishable. At this stage, therefore, of renewed existence they could not occupy the thrones seen. They must first appear at the tribunal of Christ, the Great White Throne (ch. 20:11), and give account of themselves or report to him. Being deemed "holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in his sight, having continued in the faith, rooted and settled, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel" (Col. 1:22,23); Christ transfigures the bodies of their humiliation, that they may become symmorphous or conformable to the body of his glory, through the energy whereby he is able also to subdue to himself all things (Phil. 3:21). Being thus "clothed upon," they are no longer mere "souls," which are "naked" and put to shame if not "clothed," but incorruptible and deathless beings, "the sons of the Deity, being the sons of the resurrection, and equal to the angels" (Luke 20:36). Thus robed in the pure incorruption of the Spirit, Paul's objection in their case is removed, and they are qualified to possess "the thrones of the House of David;" so that it will be said to them by the King, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the state" (Matt. 25:34).

In dismissing this item of the fifth seal, it may be remarked that its symbolization, with respect to the *souls*, is the representation in emblem of ideas perfectly familiar to the christian mind of the times antecedent and concurrent with the seal. Believers were exhorted by the apostles to be ready at any time for a sacrifice of themselves. In view of his own execution, Paul says, "If I be *poured out* upon the

sacrifice of your faith, I rejoice;" and again, "I am now ready to be offered," or poured out at the base of the altar, "and the time of my analysis* is at hand." And, in the century succeeding the apostolic age, Ignatius, who was ordered to execution by Trajan, speaks of his approaching end as his being poured out as a libation to God on his altar. And speaking of Polycarp of Smyrna, who suffered about A.D. 160, his biographer says: "Having his hands tied behind him, and being bound as a ram out of a great flock for an offering, and *prepared for a burnt sacrifice*, acceptable to the Deity, he looked to heaven and said: 'O Father, I give thee hearty thanks that thou hast vouchsafed to me that at this day and this hour I should have a part in the number of thy witnesses in the cup of thy Christ, unto the resurrection of eternal life both of soul and body, in the incorruption of the Holy Spirit. Among whom may I be accepted this day before thee as *an acceptable sacrifice*, as thou hast ordained.'" He regarded his execution as a sacrifice, or outpouring underneath the altar, and met it cheerfully, in hope of the resurrection of his soul as well as his body for investiture with the white robe, which he styles the "incorruption of the Holy Spirit."

In conclusion, I may just inform the reader that the Rev. Mr. Elliott expounds the white robes emblematically given to the souls underneath the altar as symbolical of their justification before the pagan public by the edict of the emperor Galerius, granting toleration to christians, and entreating them to pray to their God for his restoration to health. Thus, he considers their memory was justified. A remarkable robe this, and of pagan manufacture too! A clergyman might rejoice in the honor of such a justification, but certainly not the humblest of the saints.

6. "O Despot, Holy and True!"

Such was the style of address put into the mouths of the souls underneath the altar by the Spirit — *ho Despotes ho hagios kai ho alethinos*. This is the only place in the Apocalypse where the word *Despotes* occurs; in the twenty-two other places where the word *Lord* is found it is *kurios*, in the original. I conclude, therefore, that there must be some special reason why *despotes* and not *kurios* is adopted in the symbology of the fifth seal.

I find that *despot* is used in nine other places in the New

* The word "departure" (2 Tim. 4:6) is from the Greek *analysis*, signifying "an unloosing", or as a military term, the breaking up of an encampment. The English word analysis denotes the separating of a whole into its constituent elements. The use of the word by Paul is significant. He was not writing of his "departure" but of his death and consequent disintegration of his bodily parts. — HPM

Testament. In four of these it is applied to men, and translated *master*; in one instance it is so rendered in regard to God; and in the remaining four it is rendered *Lord*, and affirmed of the Deity. In Acts 4:24, the Holy and True Despot is declared in the address of the disciples after their return from the Chief Priests to their companions, saying to the Deity, "O Despot, thou art the Deity who made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and all things in them; and spake by the mouth of David." And Jude, speaking of certain false professors that had crept into the ecclesias unawares, says, that they "denied the only *Despot* Deity — *ton monon despoten Theon* — even the *Lord* Jesus Anointed." These were Nikolaitans, who were without judgment in the "great mystery of Deity manifested in Flesh" — "the fathers" of that great apostasy which afterwards developed itself into that enormous imposture, THE KINGDOM OF THE CLERGY, which darkens and demoralizes the peoples of the earth.

The Deity, then, symbolized by "the Lamb as it had been slain, having Seven Horns and Seven Eyes," is the only Holy and True Despot Deity of the Universe. This, however, in the period of the fifth seal, was disputed by another, who denied the existence of the Holy and True One, and claimed that he was the only Despot of the habitable, whom men ought to honor and obey. He styled himself Diocletianus *Jupiter* or *Jove*, while Maximian, whom he associated with himself in the imperial offices, assumed the title of *Hercules*.

Now, it is a remarkable historic fact that, at the epoch of the opening of the fifth seal, a *New Despotism* was set up by Diocletian *Jupiter*, totally different from that to which the Roman peoples had been subject from the days of Augustus hitherto. Gibbon says, "Diocletian may be considered as the founder of a new empire." This arduous work, he says, he completely achieved by A.D. 303, which was the twentieth of his reign, when he celebrated that memorable era, by a Roman triumph. "He framed a new system of imperial government, which was afterwards completed by the family of *Constantine*." Eight years before his elevation, the Roman Senate had aspired to the restoration of republicanism. This was an offence in his sight, and he assigned to *Hercules* the work of reducing it to sheer abjection, while the dignity of Rome was impaired by the studied absence of *Jupiter* and *Hercules*, who made Milan and Nicomedia their palatial residences. By this policy, "the Senate of Rome, losing all connection with the imperial court and the actual constitution, was left a venerable but useless monument of antiquity on the Capitoline Hill."

The ancient modest titles of civil magistracy were laid aside, and, if these deities still distinguished their high station by the appellation of

DIOCLETIAN'S REIGN

(Period of the 5th Seal — Apoc. 6:9-11)

These Roman coins illustrate the exposition of p. 255 onwards. The concord with which Diocletian and Maximian governed the Empire was illustrated on such. Both are shown carrying globes and sceptres and as jointly crowned by Victory. However, supreme rule was in the hands of Diocletian. The comment is made that "a *New Despotism* was set up by Diocletian Jupiter, totally different from that to which the Roman peoples had been subject from the days of Augustus hitherto." Under this new form of rule he assumed the authority of a Despot, and this was shown by him wearing a diadem instead of a laureate. *Eureka* comments: "The Diocletian Jupiter ventured to assume the *diadem*, an ornament detested by the Romans as the odious ensign of royalty." The coins below depict Diocletian as wearing a diadem instead of the laureate (left), whilst the reverse side depicts Jupiter (representing Diocletian, who claimed identity with that god) receiving the dominion of the world from Victory. He holds thunderbolt and sceptre, and places his right foot on the neck of a bound and seated captive.



emperor, or *imperator*, that word was understood in a new and more dignified sense, and no longer denoted the general of the Roman armies, but *the Sovereign of the Roman World*. The title emperor was associated with another of a more servile kind. *Dominus*, or master, owner, supreme lord, was expressive of *the despotic power of a master over his domestic slaves*. Viewing it in this odious light, it had been rejected with abhorrence by the first Caesars. "Pliny," says Gibbon, "speaks of *Dominus* with execration, as synonymous with tyrant and opposite to prince." But, notwithstanding this repugnance, the name in time lost its odiousness, till at length the style of "Our Despot and Emperor" — *Dominus et Imperator noster* — was not only bestowed by flattery, but was regularly admitted into the laws and public monuments. The whole magnificence and ceremony of Asiatic state and servility was introduced under Diocletian and Maximian, who usurped the attributes of *Divinity*, and transmitted the titles expressive thereof to a succession of Catholic emperors. The Diocletian Jupiter ventured to assume the *diadem*, an ornament detested by the Romans as the odious ensign of royalty, and the use of which had been considered as the most desperate act of the madness of Caligula. It was no more than a broad white fillet set with pearls, which encircled the emperor's head. Thus, the Sixth Head of the Dragon was diademed, whereby also, as all the five previous forms of government were all subordinately merged in the emperorship, they were diademed as well. The progress of despotism was rapid and irresistible. When a subject was admitted to the divine presence of the imperial Jupiter, he was obliged, whatever might be his rank, to fall prostrate on the ground, and to adore, according to the eastern fashion, the divinity of his Lord and Despot. The state maintained by Diocletian was theatrical, the object of which was to display the unbounded power which the emperors possessed over the Roman world.

Now, it cannot be supposed that this novel despotism should develop itself and be established without exciting great attention and discussion among the people. The immense number of professors of christianity in the empire would reject the pretensions of Diocletian to be the only true and holy despot of the world. They would affirm the claims of the Deity whom they worshipped; and would refuse to prostrate themselves in his imperial presence in recognition of his divinity and lordship upon earth. This was, doubtless, the reason why a great number of "christians" were dismissed from their official employments in the imperial household and other departments of the state. An issue was joined upon the question of — *Who is the Holy and True Despot of the world, Jupiter or the Lamb?* This was the great question

of the day, which, until the Lamb's party gained the victory, absorbed all others. It was a question which, in its discussion, shook the empire to its foundation, and brought great calamity upon those who repudiated the high pretensions of "the Father of the gods and men." Like the question that abolished the constitution of the Union and brought ruin upon the republic, it had its period of discussion and its period of war. The first eighteen years of the reign of Diocletian afforded scope for "the word of the Deity and the testimony held" against his usurpation of divine attributes. Policy, however, inclined him to toleration, until, by the importunity of his associate, Galerius, who entertained the most implacable aversion for the name and religion of Christ, he was induced to proclaim war against the adherents of the Lamb. This edict inaugurated the fifth seal, of which the great and absorbing subjects of debate were the antagonistic claims of Jupiter and the Lamb to the Despot-Sovereignty of the world.

This, then, is the reason why the Spirit puts this remarkable style of address into the mouths of the souls underneath the altar. By so doing, he pronounces through them sentence in the great controversy being so sanguinarily discussed during the period of the fifth seal. In effect, he proclaims, "I, even I the Lamb, am the Despot, holy and true; the claims of the pretended Jupiter shall not stand; for the great day of my wrath is near, when I will judge and avenge the blood of my servants, and expel from the heaven their persecutor and cast him to the earth" (ch. 6:17; 12:8). The introduction of the word *Despot* in this the only place of the Apocalypse, is a sort of chronological indication that the fifth seal belongs to the period to which it is herein assigned.

7. Their Fellowservants and Brethren

In the answer given by the Spirit to the emblematic souls underneath the altar, the professors of christianity still alive and contemporary with the fifth seal period, are divided into two classes — the one the fellowservants, and the other the brethren, of the deceased souls. The brethren are fellowservants, but all the fellowservants were not brethren — even as christadelphians are christians, but all christians so-called are not christadelphians. The brethren of the souls were all fellowservants of the Lamb's household in the service of "conquering" the idolatry enthroned in the Dragon empire. The Nikolaitanes, the spurious Jews of Satan's synagogue, the Balaamites, Jezebel's children, the dead Sardians who had only a name to live, the feeble Philadelphians, and the lukewarm Laodiceans, were all fellowservants in this crusade against that which hindered the manifestation of the Man of Sin. They all belonged to the ecclesiastical community

called "Christian" by the idolators, and were exposed in common to all the persecutions raised against it by the priests and rulers of the Roman Habitable. Multitudes of them were killed in this long and sanguinary religious war. But, though they thus became what ecclesiastics call "martyrs," they "remembered not from whence they had fallen, to repent and do the first works;" they repented not of the blasphemy of styling themselves Jews when they were only of the Satan's synagogue; they still taught that believers might eat things sacrificed to idols, and themselves sacrifice as an expedient to save their lives in times of persecution, and, though thus "lapsed," on the restoration of peace, be received again among "the brethren;" they still adhered to "the depths of the Satan as they teach;" they kept not the word, and denied the Spirit-Name; they repented of none of these things, but still styling themselves "Jews inwardly," or christians, they waxed worse and worse to the times of the Sixth Seal, saying, at the crisis of the war against the Dragon, "We are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;" but they knew not that they were "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Many of them "gave their bodies to be burned" in this great antipagan war; but, not possessing the *agape*, or love which comprehends the one faith and the one hope, believing and hoping all the things, and rejoicing in the truth, and styled in the Common Version, most incorrectly, "charity," they were sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Paul had prevision of these "fellowservants" in the war, who, indeed, brought much trouble upon him in his day. In reference to them, he warned the Ephesian Brethren that from among their own Elders men would arise "speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them;" and, in writing to the saints at Corinth, says of their class in 1 Cor. 13:2: "Though I have prophecy, and understand all the mysteries, and all the knowledge; and though I have all the faith, so that I could remove mountains; and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor (charity); and though I give *my body to be burned*, and have not *agape*, or love, (as he defines it), *it profiteth me nothing.*" Hence, the "martyrdom" of the many of these fellowservants of the souls underneath the altar, so glorified by their class in then present and aftertimes, was of no profit to them; it served for a testimony against paganism and judgment upon themselves for their apostasy.

About fifty years previous to the opening of the fifth seal, a broad line of demarcation began to be drawn ecclesiastically between these "fellowservants" and "the brethren." As we have already seen in our account of the Novatians, these fellowservants, who called themselves "Catholics," because the majority, and holding chiefly the offices of

the Ecclesias, expelled "the brethren" from their pale. Cyprian, whom modern Episcopalians regard as the great "father" who championed the things which they approve, was a notable chief of the fellow-servants in the Roman Africa. He was a notable specimen of a pious, eloquent, and charitable ecclesiastic; he would have made a first-rate archbishop of Cambray, or Canterbury; or a zealous minister of any other denomination. No one can doubt his sincerity; for he suffered death for the testimony he held against paganism. But he was not of "the brethren." We refer the reader to Vol. 1, p. 444, for reference to him more in detail than is necessary here. He may also turn to p. 296 of that volume, for things taught and believed by "the fellow-servants." None who rejoice in such traditions can be brethren to "souls slain for the word of the Deity." This does not teach the inherent and hereditary immortality of ground-souls; it does not teach, the salvation from, or damnation in, flaming sulphur, of infant immortal souls; it does not teach sacramentalism; or the impartation of converting and regenerating spirit, technically styled "grace" by Laodiceans, through unenlightened formalism; or the subjection of an infant, or ignorant faithless adult, to the ceremonial use of water, bread, and wine, in any form; it does not teach, either baptism or rantism — immersion or sprinkling — for the remission of original sin; nor does it teach, that baptism came in the room of circumcision. The word of the Deity, on account of which the souls underneath the altar were slain, teaches none of these "depths of the Satan;" therefore they were not slain on account of them; and the living styled "their brethren," could not have believed them.

The Brethren in the period of the fifth seal had become what would now be styled "a contemptible few." They were, however the "little strength" of the dilapidated and demoralized christian body. The true scriptural understanding of the word was with them. They were the salt, without which the whole community of professors would have been currently putrescent. The Lamb, for their sakes, still delayed to "spue them out of his mouth;" but, when the number of the Brethren that should be killed by the pagan power should be filled up, there would no longer be any reason why *the spuing* should be deferred.

During the period of the first Six Seals the number of "the Brethren" or christadelphians, continually decreased, while that of "the fellow-servants" as persistently and rapidly increased. This will appear, not only from history, but from the general tenor of the epistles to the seven Asiatic ecclesias. In Ephesus, contemporary with the giving of the apocalypse, the Brethren of Christ were in the

majority, as they were also in all other parts of Asia Minor. The Spirit commends their works, and labor, and patience; though indeed, they were not up to that standard of excellence that prevailed in the time of Paul. They had "fellowservants" among them when John wrote; but being in the official, as well as the popular majority, they were able to try and convict pretenders to apostleship; and to denounce their Nikolaitanism as a hateful and detested imposition. But, in two hundred years after, a great revolution in affairs had been effected; and the relative position of parties altogether reversed. The Brethren had entered the Sardian state. They had dwindled down to "a few names," and to but a "little strength;" while the Fellowservants had gained official and numerical ascendancy; they "had a name that they were living;" that they were vigorous, and strong. They now formed a distinct and independent republic, in the midst of the empire, governed by its own laws and magistrates, possessed of a public treasury, and intimately connected in all its parts, by the frequent assemblies of its bishops, to whose decrees their numerous and opulent congregations yielded an implicit obedience. Thus ecclesiastically organized, the Fellowservants considered that "they were rich and had need of nothing," but a military leader, (for they already swarmed in the armies of the state) to place the sovereign power in their hands. But against all this "the Brethren" protested as indicative of spiritual death; that those who approved it were "dead;" and that the system itself, as a divine institution for the separation of a people from among the Gentiles for the Spirit-Name, was "ready to die." But the protest of the Brethren was unheeded by their Fellowservants, or the "Catholics" so-called. The events of the Sixth Seal furnished these with the desired Military Chieftain in one of the six emperors of the Roman world. Thus led, they became victorious over Jupiter and Hercules; and in their prosperity, ignored all connection with "the Brethren;" who, having been mostly killed in the period of the fifth seal, were added to the souls underneath the altar; so that the "little strength" of the Philadelphian state being reduced to *lukewarmness* among the Fellowservants, these under the sixth seal entered the Laodicean, in which they shone forth "clothed with the sun, and the moon under their feet, and upon their head a stephan, or coronal wreath, of twelve stars" (ch. 12:1). Politically, they had "conquered" the Pagan, whose philosophy spiritually had vanquished them.

In conclusion, it may be remarked under this head, that the term "fellowservants" is as appropriate for "the Catholics" of the latter part of the third century and the early part of the fourth (but not "catholics" of succeeding times) as the term "sanctified ones" was to the pagan

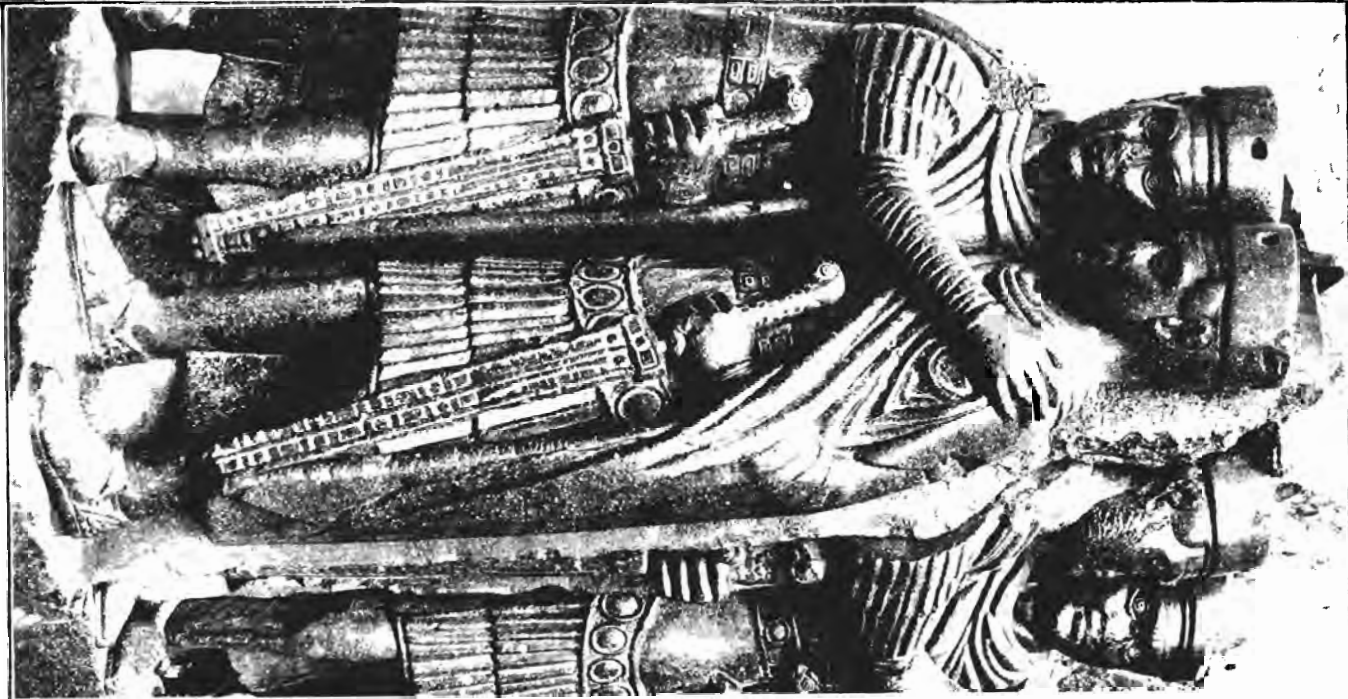
Medes and Persians in Isa. 13:3. These were the Spirit's sanctified ones in the sense of their being *separated* by him for the work of overthrowing the Babylonish Lion. The primitive catholics were separated, or sanctified, to the service of "casting the great red Dragon and his angels out of the heaven" (ch. 12:7-10); because he was the prosecutor of "their brethren." The Brethren themselves, who were not allowed the use of carnal weapons, could not have effected this expulsion; it was therefore reserved for the time when the Brethren would be inappreciably few, and in effect superseded by mere nominal professors of christianity calling themselves Catholics, to expel by these the Accuser from the heaven. These christians in name, having become in the sight of Deity "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" — only a slight spiritual improvement, if any, upon the vicious and bloodstained idolators — he assigned to them the service of dethroning Jupiter by the sword; for "the wicked are His sword." They were sanctified to this work; or, in modern phraseology, this was their mission. The doctrinal defeat of paganism, in the conversion of the worshippers of the gods to "the faith once delivered to the saints," was due to "the Brethren" who faithfully adhered to "the word of the Deity;" but the political and military overthrow of the common enemy, to "the Fellowservants" or catholics under the Sixth Seal, who were prepared like the troops of Cyrus, to combat on the principles of the flesh, for dominion and the glory of the world. Victory gave them these, and they have retained them to this day. The use they have made of them has been worse than pagan. Having become putrid, the Spirit ejected them with disgust and loathing; and as "the thinking of the flesh" now obtained full sway, they were inimical to the Deity and "the word of his grace," and became the violent and bitter persecutors of "the Brethren," — "the remnant, who keep the commandments of the Deity, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (ch. 12:17).

In conclusion lastly, the reader may now "see" the reason why the symbolization of the first seal was *white* indicative of peace and prosperity within the limits of the Roman Habitable; and of the succeeding seals, red, black, livid pale, and the sun of the heavens black as sackcloth of hair, indicative of war, distress, famine, pestilence, and total obliteration. The reason may be found in this. Christ said to his disciples, "*ye are the salt of the earth*;" but if the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it (the earth) be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men." During the first seal-period, the Body of Christ had not lost its savor; it salted Roman Society, "the earth," with divine wisdom; and society had peace and prospered. Life and property were secure; government was

fairly administered; and the people were successful in trade and commerce. But, in the second seal-period, the savor of the salt had much deteriorated — civil war took the peace away from the earth in retribution; in the third seal-period, the savour had still more diminished, and there were superadded greater public calamities: in the fourth seal-period, it was hardly possible to discover any salt in the so-called Body of Christ at all; and the consequence was that famine, pestilence, and sword, brought the state to the verge of dissolution, and reduced the population of the world to half: in the sixth seal-period, the salt had become tasteless; in the mouth of the Spirit, it was utterly insipid, and “good for nothing but to be cast out;” and therefore, as he threatened to do if they repented not, he spued the self styled “catholics” out of his mouth — He repudiated them with all their speculations about immortal souls, eternal torture with and by the devil in flaming brimstone, going to heaven at death, infant damnation and salvation, baby and adult sprinkling, baptism in the room of circumcision, salvation of apostates, the saving efficacy of martyrdom, salvation by sacraments without faith, the apostolic successorship of ecclesiastics, and many other vain traditions too numerous to mention here — He spued them all out of his mouth as the loathsome and nauseous putrid sloughs of a carcase he pronounced “dead,” and dissolving in corruption. Such was the end of primitive christianity in the times parallel with paganism in power. It went forth “conquering” and it “conquered.” It gained the *stephan* in the games; but in its victory became a wreck.

8. Historical Illustration of the Fifth Seal

At the commencement of this period, A.D. 303, the Roman people were under the dominion of two emperors of the first rank styled *Augusti*; and two of an inferior grade, styled *Caesars*. Of these four, the two former were Diocletian, who surnamed himself *Jupiter*; and Maximian, surnamed *Hercules*; and the two others, Galerius, the Caesar and son-in-law to Jupiter; and Constantius Chlorus, Caesar and son-in-law to Hercules. Diocletian the parent of the fortunes of the other three, was a man of profound dissimulation, vigorous mind, steady in the pursuit of his ends, ambitious, superstitious, but not naturally cruel. For about eighteen of the earliest years of his reign, he protected the Catholics; and but for the savage fierceness of Maximian, and his son-in-law Galerius, who influenced him against them, he would probably not have figured among the persecutors of the faith. Constantius, the father of “Constantine the Great,” was a person of probity and humanity. Of the other three, the ferocity of Galerius was



PREPARATION FOR THE SIXTH SEAL.

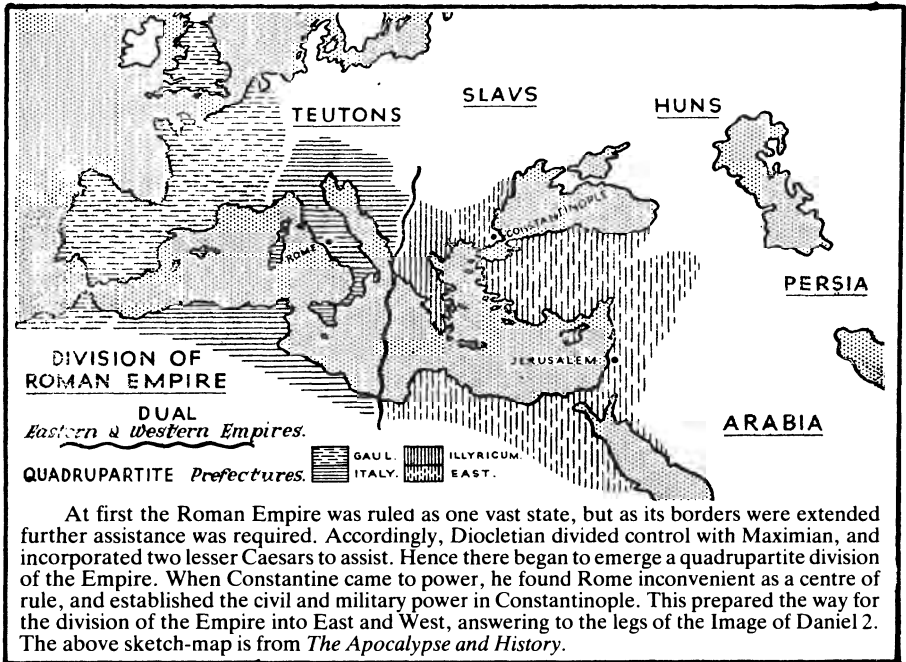
The sixth seal opened to provide a picture of the political and religious revolution that followed the ascension of Constantine to sole rule over the world. As *Eureka* records (see opposite), in his governmental reforms, Diocletian in 286 made the Empire into a Tetrarchy (four-man rule), led by two Augusti: himself in the East and Maximian in the West, and two Caesars: slightly younger men who would later succeed the Augusti (whereupon two new Caesars would be appointed, and so on). The Tetrarchy is shown in the carving left dating about A.D. 300. Diocletian and Maximian, the Augusti, at right; the two Caesars, at left, Galerius and Constantius, the father of Constantine. On his elevation to power in the West, and drive for power with the aid of "Christians" Constantine destroyed the Tetrarchy and assumed sole rule.

the most remarkable; so that it may be truly said, that the inauguration of the slaughter of the fifth seal was referable to him.

The third century concluded with some symptoms of a storm ready to burst upon "the fellow-servants and brethren," who had long been in a state of ease and worldly prosperity and as we have seen, deeply declined from the purity and simplicity of the gospel. In Eusebius is found the following observation in reference to the times: "The heavy hand of the Deity's judgments," says he, "began softly, by little and little, to visit us after his wonted manner. The persecution that was raised against us, took place first amongst the christians (the Fellow-servants) who were in military service; but we were not at all moved with his hand, nor took any pains to return to God. We heaped sin upon sin, judging, like careless Epicureans, that the Deity cared not for our sins, nor would ever visit us on account of them. And our pretended shepherds ("the clergy") laying aside the rule of godliness, practised among themselves contention and division." Then speaking of the persecution of the fifth seal, he says: "The dreadful persecution of Diocletian was then inflicted on the Ecclesia, as a just punishment and as the most proper chastisement for their iniquities."

Toward the end of the third century, while Diocletian was practising the superstitious rites of divination, he became persuaded that the ill success of his attempts to pry into futurity, were owing to the presence of a catholic servant, who had made on his forehead the sign of the cross: and he immediately in great anger, ordered not only those who were present, but all in his palace, to sacrifice to the gods, or, in case of refusal, to be scourged with whips. He commanded also the officers of his armies to constrain all the soldiers to do the same, or to discharge the disobedient from the service. Many of the catholics (for it was only these bearing the name of christian that enlisted in the armies of Jupiter) chose rather to resign their commissions. A very few were put to death on this account. Marcellus a centurion was one of these. His story is, briefly, that A.D. 298, at Tangier in Mauritania, while every one was employed in feasting and sacrifices, he took off his belt, threw down his vine branch and his arms, and added, "I will not fight any longer under the banner of your emperor, or serve your gods of wood and stone. If the condition of a soldier be such that he is obliged to sacrifice to gods and emperors, I abandon the vine branch and the belt, and quit the service." He was ordered to be beheaded; and Cassianus, the register, whose business it was to record the sentence, cried out that he was shocked at its injustice. He was put to death a month afterwards.

But the general persecution which destroyed such numbers, was



withheld for some time. In the prelude already mentioned, and of which we have only a dark and imperfect account, something of Diocletian's policy seems conspicuous. He probably feared the catholic element of his armies, thinking it might subvert the order of things he had established, and set up Catholicism in its place. By purging the army he might prevent this, and perpetuate the reign of Jupiter without a rival, as the Despot of the Roman world. Be this as it might, it is evident that after he had long favored the Catholics, from some cause or other, he had now contracted a prejudice against them, though at first he made use of artifice rather than violence.

But, as we have said, Jupiter's son-in-law Galerius was a most ferocious monster of superstition. Hating the catholics intensely, he determined to gratify his malignity by stirring up Diocletian, if possible, to agree to their extermination by fire, axe, and torture of every kind. He accordingly visited the Court at Nicomedia in the nineteenth of his reign, A.D. 302, and there, during the whole winter, devoted himself to the obtaining of the imperial sanction to this iniquity. He proposed a general persecution; but Diocletian Jupiter remonstrated against the impolicy of such sanguinary measures, and was for limiting the persecution to the officers of the court and the soldiers. Finding himself unable to stem the fury of Galerius, he called

a council of a few judges and officers. Some gave it as their opinion, that the christians should in general be put to death; and others, induced by fear or flattery, assented. Still D. Jupiter was averse, and through policy, or superstition, determined to consult the oracle of Apollo at Miletus. Apollo's priests in charge of the oracle, answered, as might have been expected, in a manner friendly to the views of Galerius. Staggered by repeated importunities, the old emperor still hesitated, and could not be persuaded to attempt the annihilation of christianity by bloodshed; whereas Galerius, strengthened in his murderous intent by the equal hatred of his extremely bigoted mother, desired to burn alive all who refused to sacrifice to the gods of Greece and Rome.

The pleasure of the imperial hierarchy of paganism was at length signified to the fellowservants and the brethren of the souls already underneath the altar, who, during the course of this gloomy winter had expected, with anxiety, the result of so many secret consultations. The 23rd Feb. A.D., 303, which coincided with the Latin festival of the Terminalia, was appointed to set bounds to the further progress of christianity. At the earliest dawn, the praetorian praefect, accompanied by several generals, tribunes, and officers of the revenue, repaired to the principal catholic edifice of Nicomedia, which was situated on an eminence in the most populous and beautiful part of the city. The doors were instantly broken, and they rushed in, searching in vain for some visible object of worship (evincing so far a diversity between ancient catholicism and modern popery), they were obliged to content themselves with committing to the flames — not a mass book, or episcopal liturgy, for this trumpety even in those degenerate times had not then been invented — but the volumes of holy scripture. These imperial ministers of destruction were followed by a numerous body of guards and pioneers, who marched in order of battle, and were provided with all the instruments used in the destruction of fortified cities. By their incessant labor, an ecclesiastical edifice, which towered above the imperial palace, and had long excited the indignation and envy of the idolators, was in a few hours levelled with the ground.

The next day the general edict of persecution was published. It was enacted that the ecclesiastical edifices, styled by the Apostasy "churches," in all the provinces of the empire, should be demolished to their foundations; and the punishment of death was pronounced against all who should presume to hold any secret assemblies for the purpose of religious worship. And as it was understood, that the doctrines of the faith of Christ were all contained in the writings of the prophets and apostles, it was ordered that the bishops and presbyters should deliver all the sacred books into the hands of the magistrates;