



The Spiritual Warfare

A Study About an Existing
Warfare between Christians
and Powerful Spirit Beings
Occupying Heavenly Places

Arlen L. Chitwood

*The
Spiritual
Warfare*

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places [‘against the spirit forces of wickedness in heavenly places’]” (Eph. 6:12).

Cover Photograph: Sunset On South Carolina Coast, Spring, 2005

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by
Arlen L. Chitwood

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By the Same Author —

HAD YE BELIEVED MOSES
THE MOST HIGH RULETH
FROM ACTS TO THE EPISTLES
IN THE LORD'S DAY
FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN
LET US GO ON
REDEEMED FOR A PURPOSE
JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST
MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM
THE BRIDE IN GENESIS
SEARCH FOR THE BRIDE
SEVEN, TEN GENERATIONS
GOD'S FIRSTBORN SONS
THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE
SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH
SALVATION OF THE SOUL
SO GREAT SALVATION
THE TIME OF THE END
BROUGHT FORTH FROM ABOVE
THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE
SIGNS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL
RUN TO WIN
JUDE
RUTH
ESTHER

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FOREWORD

There is an existing, ongoing warfare between powerful spirit beings in the heavens (Satan and his angels) and individuals on the earth (Christians). This warfare centers around *salvation* — not the Christians' presently possessed eternal salvation but present and future aspects of salvation, the salvation of the soul. In this respect, *the existing warfare is a battle for the souls (the lives) of the saved.*

And the warfare has *regal ramifications*, which takes one all the way back to:

1) The reason for man's creation in the beginning ("let them have dominion ['let them rule']" [Gen. 1:26-28]).

2) And the reason Satan brought about man's fall (Satan was the one to whom God had previously given dominion [rulership] over the earth, the one who held the sceptre at the time of man's creation [Ezek. 28:14; Luke 4:6], with man created to replace the incumbent ruler).

Man has been, is being, and will be saved for *a revealed purpose*. There is *a revealed goal* in view, and, relative to salvation, *that goal is always the same in Scripture*, regardless of what aspect of man's salvation is in view. *That goal is the same* for the whole of man's salvation — "spirit and soul and body" (1 Thess. 5:23). *That goal has to do with redeemed man ultimately occupying the position for which he was created in the beginning.*

Man, realizing the goal of salvation, *must one day hold the sceptre*. And this will occur after Man's Day has run its course, at the beginning of the Messianic Era.

(This is the manner in which Scripture presents salvation throughout, with the unchangeable foundational pattern set in the opening verses of Genesis.

The inhabited world to come will not be placed in subjection to angels, as the present world [Heb. 2:5]. *This is the message seen throughout Scripture.* A new order of Sons is about to be brought on the scene [Rom. 8:18-23]. Satan and his angels are about to be replaced by Christ and His co-heirs. And, from a Scriptural standpoint, man's salvation centers around that coming day when this new order of Sons will hold the sceptre and rule the earth.)

Man invariably deals with salvation in relation to eternity and going to heaven, while seldom mentioning salvation in relation to the Messianic Era and the kingdom of the heavens. Scripture, on the other hand, presents the matter in the latter respect. Scripture invariably deals with salvation in relation to the Messianic Era and the kingdom of the heavens. *Heaven* (the present dwelling place of God) and *the ages beyond* are mentioned at times, but not relative to salvation in the same sense that man relates them to salvation.

Man is not going to spend either the Messianic Era or the eternal ages which follow in the place known today as *heaven*. And, in relation to *the eternal ages* which follow the Messianic Era, God is not going to dwell in this place either. God is going to dwell *on the new earth throughout the ages comprising eternity*.

And even when Scripture does deal with saved man in heaven (*e.g.*, Christians following death, or Christians following the rapture) matters are always completely consistent with the way Scripture elsewhere deals with saved man. If future time comes into view, reference is made to things surrounding the Messianic Era, not the ages beyond (though in several instances the Messianic Era is connected with and seen as the first of these ages, though separate from them [*e.g.*, Luke 1:33; Eph. 2:7]).

The Messianic Era, Ages Beyond

During the Messianic Era, man will dwell either on a restored earth or in the heavens above this restored earth, with there being a Jerusalem above and a Jerusalem below (capital cities both over and on the earth, with Christians [along with certain O.T. saints] inhabiting

the city above, and Israel inhabiting the city below). During this era, there will be a rule from the heavens over the earth. And this rule, as today, will originate with God in heaven and progress through rulers placed in the heavens in relation to this earth.

Today, this rule progresses from God through Satan and his angels (though rebel rulers), who reside in the heavens above the earth. But during that coming day this rule will progress from God through His Son and His Son's co-heirs, who will reside in the new Jerusalem above the earth.

A rule of the preceding nature, from the heavens over the earth, must continue during the Messianic Era, for this is the manner in which God established the government of the earth in the beginning. Such a rule must continue as long as the earth remains, which will be until the end of the Messianic Era — to the full end of the seven days, the 7,000 years, set forth in the beginning (Gen. 1:1-2:3).

A rule from the heavens over the earth (one province in God's kingdom) is not only the way in which God originally established the government of the earth but the way in which He evidently established His government throughout all other parts of the universe as well (all other provinces in His kingdom). And this can never change in relation to any one province, for "the heavens do rule" (*cf.* Dan. 4:25, 26).

Thus, God's Son, with His co-heirs, *must rule throughout the Messianic Era* in exact accordance with the way God established the government of the earth in the beginning. Such a governmental rule will have to continue during this time, for the present earth will not pass out of existence until the end of the Messianic Era (Rev. 21:1-5).

God's Son, with His co-heirs, will rule over the earth for 1,000 years — the earth's coming Sabbath, foreshadowed by the seventh day in Gen. 2:1-3 (*cf.* Ex. 31:13-17; Heb. 4:1-9). They will rule for 1,000 years to effect order where disorder has prevailed for millenniums in one province in God's universe. And once order has been restored, the kingdom will be delivered up to God the Father, that God might be "all in all [*i.e.*, permeate all, be 'everything in all things']."

Then, once order has been restored and the kingdom has been delivered up to the Father, the present heavens and earth will pass

out of existence. A new heavens and a new earth will be brought into existence; and the new earth, in that day, will become the place in the new heavens (as the earth today is located at a place in the present heavens) from whence universal rule will emanate. God will move His throne to the new earth, the Son will sit with His Father on this throne (called “the throne of God and of the Lamb”), and saved man will exercise power from this throne as well (II Peter 3:10ff; Rev. 21:1ff; 22:1-5).

Regality, the Earth, the Universe

Therein lies man’s destiny, not going to heaven per se. Man’s destiny in relation to the heavens has to do with *regality, the earth, and the universe* — first, ruling over this present earth from the new Jerusalem above the earth, during the Messianic Era; then, ruling out in the universe from the new Jerusalem on the new earth, during the ages which follow (*cf.* Psa. 8:3-6).

(Note that the size of the new Jerusalem — about 1,500 miles in length, breadth, and height [Rev. 21:16] — would give rise to the thought that the new earth will likely be much larger than the present earth. A city of this size would be completely out of place sitting on the present earth, but the new earth will apparently be of a size which could easily accommodate this city.)

Salvation in Scripture is always dealt with in relation to the scope of Scripture; and Scripture deals centrally with everything moving toward a seventh day, a seventh 1,000-year period (*cf.* Matt. 16:28-17:5; II Peter 1:15-18; 3:3-8). Events during this coming day, the Messianic Era, must be brought to pass *first*. And therein lies the reason why Scripture deals with man centrally in relation to this time, with the ages beyond seldom being in view (regardless of which aspect of salvation is being dealt with — past, present, or future).

Only following the Messianic Era can the ages which lie beyond this era be brought into view in all their fullness. During the present time, the eternal ages are briefly dealt with in Scripture so that man can have some understanding of God’s plan for the ages, where the

whole of the matter — 6,000 years, followed by a 1,000-year Messianic Era — will eventually lead. But only following the Messianic Era will matters move *beyond* that which is dealt with extensively in Scripture. Only then will God begin to open up and fully reveal that which will occur during the period *which man thinks of today as eternity*.

And the manner in which Scripture presents this whole matter — particularly as it relates to eternal salvation — has become very difficult, practically impossible, for most Christians to see and grasp. These Christians have been taught wrong for years — not necessarily concerning *how to be saved*, but concerning *the purpose for salvation and that which lies ahead for redeemed man*. And because this erroneous teaching surrounding salvation (seeing eternal salvation as the goal) has become so ingrained within their way of thinking, attempts to present salvation from the correct Biblical perspective usually meet with askance looks, opposition, or antagonism on almost every hand.

(Eternal salvation, rather than being the goal, places man in a position where he can one day realize *the goal which God has for man, which is regal*. Eternal salvation, wherein unsaved man passes “from death unto life” [John 5:24; Eph. 2:1], places an individual in the position where he can one day realize the purpose for his very existence, the purpose for his creation in the beginning — “...let them have dominion” [Gen. 1:26-28].)

When that depicted by the woman placing the leaven in the three measures of meal in Matt. 13:33 (which apparently occurred very early in the dispensation and concerned an attempt on Satan’s part to corrupt all Biblical doctrine having to do with the Word of the Kingdom), anything related to the Word of the Kingdom began to be adversely affected. And this working of the leaven, of necessity, extends even into the Biblical scope of salvation by grace.

The latter would have to be the case because of the inseparable connection salvation by grace has with the Word of the Kingdom. It is man passing “from death unto life” which places him in a position where he can realize the salvation of his soul.

And matters become even more negative surrounding the relationship which salvation by grace has with the kingdom through the

message of those advocating Lordship Salvation. Those proclaiming this message take things having to do with the Word of the Kingdom and erroneously bring these things over into and apply them to the message of salvation by grace (*i.e.*, things having to do with present and future aspects of salvation are removed from their respective contexts and applied to things having to do with past aspect of salvation). And, through this means, those proclaiming this message not only remove the kingdom from view but they do two other things in the process. They both destroy teachings surrounding the Word of the Kingdom and corrupt the message of salvation by grace.

Interestingly enough, those who proclaim *a correct salvation message per se but ignore the kingdom* and those who proclaim *a Lordship Salvation message (who, through this means, destroy one message and corrupt the other)* form two major groups in Christendom today. Those from these two groups remain at almost complete odds with one another on the message of salvation by grace; but when it comes to correctly relating this message to the kingdom, which neither does, it can only be said of both groups that they have been similarly, adversely affected by the same leavening process which is rampant in the Laodicean Church of today.

1

Location of the Conflict

And to make all men see what is the fellowship [‘dispensation’] of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world [‘from the ages’] hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by [‘might be made known through’] the church the manifold wisdom of God,

According to the eternal purpose [‘According to a purpose of the ages’] which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph. 3:2, 3a, 9-11).

There is an existing, ongoing warfare between powerful spirit beings in the heavens (Satan and his angels) and individuals on the earth (Christians). This warfare centers around *salvation* — not the Christians’ presently possessed eternal salvation but present and future aspects of salvation, the salvation of the soul. In this respect, *the existing warfare is a battle for the souls (the lives) of the saved.*

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Man, realizing the goal of salvation, *must one day hold the sceptre*. And this will occur after Man's Day has run its course, at the beginning of the Messianic Era.

The Church was called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel rejected at Christ's first coming — proffered regal positions in the kingdom of the heavens. This offer was extended to Israel in time past, but Christians are the ones to whom the offer is presently being extended. And, with this in view, Christians (as Israelites in time past) are the ones presently being afforded the opportunity to bring forth fruit in relation to the kingdom (*cf.* Matt. 21:43; I Peter 2:9, 10).

It is Christ and His co-heirs (Christians from the present dispensation) who are destined to one day replace Satan and his angels, the present rulers in the kingdom. This is what is being made known to the present rulers ("the principalities and powers in heavenly places"), *through the Church*, in Eph. 3:10 — the fact that they are about to be replaced, by man, 6,000 years after the fact, realizing the purpose for man's creation in the beginning.

God is about to bring forth a new order of Sons, and Satan knows this. Six thousand years ago, *at the time of man's creation*, it was made known that man would replace the incumbent rulers (Gen. 1:26-28). And, during the present dispensation, a continuing declaration of this same fact is being made known, *through the Church*, in a more specific manner (*i.e.*, not man in general

but Christ and His co-heirs [Christians] in particular will replace the incumbent rulers).

This is why the warfare rages. Satan and his angels know this, and they are doing everything within their power to prevent God's new order of Sons from being brought forth. Satan and his angels know that once God brings forth this new order of Sons (Christ and His co-heirs), these Sons will not only rule the earth in the stead of the incumbent rulers but they will rule from the same heavenly places (*cf.* Eph. 6:12).

(Note that the battle seen between Michael and his angels on the one hand and Satan and his angels on the other in Rev. 12:7-9 [*cf.* Ezek. 28:16b-19] — a battle which will occur near the middle of the coming Tribulation, in which Satan and his angels will be cast out of their heavenly places onto the earth — anticipates and prepares the way for Christ and His co-heirs to then move into this heavenly realm and exercise regal power therein.)

The coming kingdom of Christ, toward which the whole of Scripture moves, will be one kingdom with two realms — *a heavenly realm*, and *an earthly realm*. Christ, the Seed of Abraham, will be the Supreme Ruler; and occupying positions of power and authority with Him will be the seed of Abraham (the Church) ruling from *a heavenly realm* and the seed of Abraham (Israel) ruling from *an earthly realm*.

Christ, after this fashion, will have a dual reign, both from *His Own throne in the heavens* and from *David's throne on the earth* (Luke 1:31-33; Rev. 3:21). There will be *a Jerusalem above* and *a Jerusalem below*. The New Jerusalem will rest in a heavenly position above the earth, as the capital of the earth from above (apparently a satellite city which those on the earth can possibly behold); and the city of Jerusalem on the earth will be restored, existing as the capital city of the earth from below.

Christ with His co-heirs will exercise power and authority from the New Jerusalem above the earth; and Christ in the midst of and with His people, Israel, will exercise power and authority from Jerusalem below. Power and authority from above will emanate from Christ's Own throne, and power and authority from below

will emanate from David's throne, which will be given to Christ.

That will be the basic structure of the coming kingdom of Christ, in which both *the heavenly seed* and *the earthly seed* of Abraham will "possess the gate of [rule over]" the Gentile nations of the earth. And this rule will result in not only the nations being blessed but the kingdom ultimately (at the end of 1,000 years) being brought back into a state where it can be delivered up to the Father so that "God may be all in all ['God may be all things in all of these things']" (Gen. 12:1-3; 22:17, 18; I Cor. 15:24-28; cf. Col. 1:16, 20).

The Present Kingdom

The earth is a province in the kingdom of God, and Satan holds the position of Messianic Angel (the provincial ruler) over the earth. He has held this position since the time of his appointment by God in the beginning, prior to his fall; and he (along with angels ruling under him) will continue holding this position until he is one day replaced by Man — the second Man, the last Adam, with His co-heirs, redeemed from the lineage of the first man, the first Adam (Ezek. 28:14-16; Heb. 2:5-10).

Satan's fall wrought no change in his appointed position, for a principal of Biblical government necessitates that an incumbent ruler hold his appointed position until his successor not only appears but is ready to take the sceptre. There is no such thing as God removing a ruler from a province in His kingdom and not, at the same time, appointing another ruler.

Though Satan's fall wrought no change in His appointed position, it did bring about a change in the kingdom over which he ruled. The material kingdom itself was reduced to a ruin.

"And the earth was ['But the earth became'] without form, and void; and darkness was ['and darkness became'] upon the face of the deep" (Gen. 1:2a; cf. Ezek. 28:18b).

From that time until immediately prior to the creation of Adam, though Satan continued to occupy his appointed position,

he ruled over a ruined kingdom shrouded in darkness.

Then, approximately 6,000 years ago God restored the earth, along with the light of the sun and moon, and brought man into existence with a view to man taking the sceptre held by Satan. This is the way Scripture begins.

- 1) A creation.
- 2) A ruin of that creation, resulting from Satan's sin.
- 3) A restoration of the ruined creation through Divine intervention, over six days time.
- 4) Then, the creation of man to take the sceptre, in the stead of Satan.

However, the incumbent ruler, Satan, brought about the first man's fall; and this necessitated the appearance of the second Man to provide redemption before fallen man could one day hold the sceptre, as God had originally intended. Satan, bringing about the first man's fall, followed by God's redemption of fallen man, follows the pattern previously established in the first chapter:

- 1) A creation.
- 2) A ruin of the creation, resulting from Satan's intervention.
- 3) A restoration of the ruined creation through Divine intervention, over six days (6,000 years) time.
- 4) Then, redeemed man ultimately holding the sceptre in the stead of Satan, realizing the reason for man's creation in the beginning.

The earth had been brought into existence for a purpose — “to be inhabited,” *i.e.*, to be an inhabited province in God's kingdom (Isa. 45:18); and, following its ruin, the earth was restored in order that God's purpose for the earth might be realized.

Man, likewise, had been brought into existence for a purpose (Gen. 1:26-28); and following man's ruin, God began a work of restoration in order that His purpose for man's existence might be realized.

As God (following Satan's fall) restored the ruined material creation over a six-day period, He (following man's fall) is presently restoring another ruined creation — ruined man — over the same length of time, with each day in the latter restoration being 1,000 years in length. Then, as God rested for a day following the prior restoration (Gen. 2:1-3), He will rest for a day, for 1,000 years, following the present restoration (Heb. 4:4-9).

The pattern concerning how God restores a ruined creation was set at the very beginning, in the opening verses of Genesis. And man, a subsequent ruined creation, must be restored in exact conformity with the God-established pattern.

As this restoration pertains to "time," it will occur over six days, over six thousand years (*cf.* Matt. 16:28-17:5; II Peter 1:15-18; 3:3-8). And there will then be a day of rest which will last for one day, for one thousand years. This is the earth's coming Sabbath, toward which every earthly Sabbath pointed and every earthly Sabbath anticipated (Ex. 20:8-11; 31:13-17; Heb. 4:4-9).

The whole of Scripture, progressing through six days of redemptive work, moves toward that coming Sabbath of rest. The skeletal structure was set *in perfect form* in the beginning, and the whole of Scripture beyond that point must rest on this structure. The whole of Scripture moves toward that coming seventh day when Christ and His co-heirs will take the sceptre and rule the earth in the stead of Satan and his angels.

(For additional details concerning a correct interpretation and understanding of Gen. 1:1-2:3, refer to Chapters II-IV in the author's book, THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE.)

From what realm though do Satan and his angels presently rule? It is clear from both Old and New Testament Scriptures that they rule *from a heavenly realm over the earth*. Satan and his angels have access *to the earth* (Gen. 6:2-4; Job 1:7; 2:2; I Peter 5:8; Jude 6), but they do not rule *on the earth*.

1) Location of Satan's Rule — Old Testament

Daniel chapter ten presents certain insights into how the present kingdom of Satan is structured, along with the location

of those administering power and authority in the kingdom. In this chapter, a heavenly messenger who had been dispatched to Daniel on the earth from that part of the heavens where God resides and rules (the northernmost point in the universe in relation to the earth [Isa. 14:13, ASV]) was detained at a point enroute. This messenger was detained in the heavens above the earth by “the prince of the kingdom of Persia.” Then Michael was dispatched from heaven, and the messenger remained there with “the kings of Persia” while Michael fought with the prince of Persia for his release (v. 13).

The picture presented is that of *powerful angels in the kingdom of Satan ruling the earth from a heavenly realm through counterparts in the human race on earth*. There was a prince (ruler) of Persia in the heavens, and there was a prince (ruler) of Persia on the earth. Then, in the heavens, there were lesser rulers associated with Persia (the kings of Persia); and the same would have been true in the earthly kingdom (cf. Dan. 2:39; 5:28-31; 7:5; 8:3-6, 20).

Then beyond that “the prince of Greece” is mentioned — another heavenly ruler, the angelic heavenly ruler over the Grecian kingdom on earth (v. 20). And the reason why attention is called to this heavenly ruler is easy to see and understand. Daniel, throughout his book, deals with the kingdom of Babylon, from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the days of Antichrist; and Dan. 10:20 (“...the prince of Greece shall come”) anticipated that day when Alexander the Great in the Grecian kingdom on earth would conquer the kingdom of Babylon under the Medes and the Persians (cf. Dan. 2:39; 7:6; 8:7, 8, 21, 22).

Thus, there is not only a breakdown of powers in the heavenly kingdom under Satan corresponding to a breakdown of powers in various earthly kingdoms under fallen man but there is also a shifting of powers in the heavenly kingdom corresponding to a shifting of powers in the earthly kingdoms. In this respect, any person occupying a position of power in any Gentile earthly kingdom during the present age is merely occupying a position of power under Satan and his angels, as they rule from the heavens through counterparts on the earth.

(Note that the nation of Israel is the lone exception among nations on earth whose rulers presently hold positions of power and authority under fallen angels in the kingdom of Satan. The prince over Israel is “Michael” [Dan. 10:21], an angelic prince in the heavens who is not numbered among those ruling in Satan’s kingdom, as “Israel” is not numbered among the nations [Num. 23:9].)

2) Location of Satan’s Rule — New Testament

The Book of Ephesians presents the same picture of Satan’s present kingdom as the Book of Daniel, though from a different perspective. Ephesians is a book dealing with the heavenlies, pointing to the place where the Christians’ future inheritance lies (Eph. 1:3-23). Christians have been saved with a view to realizing an inheritance as co-heirs with Christ in a heavenly kingdom at a future date. That is one of two central messages in this book.

The other central message has to do with the present inhabitants of that heavenly sphere — Satan and his angels (1:21; 3:9-11; 6:11ff). They are said to reside “in heavenly places” (3:10), and Ephesians chapter six presents an existing, ongoing warfare between Christians and these angels.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (6:12).

(The words “in heavenly places” [3:10] and “in high places” [6:12] are both translations of the same Greek words, referring to a *heavenly sphere*. The reference, in both instances, is to angels exercising positions of power and authority *from places in the heavens* within the kingdom under Satan — the present existing kingdom of the heavens.

For additional information concerning the present existing kingdom under Satan, along with the coming kingdom under Christ, refer to the author’s book, THE MOST HIGH RULETH.)

Thus, there is a present existing warfare between the heavenly rulers and Christians; and that warfare rages because Satan and his angels know the reason that *the one new man* “in Christ” has been called into existence (*cf.* Eph. 3:9-11). The one new man

will comprise the co-heirs ruling with Christ in that coming day, following the time Satan and his angels will have been put down. And Christ, with His co-heirs, ruling in the stead of Satan and his angels, will exercise power and authority from the same realm where Satan and his angels presently rule.

Thus, the warfare rages because Satan and his angels will do everything within their power to prevent this transfer of power and authority; and it will continue to rage until Christians have been removed from the earth, anticipating Satan and his angels being removed from their heavenly realm (“cast out into [‘unto,’ ‘upon’] the earth” [Rev. 12:4, 7-10; cf. Ezek. 16b-19]), with a view to Christ and His co-heirs taking the kingdom (Rev. 19:11-20:6; cf. Rev. 11:15).

These things will occur at the end of the present dispensation (which has lasted almost 2,000 years) and near the end of the present age (which has lasted almost 6,000 years). Then, and only then, will redeemed man realize the purpose for his creation in the beginning — “...let them have dominion” (Gen. 1:26-28).

(The present dispensation covers time between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks in Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy [Dan. 9:24-27], though not time related to the prophecy itself. The present dispensation comprises a 2,000-year period *separate from time in Daniel’s prophecy*. God’s chronometer, marking time in the prophecy, has, so to speak, stopped, allowing the present dispensation to run its course. Then, once the present dispensation has been completed, the Church will be removed, and God will complete His dispensational dealings with Israel through the fulfillment of that seen in Daniel’s prophecy.

God’s chronometer relating to the Jewish people will then mark time in Daniel’s prophecy once again, fulfilling the final week, the final seven years. This final unfulfilled week is the coming seven-year Tribulation. And the fulfillment of this final week will not only complete seven unfulfilled years of the previous dispensation but also the final seven years of the age covering Man’s 6,000-year Day.

For more information on Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy, refer to Chapter XII, “Daniel’s Seventy Weeks,” in the author’s book, THE TIME OF THE END.

For information on distinctions between ages and dispensations, refer to the author’s book, THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE, Chapter V.)

The Proffered Kingdom

Israel was called into existence to be the nation which God would not only bless but would, in turn, through this nation, bless all the other nations as well. In this respect, Israel was called into existence to be the channel through which God would bless all mankind (Gen. 12:1-3).

In order for these blessings to ultimately be realized in their fullness, man must occupy the position for which he was originally created. *Man must hold the sceptre.* There *can be* (there have been and presently are) blessings for mankind, through Israel, as man moves toward that end; but the fullness of blessings which God has in store for mankind, through Israel, *cannot be realized until Israel has been restored and man actually holds the sceptre.*

To effect the whole of the matter, Israel's calling involved giving man the Redeemer, giving man the Word of God, and being made the repository for both heavenly and earthly promises and blessings.

Through Israel, God has given to man the Redeemer and the Word of God, revealing His plans and purposes. But the heavenly and earthly promises and blessings, other than a foretaste, have yet to be realized. Such a realization *awaits Israel's restoration and man holding the sceptre* during the coming Messianic Era.

1) *Israel and the Proffered Kingdom — Past*

There were two times in history when the nation of Israel was placed in a position where the people of Israel could enter into and occupy the kingdom. The first was under Moses and later Joshua following the Exodus from Egypt, and the second was under Jesus the Christ almost 1,500 years later.

A) *The Earthly*

The proffered kingdom during the days of Moses and Joshua had to do with *the earthly* segment of the kingdom. The Israelites had been called out of Egypt to realize an inheritance in another land, and that other land was *the earthly land of Canaan.*

The nation under Moses, at Kadesh-Barnea, rebelled against

God and His appointed leader Moses. Because of unbelief, they refused to enter the land and, under God, take the land; and, within their actions, they even went so far as to seek to appoint a new leader and return to Egypt (Num. 13:26-14:4).

This resulted in the entire accountable generation, save Caleb and Joshua (because they possessed “another spirit” relative to entering the land), being overthrown in the wilderness during the next thirty-eight and one-half years (Num. 14:5-38). And then Joshua, after the overthrow of the entire accountable generation and after the death of Moses, led the second generation of Israelites into the land (Joshua 1:1ff).

The Israelites entering the land under Joshua though, along with succeeding generations of Israelites, never realized the fullness of the purpose for their calling. This failure was the result of unbelief and disobedience at different times on the part of the people. And the attitude and action of the people in this respect governed the attitude and action of God in this same respect (Lev. 26; Deut. 28).

God’s blessings would follow Israel’s belief and obedience, resulting in the surrounding Gentile nations also being blessed. But exactly the opposite would result from unbelief and disobedience. There were *curses* rather than blessings, and a withholding of blessings from Israel resulted in a withholding of blessings from the surrounding Gentile nations as well.

The kingdom reached its heights during the days of David and his son, Solomon. But following the division of the kingdom after Solomon’s death, things took a different turn entirely. The nation, through *a continuing disobedience*, became entrenched in a downward course from which there would be no return, leading to *Gentile captivity and the Times of the Gentiles*. God’s call to His people to “humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways” (II Chron. 7:14) — through the prophets — went unheeded.

And God remaining true to His Word (Lev. 26:32ff; Deut. 28:25, 37), eventually allowed Gentile powers to enter the land and take His people captive, uprooting the Jewish people from their own land and transporting them to Gentile lands. The Assyrians came

down and took the northern ten tribes into captivity beginning about 722 B.C., and the Babylonians came over and took the southern two tribes into captivity beginning about 605 B.C.

The removal of the southern two tribes, completing a captivity and removal of the Jewish people from their land by Gentile powers, began the period known as “the times of the Gentiles,” which extends from that point until the end of the coming Tribulation.

The kingdom was taken from Israel at this time, along with the Glory; and neither will be restored to Israel until the coming Messianic Era (Ezek. 10:4, 18; 11:22, 23; 43:1-5; cf. Luke 9:32; Acts 1:9; I Tim. 3:16).

Though the Jewish people were allowed to return from captivity seventy years following the Babylonian captivity, only a remnant returned; and though the temple was rebuilt, it housed no Glory.

And the same holds true today. Though the nation has been allowed to return, only a remnant has done so (but this time through a Zionistic, man-made movement, in unbelief); and though Israel will shortly rebuild her temple, it will house no Glory.

Another parallel relative to Israel past and present also holds true. The remnant forming the present nation, as the remnant forming the past nation, will be uprooted and driven to the ends of the earth. The former occurred under the Romans, beginning in 70 A.D., and the latter will occur under Antichrist, beginning in the middle of the Tribulation.

And as the temple built by the remnant returning to the land following the Babylonian captivity was later destroyed (in 70 A.D.), so will it be with the temple which Israel is about to build. It too will be destroyed (Dan 9:26; Matt. 24:15-22; Luke 21:20-24).

Israel, with her temple (housing the Glory of God once again), will be restored only *after* the Times of the Gentiles has run its course and *after* Messiah returns. Christ, *Himself*, will personally restore the nation (Deut. 30:1-3; Matt. 24:30, 31), and *He, Himself*, will personally build the temple (Zech. 6:11-13).

B) *The Heavenly*

The preceding forms a brief historic and prophetic overview of *the earthly* segment of the kingdom, which could be understood

following the days of David as *the kingdom covenanted to David* (II Sam. 7:4-17; cf. Luke 1:31-33).

However, there was another segment of the kingdom which also, of necessity, had to be offered to Israel; and that other segment was *the heavenly*.

This segment of the kingdom was offered to Israel at the time of Christ's first advent. Scripture clearly reveals that the earthly segment of the kingdom was not in view at all at this time. *Only the heavenly segment was in view.*

John the Baptist preceded Christ with the message,

“Repent ye [a plural pronoun in the Greek text, referring to the entire nation]: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand” (Matt. 3:1ff).

John was the forerunner of the Messiah (v. 3); and he appeared, calling the nation to *repentance* (a change of mind), announcing that *the kingdom of the heavens* (the rule of the heavens over the earth) was *at hand* (i.e., had drawn near and could have been established, for the Messianic King Himself was present [cf. Matt. 2:2; 27:37]).

(The expression, “the kingdom of heaven,” appearing thirty-two times in Matthew’s gospel [KJV, et al.] should literally be translated, on every occasion, “the kingdom of the heavens.” The word “heaven” is always plural and preceded by the definite article in the Greek text.)

Then after John was imprisoned, Jesus took up the message (Matt. 4:12, 17), later He called out twelve disciples to carry this same message to the people throughout the land of Israel, and later yet He called seventy others for the same purpose (Matt. 10:1ff; Luke 10:1ff).

Thus, the offer of the kingdom of the heavens was extended to Israel initially by John the Baptist and for a subsequent three and one-half years by Christ and His disciples — the Twelve, and then the Seventy. But, after all had been said and done, the nation, because of the attitude of the religious leaders in Israel, rejected not only the offer but even went so far as to reject and crucify the One Who made the offer (Matt. 12:22-32; 23:1ff; 27:17ff).

(An offer of the *heavenly* segment of the kingdom was a matter that the religious leaders in Israel should have been quite familiar with. This segment of the kingdom, though not dealt with as extensively in the Old Testament as the *earthly*, was still a major subject of Old Testament Scripture [Gen. 14:18-22; 15:5; 22:17, 18; 26:4; Dan. 7:18-27; 10:13-21; cf. Job. 1:6-12; 2:1-6]. And many Israelites throughout Old Testament history, understanding these things, looked beyond the earthly to the heavenly [cf. Matt. 8:11; Heb. 11:8-16].)

Israel's rejection of the kingdom of the heavens anticipated the Church being called into existence to be the recipient of that which the nation had rejected (Matt. 16:1-18). And the announcement concerning the matter was subsequently made to the religious leaders in Israel, as recorded in Matt. 21:43, immediately prior to the events of Calvary:

“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God [that part of the kingdom which had been offered, *the heavenly*] shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

The heavenly segment of the kingdom was taken from Israel in view of the Church being called into existence to be the recipient of that offer. And Israel, from that point forward, in line with Matt. 12:31, 32, could not bring forth fruit relative to *the kingdom of the heavens*.

Israel, *relative to this segment of the kingdom*, could no longer bear fruit, “neither in this world [‘age’], neither in the world [‘age’] to come.” That encompassed the two ages covering the whole of the time set forth by the seven days in Genesis chapters one and two, which covers the 6,000 years comprising Man's Day and the 1,000 years comprising the Lord's Day, the Messianic Era.

But note that this is relative to *the kingdom of the heavens only*. It has nothing to do with the kingdom covenanted to David, the earthly segment of the kingdom. This can never be taken from Israel, and Israel will one day be very fruitful, *on the earth*, when Messiah returns and this segment of the kingdom is restored to the nation.

2) *The Church and the Proffered Kingdom — Present*

When Christ announced to the religious leaders in Israel that the kingdom would be taken from Israel and be given to “a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof,” that nation — *the Church* (I Peter 2:9) — did not then exist. But though the Church had not yet been called into existence, it had previously been mentioned by Christ (Matt. 16:18) and had been anticipated by events leading into Matthew 21:43 (Matt. 12:22-32; 13:1ff; 21:18-42).

The first mention of the Church though, in reality, actually precedes these events in Matthew’s gospel by one and one-half millenniums in one respect and by four millenniums in another respect.

Moses, 1,500 years before Christ’s first appearance and 1,500 years before the Church was brought into existence, provided the first recorded information concerning the Church. And this information is provided by way of typology in Genesis chapters two and three, drawn from events occurring 2,500 years before Moses recorded them (Eve removed from Adam’s body, foreshadowing Christ’s bride removed from His body, etc.).

Then another interesting matter surrounds the fact that the Church is presented in Biblical typology prior to any mention of Israel after this fashion. Israel is not seen in Biblical typology until the events recorded in Genesis chapter four (Cain slaying Abel, Israel slaying Christ). And events in chapter four parallel events in the previous chapter, in chapter three, where Adam partakes of sin to effect Eve’s redemption, foreshadowing Christ becoming sin to effect our redemption (II Cor. 5:21).

Thus, matters surrounding Israel rejecting the offer of the kingdom of the heavens, climaxed by the crucifixion of the One Who made the offer and necessitating the calling into existence of the Church, all have their roots back in the opening chapters of Genesis. The Church is that “holy nation” (I Peter 2:9) spoken of in type by Moses, referred to by Christ in Matt. 16:18, and in the mind of Christ in Matt. 21:43 when He announced to the religious leaders in Israel that the kingdom would be taken from them and be given to “a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

The Church is comprised of *a heavenly people with heavenly*

promises and blessings, and these promises and blessings will be realized during a future day (the Messianic Era), *in the heavens*, not on the earth. Contrariwise, Israel's future promises and blessings are *earthly alone*, for the heavenly promises and blessings have been taken from Israel.

Accordingly, viewing the matter after the preceding fashion leaves no room to question which facet of the kingdom (heavenly or earthly) was offered to, rejected by, and taken from Israel. The Word clearly states which facet: "the kingdom of the heavens," referring to *the heavenly sphere of the kingdom*.

(The confusion in this realm usually emanates from erroneously understanding the expression, "the kingdom of the heavens," as referring only to a kingdom having its origin in the heavens, where God dwells, not to a kingdom located in a heavenly sphere.)

Then, beyond these clear statements concerning which facet of the kingdom was in view at the time of Christ's first coming, exactly the same thing can be seen and understood when viewing the matter from the standpoint of the whole of Scripture.)

The earthly segment of the kingdom had been covenanted to David via an unconditional covenant and *could not have been, nor can it ever be*, taken from the nation of Israel. Christ's announcement to the religious leaders in Israel *could not have had* anything to do with the earthly segment of the kingdom; nor was the earthly segment of the kingdom even in view in the offer of the kingdom to Israel, beginning with John and continuing with Christ and His disciples.

The heavenly segment of the kingdom alone was in view in the offer to Israel, the rejection by Israel, the removal from Israel, and the offer to another nation. And *the Church alone* — "Abraham's seed [because of the Christians' position 'in Christ'], and heirs according to the promise [*heavenly*, not earthly]" (Gal. 3:29) — is the only entity which can possibly be identified as this new nation, the one presently being extended the opportunity to bring forth fruit relative to the kingdom of the heavens (I Peter 2:9-11; II Peter 1:8-11).

And the work of the Holy Spirit throughout the entire pres-

ent dispensation revolves around this whole overall thought. Redeemed man, removed from both Jew and Gentile, has been saved (has become *a new creation*, a part of *the one new man* “in Christ”) *for a purpose*; and that purpose has to do with bringing forth fruit (present) with a view to occupying a position as co-heir with Christ in “the kingdom of the heavens” (future).

The Future Kingdom

Satan and his angels are to be put down, and Christ and His co-heirs are to take the kingdom. That is the clear testimony of Scripture, beginning in Genesis and concluding in Revelation. The matter will occur after exactly the same fashion set forth in Dan. 4:17.

“...by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will...”

The Most High will one day give the kingdom to His Son (Dan. 7:13, 14; cf. Rev. 11:15), Satan and his angels will be put down (exactly as Nebuchadnezzar in history was put down, for that will be “the decree of the most High” [Dan. 4:23-31]), and the Son will then take the kingdom and rule, holding the sceptre.

At that time God will place redeemed, qualified individuals in positions of power and authority as co-heirs with His Son (Dan. 4:17, 25, 32; Matt. 20:23); and Christ, with His co-heirs, will hold the sceptre (cf. Ps. 2:6-9; Rev. 2:26, 27).

Christ’s co-heirs will have previously been shown qualified at the judgment seat; and following the Father positioning these co-heirs on the throne with His Son, Christ and His co-heirs (who will form His wife in that day) will then rule the earth from His throne in the heavenly Jerusalem for 1,000 years.

Israel will have been restored to the nation’s earthly land, and the kingdom covenanted to David will have been restored to Israel. David’s throne will have been given to Christ; and He will rule from this throne on the earth as well as from His Own throne in the heavens (note that David will also rule from this

throne [cf. Ezek 34:23; 37:24; Luke 1:31-33]).

Thus, Christ will have a dual reign during the Messianic Era. And it will be after this fashion that Christ will exercise power and authority over the earth for 1,000 years.

Christ's rule *from the heavens* will involve *His co-heirs (His wife)*, who will exercise power and authority with Him over the nations. And Christ's rule *on the earth* will involve *the Jewish people (the restored wife of Jehovah)* who will also exercise power and authority with Him over the nations.

Accordingly, the Gentile nations, in this manner, will be governed from two realms during this time — *heavenly and earthly*; and blessings will flow forth through Abraham's Seed from both realms (cf. Gen. 12:3; 22:17, 18; Rom. 9:4, 5; Gal. 3:16, 29).

And the object of Christ's rule after this fashion will be *to bring order out of disorder, to effect a cosmos out of a chaos*.

"All rule and all authority and power" must be put down; "all enemies" must be put "under his [under Christ's] feet," even "death." And when "all things shall be subdued unto him [unto Christ]," the kingdom will be "delivered up" to "God, even the Father" in order that "God may be all in all [God may be all things in all of these things]" (I Cor. 15:24-28).

This is what the whole of Scripture, beginning in the opening verses of Genesis, anticipates; and to bring the matter to pass, the Son, in conjunction with His co-heirs in the heavens and the nation of Israel on the earth, will rule the earth for the duration of that seventh day — for 1,000 years — foreshadowed by the seventh day seen at the very beginning, in Gen. 2:1-3.

2

Participants in the Conflict

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places [‘against the spirit forces of wickedness in heavenly places’] (Eph. 6:10-12).

Christians are presently engaged in a battle against powerful angelic rulers in the spirit world. These angels, ruling in the kingdom of Satan, are striving for *the souls of men*; and the outcome of this conflict, like any conflict, is determined by proper or improper preparation as one engages the enemy.

A properly prepared Christian can enter the conflict and consistently win battle after battle, but an improperly prepared Christian entering the conflict can only experience defeat time after time.

Victory is achieved through engaging the enemy within the framework of the Lord’s instructions in Eph. 6:10ff. A Christian though who engages the enemy after any other fashion is entering the conflict apart from the Lord’s instructions, leaving himself in a very vulnerable position, one in which the enemy can consistently achieve victory.

Thus, in this respect, *victory* on the one hand or *defeat* on the other is determined by the Christian's preparation for the conflict at hand. A Christian can either heed the Lord's instructions or he can ignore the Lord's instructions. There is no middle ground (Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23). The former will produce *readiness for battle and result in victory*, but the latter will leave the Christian *very vulnerable to attack and can only result in defeat*.

Victory for the Christian will actually be determined by how badly he wants to win. The overriding thought in Ephesians has to do with *individuals being saved for a revealed purpose*. Christians have been saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8) in order to realize an inheritance in heavenly places (1:3, 11, 18; 2:6, 7; 3:1-6). The task of a pastor-teacher is to lead Christians into a mature knowledge of this inheritance, a mature knowledge of the things surrounding the purpose for their salvation (4:11ff), resulting in their being filled with the Spirit (5:18ff) and being able to engage the enemy after the fashion given at the end of this epistle (6:10ff).

How badly do Christians really want to achieve victory over the enemy and one day realize the proffered inheritance with God's Son? *That is the question which will determine what a Christian does about the Lord's instructions concerning proper preparation for the battle at hand.*

Confronting the Enemy

Knowing one's enemy and his objective is all-important when one enters into a battle. The enemy, in this case, is identified in very graphic terms at the outset of the Lord's instructions, and the enemy's objective is a major subject of Scripture. Christians are to be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might"; and they are to properly clothe themselves with provided armor as they move about in this fashion (being strong in the Lord, relying upon His power and might) in order that they might be able "to stand against the wiles of the devil" (vv. 10, 11). And the crafty ways which Satan uses as he lies in wait to deceive are brought to pass through the actions of powerful fallen angels, world-rulers in his kingdom (v. 12; cf. Eph. 4:14).

Satan is the great imitator. He ever seeks to counterfeit the work of God as he and his angels move against Christians. God has innumerable angels at His command who perform activities in His kingdom; and Satan, “the god of this world [‘age]” (II Cor. 4:4 [‘the god of this age’ in relation to the earth and his rule]), has innumerable angels at his command who perform activities in his kingdom.

(The kingdom of Satan is actually a part of the overall kingdom of God. Angels rule domains throughout God’s kingdom, and their rulership over domains is looked upon and referred to as *the rule over a kingdom*. Delegated power and authority of this nature has to do with *numerous kingdoms within one overall kingdom*.)

Satan, in time past, was among the angels given a kingdom and dominion. However, dissatisfied with the extent of his delegated power and authority, Satan sought to “exalt” *his throne* and “be like the most High [be like God Himself, the supreme Ruler over all].”

And today Satan is a rebel ruler within his kingdom, along with one-third of his original contingent of ruling angels, who followed him in his attempt to increase his hold on power and authority [*cf.* Isa. 14:12-14; Rev. 12:4].

Satan’s present kingdom is referred to as *the kingdom of this world* or *his kingdom*. Christ, at His first coming, called attention to both the present kingdom under Satan and His coming kingdom when he said, “My kingdom is not of this world [*lit.*, ‘not out of this world,’ referring to the present world kingdom under Satan]” [John 18:36a]. And this will explain that which is involved in I John 2:15ff, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...”

It is *this present kingdom under Satan* which will one day become “the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ” [Rev. 11:15, ASV; 16:10; *cf.* Matt. 6:10]. And it is this kingdom, which Christ and His co-heirs will rule with a rod of iron for 1,000 years in order to bring the kingdom back into conformity with the way God has established individual kingdoms within His overall kingdom [*cf.* Ps. 2:6-9; I Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 2:26-28].)

In God’s kingdom, it is evident that angels perform various activities within the scope of *fixed laws* in order to fulfill the perfect will of God concerning matters, apart from any immediate command from God; and by so doing, their actions are looked upon

as those of the Lord Himself.

(For an example of the preceding, note that the destruction of the cities of the plain during Abraham's day was carried out by angels, who could only have been acting under *fixed laws*. And, though angels destroyed these cities, the Lord Himself is also said to have been the One Who performed the act. That performed by these angels acting under fixed laws *became* the actions of the One Who established these laws [Gen. 19:13, 14, 29].)

It appears evident that the same thing occurs in Satan's kingdom. Satan, "the god of this world ['age']," is the one who moves against Christians in a deceptive manner, the one who ever stands ready to devour them (*cf.* Eph. 6:11; I Peter 5:8). But our warfare is revealed to be, more specifically, against the innumerable host of angels in Satan's kingdom rather than against Satan himself, as an individual (Eph. 6:12).

This can only be carried out by Satan's angels acting within the scope of *fixed laws* in order to fulfill the will of Satan, apart from any immediate command from Satan; and by so doing, their actions are looked upon as those of Satan himself.

(Note that these *fixed laws*, operable in Satan's kingdom, would have their origin and basis in laws established by God in the beginning. And the manner concerning how these laws operate, though continuing to be operable in a system which had become corrupted under Satan, could not change.)

Thus, through warring against angels in Satan's kingdom, Christians are actually engaged in a battle against Satan himself. Because of the apparent manner in which command has been established in Satan's kingdom, *there would be no difference between warring against his angels or warring against him personally.*

1) Description of the Enemy

Different terms are used in Eph. 6:12 to describe the angels in Satan's kingdom against whom Christians are engaged in battle. They are called "principalities," "powers," "rulers of the darkness of this world," and "spiritual wickedness in high places."

These four different descriptions do not form references to various gradations of angels ruling in different territorial domains under Satan, though Satan's kingdom is structured after this fashion. These descriptions merely constitute four different ways which the Lord uses to describe the enemy, providing various facets of information.

a) "*Principalities*": This is a translation of the Greek word *arche*, which refers primarily to "a beginning" (e.g., Gen. 1:1 [Septuagint]; John 1:1, 2). When the word is used in the sense that it appears in the text though, the reference is to "a ruler." This is the same word used earlier in Ephesians (1:21; 3:10), referring to *world-rulers*. This is also the word used in I Cor. 15:24, revealing the purpose for Christ's coming reign over the earth — to "put down all rule [*arche*] and all authority and power." That is, Christ is going to reign until all world-rulers, those holding positions of power and authority, have been completely subdued.

(Though Satan and his angels will be bound in the abyss during this future time [Rev. 20:1-3], Gentile nations, with their rulers, will still be present on the earth. And rebellion will, at times, as it presently does during Man's Day, still exist within their ranks [Ezek. 14:16-21; Rev. 20:7-9].)

The Greek word *arche*, referring primarily to "a beginning" — used as the opening word to describe *the incumbent world-rulers in heavenly places* — would undoubtedly be an allusion to the fact that those described have held their positions *since the beginning*. They form part of *the original contingent of rulers*.

(Those referred to by the word *arche* form one-third of the original contingent of angels which God deemed necessary to rule the earth with the one later known as "Satan." Two-thirds of this original group of angelic rulers refused to follow Satan in his attempt to elevate his throne. This is dealt with in "Objective of the Enemy" on pp. 24-31 in this chapter and also in Appendix II in this book.)

b) "*Powers*": This is a translation of the Greek word *exousia*, meaning "power" or "authority," and is simply another way to describe those occupying positions of governmental power. They are not only "rulers," but they are "powers," "authorities." This

is also the same word used with *arche* in the previous references (I Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; 3:10). *Exousia* not only calls attention to the “power and authority” held by an *arche*, “a ruler,” but it is also used as a synonym for the *arche*.

c) “*Rulers of the Darkness of this World*”: The word “rulers” here is the translation of a different word in the Greek text than the word “principalities” appearing earlier in the verse. The word used here is *kosmokrator*, a combination of two words — *kosmos*, meaning “world”, and *kratos*, meaning “to rule.” Thus, *kosmokrator* means “world-ruler,” shown as such in the KJV text, though the word “rulers” is separated from the word “world.” The expression, “rulers of the darkness of this world,” could perhaps be better translated, “world-rulers of the present darkness,” or “rulers of this present dark world.”

d) “*Spiritual Wickedness in High Places*”: The words “spiritual wickedness” could be better translated “spirit forces of wickedness,” referring to Satan and his angels. And these individuals are said to reside in “high places,” literally “in the heavenlies,” or “in heavenly places” (identical expression in the Greek text as used in Eph. 1:3).

Thus, Christians are at war against, not flesh and blood (individuals on the earth), but against the powerful rulers of this present dark world who occupy various positions of power and authority under Satan in heavenly places. It is these individuals with whom we are engaged in battle; and because they evidently act within the scope of fixed laws as they seek to carry out Satan’s plans and purposes, our warfare is equally against Satan himself.

2) *Objective of the Enemy*

Battles between opposing armies are normally fought for territorial rights, which would include governmental control over that territory. The objective in battle is to either retain one’s presently possessed territory or acquire new territory through victory over the opposing side.

And the warfare in Ephesians chapter six is no different. On one side there are powerful world-rulers seeking to hold onto presently possessed territory, along with their positions as rulers over

this realm. Then, on the other side there are those called into existence to one day move into and occupy this territory, ruling over this same realm in the stead of the incumbent world-rulers.

Satan and his angels have ruled over the earth from the very beginning of God's established government in this one province in the universe. Satan was created and positioned over this earth as the "anointed cherub ['messianic (ruling) angel']" by God in the beginning (Ezek. 28:14), and a great host of other angels were also created and placed in positions of power under him (*cf.* Dan. 10:13, 14, 20; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:7-9). And the sceptre has been held by Satan and his angels, without interruption, since that time.

However, because of Satan's aspirations to be "like the most High" (Isa. 14:14), major changes have occurred in his kingdom. Disruption, producing chaos in God's government, entered at one place in the universe through the unlawful actions of one provincial ruler.

The first major change in Satan's kingdom was in *the sphere of active rulership* — *his governing power structure*. Two-thirds of the angels originally ruling under Satan refused to follow him in his God-dishonoring, rebellious act, leaving only one-third of the original number (Rev. 12:4). Thus, at the very beginning, Satan's ranks were depleted by two-thirds from that number which God had originally deemed necessary to properly rule this province in His kingdom.

The second major change was in *the domain itself*. Because Satan had attempted such an act — which was actually an attempted coup, an attempted takeover of the government of the universe — his kingdom was reduced to a ruin. God had no choice other than to act in accordance with His perfect justice and righteousness, executing judgment of a nature which reduced Satan's kingdom to the ruin described in Gen. 1:2a. And though Satan continued to hold the sceptre, he and the angels who had allied themselves with him, could only rule over a ruined kingdom.

These things occurred during an age or during ages preceding man, and Scripture provides no revelation concerning "time" during this period. Scripture is silent concerning how long Satan and his angels ruled over the earth in its original state, and Scripture

is equally silent concerning how long the earth lay in its ruined state following Satan's move to elevate his throne.

God has deemed "time" within events prior to the restoration of the earth to be of no moment insofar as His plans and purposes for man are concerned. Thus, "time" begins to be reckoned in God's revelation to man *only* when God begins His act of restoring the ruined creation in Gen. 1:2b, anticipating man being created to take the sceptre.

Almost 6,000 years ago God restored the earth over a six-day period; and on the sixth day, after God had completed His restorative work, man was created for the express purpose of *ruling the earth in the stead of Satan and his angels*. An entirely new creation, created in the image and likeness of God — a creature unlike any other in the universe — was brought into existence to *take the sceptre and rule over the restored province, the restored domain*.

Satan knew exactly why the earth had been restored and why God had created man. Following the restoration of the earth, both before and after the creation of man, God made matters very clear through His announced plans and purposes.

God, prior to the creation of man, said,

"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion..." (Gen. 1:26a).

Then following the creation of man, and the removal of the woman from the man,

"...God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion..." (Gen. 1:28a).

The word translated "dominion" from the Hebrew text, in both instances (vv. 26, 28), is the word *radah*, meaning "to rule." This is the same word used in Ps. 110:2, translated "rule," referring to Christ's coming rule over the earth as the second Man, the last Adam. The earth had been restored for man, and man had been created to take the dominion which Satan possessed; and since the one to take the sceptre of the earth within God's planned

economy was now present, Satan possessed only one recourse to retain his position: *Man must be disqualified.*

Disruption within God's plans concerning His new order of rulers, rendering man unfit to hold the sceptre, is the reason Satan approached and deceived Eve in the beginning. Such resulted in Adam's fall, disqualifying man and placing him in the same fallen position as Satan — a position in which man *could not* assume control of the government.

In man's case though, following his fall, God acted after an entirely different fashion than He had acted when Satan fell. God, in His condemnatory remarks to Satan, because of that which had occurred through his deception of Eve, promised a Redeemer for man (Gen. 3:15); and He then acted in a redemptive capacity by slaying one or more animals and providing garments from animal skin for Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:21). These things were done immediately after man sinned, before he was barred from Eden; and they were done with a view to redeemed man one day holding the sceptre in the stead of Satan and his angels.

Satan knew exactly why God had promised a Redeemer and why a redemptive act had been performed for fallen man, and this is the reason he continued his move against man and has continued it to this day. Satan's move to retain his position, which began against Adam through Eve, has continued against Adam's descendants on an uninterrupted fashion for the past 6,000 years. *Man* is the one whom God brought into existence to replace the incumbent rulers, and the battle has to do with *regal rights over a territory — rulership over the earth.*

The gifts and calling of God are “without repentance [‘without a change of mind’]” (Rom. 11:29). God is not going to change His mind concerning the reason He called man into existence. God has provided redemption for man, with a view to man one day taking the sceptre.

Regality was the purpose for man's creation, this was the purpose underlying man's subsequent fall, and this is equally the purpose for his redemption. Everything is regal in nature and has to do with the earth.

Man's Redeemer has shown Himself fully qualified to replace the incumbent ruler, Satan (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13); and God

has provided redemption for man, with a view to allowing redeemed individuals the opportunity to qualify for positions on the throne with the Redeemer when He takes the kingdom. Individuals qualifying for these positions will, in this respect, also replace incumbent rulers, for the angels presently ruling under Satan must also be put down.

(Actually, Christians qualifying to rule in the kingdom with the One Who has redeemed them *for this purpose* will replace all of the angels associated with a rule over the earth within God's economy, not just the angels presently ruling with Satan. Two-thirds of the original contingent of rulers over the earth refused to follow Satan, and they, even though not actively ruling today, still retain their crowns, which *they must relinquish*.

The principle of Biblical government necessitating that an incumbent ruler hold the sceptre until he is actually replaced would *require* this to be the case; and the crowns worn by these angels, along with the crowns worn by angels presently ruling in an active capacity under Satan, will be worn by Christians during the coming age.

Matters surrounding Christians about to assume these positions of power can only be why the twenty-four elders are presented arising from their thrones and casting their crowns before God's throne after the manner and at the time seen in Rev. 4:10. There has to be definite reasons why this event not only occurs but also why it occupies a place in the Book of Revelation at this particular point.

The entire matter can only have to do with *regality and the earth*. It can only have to do with *a transfer of power over a domain*, for that is not only what is seen in the overall outworking of the central subject matter of the book [chs. 19ff] but that is also what is seen through these elders' actions as well [relinquishing their crowns to the One Who had originally placed them in crowned positions on thrones, showing a relinquishment of regality over a territory].

The time when the twenty-four elders arise from their thrones and cast their crowns before God's throne, chronologically, is immediately following the judgment of Christians [at the end of this dispensation, preceding the Tribulation] and immediately before God begins to deal with the earth-dwellers [during the Tribulation].

Contrary to popular interpretation, the twenty-four elders do not represent Christians. *Such would be impossible*. Christians will not be seated on thrones and possess crowns at this time; nor would they arise from their thrones and cast their crowns before God's throne if

they did. Christians will wear crowns during the coming age, not cast them before a throne preceding the age.

These elders can only be identified as representing those angels, still crowned up to that point in time, who did not go along with Satan in his attempted coup. *The earth and its government are in view*, and the fact that these elders are crowned shows that they occupy ruling positions associated with the earth's government [Biblical revelation concerns itself with regality and the earth, not with regality and other provinces in the universe].

Also, the Greek word used for "crowns" in Rev. 4:10 is *stephanos*, not *diadema*, showing that although these elders are associated with the earth's government [which itself identifies them as *angels*], they are not actively involved in this government at the time they cast their crowns before God's throne [a crown worn by one actively occupying a governmental office is called a *diadema*, not a *stephanos*]. They are presented at this particular point in the book as willingly relinquishing their crowns, with a view to others about to take the kingdom [Christians having previously been shown qualified to rule at the judgment seat (Rev. 1-3)]; but crowns worn by Satan and his angels will have to subsequently be taken by force.

Refer to Appendix II of this book for a more comprehensive discussion of Rev. 4:10 and crowned rulers.)

God has set aside an entire dispensation to call out the rulers who are to ascend and occupy the throne with His Son during the coming age. Christians, those individuals comprising *the one new man* "in Christ," are the ones presently being extended the offer to realize the very purpose for man's existence. The Church, around which God's present dispensational dealings center, was called into existence for this purpose (Israel, at Christ's first coming, rejected heavenly promises and blessings; and the Church was called into existence to be the recipient of that which had been rejected — *i.e.*, the offer to move into and occupy positions in heavenly places in the kingdom).

Accordingly, *God's primary work in the world today* surrounds acquiring a group of qualified individuals from the human race who, during the coming age, will be able to ascend the throne with His Son and rule *from heavenly places* in the stead of angels. The "world [inhabited world] to come" *will not* be placed under

the rule of angels, as the present inhabited world. Rather, the inhabited world to come will be ruled by *Man* (Heb. 2:5-10).

And the Holy Spirit has been sent into the world by the Father to acquire a bride for His Son (the antitype of Eve, the one who will reign as consort queen with the second Man, the last Adam). That is *the primary mission* of the Holy Spirit in the world during the present dispensation (*cf.* Gen. 24:1ff), and *all of God's activity surrounding Christians throughout the dispensation* has this one objective in view (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-27).

Thus, *the primary purpose for the present dispensation and the primary mission of the Holy Spirit during the dispensation are one and the same* — to acquire a bride for God's Son, allowing the Son to take the sceptre and rule the earth as the second Man, the last Adam, with His bride (comprised of His co-heirs).

(For a more detailed discussion of the present ministry of the Holy Spirit in the preceding respect, refer to the author's book, SEARCH FOR THE BRIDE.)

Is it therefore any wonder that Christians today find themselves in a battle against the present world-rulers? Christians are *the destined heirs of a kingdom presently occupied and controlled by these rulers*. Christians are the ones destined to exercise regal power from the same heavenly sphere occupied by these angels, ruling in their stead from the heavens over the earth (a restored earth in the latter case, one removed from the present curse).

And the enemy, the present world-rulers, *know these things*. And these world-rulers, *as never before, in all their fury*, presently move against those Christians who aspire to occupy heavenly positions as co-heirs with the coming World-Ruler.

The dispensation is almost over. Man is about to move into that period beyond the 6,000 years, into the seventh 1,000-year period, into the Messianic Era; and God is performing an end-time work in the closing moments, as it were, of not only the dispensation but the entire 6,000 years comprising Man's Day.

Satan and his angels know these things; and they also know that unless they can thwart God's plans and purposes concern-

ing man, decreed in the eternal council chambers of God before man was even created (Heb. 1:2), they are about to relinquish positions and territorial rights which they have held since time immemorial. *It thus can only naturally follow that their attack would be centered against those about to move in and usurp these positions.*

Christ cannot be attacked on a personal level today, for He is at the right hand of the Father in heaven, *awaiting that coming day* (Ps. 110:1, 2). *However, Christians are presently here on the earth, within Satan's domain. They are in a position where the attack can come at any time, on any front.* And for this reason, Christians have been commanded to properly clothe themselves with the provided armor.

The enemy is at hand, the warfare is very real, and victory or defeat is dependent upon Christians following the Lord's instructions concerning the battle.

On the Battlefield

The battle lines have been drawn, but something seemingly rather strange appears to exist in the world today. There doesn't really seem to be an ongoing battle between Christians and the forces of Satan such as Eph. 6:10ff describes. Christendom is seemingly in a state of noncombat, *more at peace than at war in and with a world ruled by Satan and his angels.*

Is this really the case though? And if so, Why?

1) The Laodicean State of Christendom (Rev. 3:14-21)

The absence of any real spiritual warfare, seemingly out of line with Eph. 6:10ff, is generally *very much the case throughout Christendom*; and the reason is quite evident. Where there is no move on redeemed man's part to realize the purpose for his salvation — aspiring to one day occupy proffered positions in the heavenlies — there would be no reason for an ongoing warfare of the nature described in Eph. 6:10ff.

Satan continues to bring the entire matter under his control and sway, with a diminishing necessity for any type continuing battle. And the nearness of the complete leavening process, seen in Matt. 13:33, would determine the nearness of both sides simply

laying down arms.

Satan has worked for almost two millennia to bring Christendom into its present decadent condition — the Laodicean state of the Church prophesied to exist at the end of the dispensation. And, as previously stated, such has resulted from the continuous working of the leaven which the woman placed in the three measures of meal very early in the dispensation in Matt. 13:33, working throughout centuries into millennia of time.

Leaven works best in a place where the temperature is neither too hot nor too cold, and the “lukewarm” condition of the Laodicean Church (Rev. 3:15, 16), fostering the working of the leaven, is today allowing the leaven to do its damaging work, almost unchecked. Not only has Christendom already been permeated through and through with leaven, but the leaven continues to work and is today producing the most rapidly deteriorating and damaging work in the entire 2,000-year history of the Church.

One sad, revealed fact is that those comprising this Laodicean state of Christendom today, for the most part, *are not even aware* of their own “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” condition. And they are equally unaware of that which has occurred and is continuing to occur (Rev. 3:17).

The whole of the matter has to do with two kingdoms — *the present kingdom of Satan and the coming kingdom of Christ* (ref. Col. 1:13) — and those described in Rev. 3:17 know very little about either kingdom. In short, they lack the spiritual insight to analyze the situation as it exists.

Satan seemingly has Christendom exactly where he wants it; and with the rapidly deteriorating work continuing to be produced by the leaven, the matter is becoming even more so with each passing day. Thus, there is really no battle per se going on between Christendom at large and the world-rulers of this present darkness. All that these world-rulers have to do is maintain the status quo — *keep matters in check, and let the leaven continue its work, until such a time as even that will no longer be necessary.*

2) *But, “If Any Man Hear My Voice...” (Rev. 3:20)*

There is, however, another side to the matter, one which is

very much in keeping with that revealed in Eph. 6:10ff. There are those Christians who refuse to go along with the status quo, those who have enough spiritual insight to know what's happening, those who understand and aspire to realize the goal of their calling, as Caleb and Joshua in the camp of Israel in Numbers chapters thirteen and fourteen. Those comprising this segment of Christendom, not those within Christendom as a whole, are the ones engaged in open warfare. *These are the ones against whom the present world-rulers move in all their fury.*

(For material on the Israelites under Moses at Kadesh-Barnea, refer to Chapter III in this book, pp. 42-54, or to the author's book, FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN.)

Aside from the account of Caleb and Joshua, the matter can be seen very graphically in typology in the Books of I, II Samuel; and types, established by God in order to teach His people great spiritual truths, will always be fulfilled in exact detail through that which they foreshadow, through the antitype.

David, the anointed king of Israel, destined to one day ascend the throne and take over the government, replacing Saul (who had been disqualified to continue occupying the throne), found himself temporarily in a place of exile, in a place of rejection, out in the wilderness. He, though already anointed king, found himself separated from Israel and its government under Saul.

Certain men during this time gathered themselves unto David. These were individuals described as being "in distress...in debt...and discontented [dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs in Saul's kingdom]" (I Sam. 22:1, 2). These men remained in the wilderness with David, separate from the kingdom under Saul, and were faithful to David.

In the antitype, Christ has been anointed King over the earth. He is the One destined to one day take over the government, replacing the incumbent ruler, Satan. But today, Christ, as David in the type, finds Himself in a place removed from the kingdom, separated from the earth and its government under Satan (who, as Saul in the type, has been disqualified to continue occupying the throne).

And just as in David's case, there are those who find themselves dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs and have gathered themselves unto Christ. These are the ones who remain in the place of exile, the place of rejection with Christ, separate from the present world system under Satan, and are faithful to Christ.

Saul and his men set themselves specifically against David and his men because *Saul knew the identity of those destined to one day take over the government* (cf. I Sam. 23:13, 14, 17, 26; 24:2, 20). David and his men during this time continually relied on the Lord; and the Lord, accordingly, delivered them out of the hands of Saul and his men (I Sam. 23:7-14).

In the antitype, Satan and those allied with him have set themselves specifically against Christ and those allied with Him, for *Satan knows the identity of those destined to one day take over the government*. Christ though is in the heavens, and Satan cannot touch Him; but those allied with Him are here on the earth and very open to attack. However, as David and his men, relying upon the Lord, were delivered from the enemy, so will the followers of Christ, relying upon the Lord, be delivered from the enemy. Deliverance in both instances occurs the same way, after the same fashion.

When the day arrived that Saul and his men were finally put down, *David and his faithful followers moved in and took over the government*.

And it will be the same in the antitype.

When the day arrives that Satan and his angels are finally put down, *Christ and His faithful followers will move in and take over the government*.

That which Saul knew concerning David and his faithful band of men in the type precipitated a battle, and *that which Satan knows* about Christ and His faithful band of men in the antitype also precipitates a battle.

This is where the real battle lies — type or antitype, with the outcome predetermined.

And the type, fulfilled in history, demands that the antitype be fulfilled in prophecy. *Biblical completeness*, in this respect, is not seen apart from the latter being fulfilled as well.

3

Preparation for the Conflict

Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints (Eph. 6:13-18).

The central focus seen in the Epistle of Ephesians is *heavenly*, not earthly; and that revealed throughout the epistle has to do with *both present and future time*. In this epistle, *both men and angels* are seen occupying “heavenly places” — *Christ and Christians* on the one hand, and *Satan and his angels* on the other (1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12).

In relation to present time, Christ is seated at His Father’s right hand in the heavens (the dwelling place of God, from whence

universal rule is administered), awaiting the coming day of His reign; and Christians are positionally seated with Christ, awaiting that coming day as well (Eph. 1:3ff).

Then, in relation to future time, Christ will be seated on His Own throne in the heavens (the heavens associated with and in proximity to the earth, from whence a rule over the earth is presently administered and will continue to be administered in that coming day). And Christians, in that coming day, will be seated on the throne as co-heirs with Christ (Eph. 3:1-11; Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21).

Insofar as *the present government of this earth* is concerned (the present rule from the heavens over the earth [from that part of the heavens in proximity to the earth]), this heavenly realm is occupied by Satan and his angels, as Satan rules under God in a rebel capacity.

But *the future government of the earth* (the future rule from the heavens over the earth [from the same heavenly realm presently occupied by Satan and his angels) *will not* be administered by angels. *This government will be administered by Man; this government will be administered by Christ and His co-heirs* (Heb. 2:5-10).

Present Government, Future Government

Satan is “the prince of the power of the air [or, ‘the ruler of the authority of the air’]” (Eph. 2:2). The word “ruler” in the latter rendering is a translation of *archon* in the Greek text, a cognate form of the word *arche* used in Eph. 6:12, translated “principalities”; and the word “power” is a rendering of the Greek word *exousia*, used and translated the same way in Eph. 6:12. Satan is the “chief ruler” among a great host of other powerful spirit beings; and this entire contingent of rulers, with Satan in command, *presently exercises governmental power over the earth from “heavenly places.”*

Christ though has been raised from the dead and placed at His Father’s right hand, also in *the heavens* but far above the present “heavenly places” occupied by Satan and his angels (Eph. 1:20; 4:10). God’s “right hand” points to *the hand of power*, and the matter in view through the Son occupying this place at the Father’s right hand is *the future government of the earth* (Eph. 1:21).

The Father has told His Son,

“Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Ps. 110:1b).

And, following the Son’s enemies having been made His footstool (following complete subjection of all to the Son), the Son will rule the earth (hold the sceptre) as the second Man, the last Adam, a King-Priest “after the order of Melchizedek.”

“The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion [Jerusalem]: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

Thy people [the Jewish people] shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent [will not change His mind], thou art a priest forever [for the age] after the order of Melchizedek” (Ps. 110:2-4; cf. Gen. 14:17-20; Heb. 5-7).

Christians are presented in Ephesians as having been raised up together and made to sit together “in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (cf. Eph. 1:3; 2:6). Christians occupy these “heavenly places,” *positionally* seated with Christ (“in Christ”) at His Father’s right hand, awaiting a future day.

Christians await that day when Christ will leave His present position at His Father’s right hand and come forth as the great King-Priest “after the order of Melchizedek,” for only when this occurs can they realize the purpose for their present positional standing by ascending the throne and ruling as co-heirs, as “kings and priests,” with Christ in His kingdom (Rev. 5:10). Christ and His co-heirs, forming His bride, will then reside in and rule from *the same “heavenly places” presently occupied by Satan and his angels.*

Awaiting That Day

The position at the Father’s right hand presently occupied by Christ, and positionally by Christians, portends *future governmental power*. The Father has invited His Son to occupy this

position as Christ awaits the future day of His “power” (Mark 13:26; II Peter 1:16; Rev. 11:17), and Christians occupy their position “in Christ” with a view to the outworking of God’s plans and purposes in “the ages to come,” when God will “shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:6, 7).

The ages have been planned around the preordained activity of God’s son within these ages (Heb. 1:2), and the Messianic Era is the first of *an unending array of ages* during which the eternal plans and purposes of God will be fulfilled insofar as God’s Son occupying kingly power is concerned.

During the Messianic Era, God’s Son will rule over the present earth from *His Own throne* in the heavens. And during the ages beyond, His rule can only be of a universal nature, for it will emanate from *the throne of God and of the Lamb* on the new earth (Rev. 3:21; 22:1-3).

(Universal rule emanates from God’s throne today [located at a northernmost place in the universe, north of the earth], and during the ages beyond the Messianic Era, this throne will rest upon the new earth and exist as the Son’s throne as well. In that day, universal rule will emanate from *the throne of God and of the Lamb* on the new earth.

The Messianic Era should not be thought of as the first of the eternal ages, for it plainly is not. Rather, the Messianic Era will complete the 7,000 years foreshadowed by the six and seven days in Gen. 1:1-2:3 [cf. John 1:1-2:1]. It is foreshadowed by the seventh of these days and is connected with *the septenary arrangement of time and events shown by all seven days*, not with time and events during the eternal ages which follow.

The Messianic Era though *will be* the first of the ages in which *the eternal plans and purposes of God* are worked out. These plans and purposes have to do with this earth alone during the Messianic Era; then, they have to do with the new heavens, the new earth, and the universe at large during the ages beyond.

Thus, even though the eternal plans and purposes of God will be worked out during both the Messianic Era and the ages beyond, these two periods of time, as noted, must be distinguished from one another.)

How though is God going to exhibit His “kindness” to Christians during the coming ages, referred to in Ephesians chapter two? It will simply be *through man realizing the purpose for his existence*.

Christians — those referred to in the passage — will realize the highest of all possible callings, not only in the coming age but in the ages beyond as well. They will occupy positions with Christ on *His throne* during the coming age and continue to occupy positions with Christ on *the throne of God and of the Lamb* during the ages beyond (cf. Rev. 2:26, 27; 22:5).

The eschatology of Scripture though concerns itself *almost exclusively with the coming age*, when God’s Son will ascend His Own throne and, along with His co-heirs, rule this present earth with a rod of iron for one thousand years. And attention was called specifically to this age when the Apostle Paul, in Eph. 3:1ff, began discussing “the mystery” which had previously been revealed to him.

The mystery revealed to Paul had to do with saved Gentiles being made “fellowheirs [‘joint-heirs,’ ‘co-heirs’]” with saved Jews, forming one body, Christ’s body. And, forming Christ’s body together in this manner, both saved Jews and saved Gentiles would be in a position to ascend the throne with Christ as co-heirs with Him during the coming day of His power, when He is revealed as “King of kings, and Lord of lords” (cf. Eph. 3:1-11; Col. 1:25-29).

But, though attention is called specifically to activities during this one age in chapter three, the thought of “ages” from the preceding chapter would carry over into the whole of the matter. And this could only be particularly true of that made known to “the principalities and powers in heavenly places” through the existence of this new entity, the Church:

“To the intent that [‘In order that’] now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by [‘through’] the Church the manifold wisdom of God.

According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph. 3:10, 11).

(The Greek word translated “eternal” [*aionios*] in verse eleven — God’s “eternal purpose” — does not itself mean “eternal.” There is no one word which, in and of itself, means “eternal” in

the Greek text of the New Testament This is the word translated “eternal” throughout the New Testament, but the word itself refers to a *long period of time*, usually thought of as *an age*.

Aionios can be understood in the sense of “eternal” if the context permits. The immediate context in Eph. 3:11 doesn’t [Eph. 3:1ff]; but the far context, referring to “ages,” does [Eph. 2:7]. Thus, that made known to Satan and his angels through the existence of the Church *would have to do specifically with the coming age but could only extend out into the ages beyond as well*.

To avoid confusion in this realm, in Ephesians chapters two and three, “ages” in Eph. 3:5, 21, KJV, is a translation of *genea* in the Greek text and should be rendered “generations,” not “ages.”)

The Church in existence today reveals *the outworking* of God’s plans and purposes in the preceding respect, *not only to men but to angels as well*. The very existence of the Church could only cause Satan to act in a contrary manner to that which God has decreed, as did the existence of Adam and Eve in Eden, or the existence of Israel at a later time.

The Church is in existence to fulfill *an eternal purpose* which God “purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph. 3:11; cf. Eph. 1:11). The working out of this purpose will occur in the coming age first, then throughout all of the ages beyond.

In this respect, the immediate or near purpose for the existence of the Church is a rule with Christ from *His Own throne* in the heavenlies over *this present earth* in the stead of the incumbent “principalities and powers”; and the far purpose is a continued rule with Christ as He sits with His Father on *the throne of God and of the Lamb* on the new earth, which, as previously noted, can only be *universal in scope*.

Satan and his angels know the position which Christians will occupy during the Millennium, and, resultingly, a warfare ensues. And the warfare could only be further intensified by their knowledge of the position which Christians will occupy beyond the Millennium.

Not only will Christ and His co-heirs move into positions presently occupied by Satan and his angels and rule the earth for one thousand years but they will, following the Millennium, rule out in that realm beyond the earth where Satan and his angels

sought to rule. And their God-dishonoring aspirations in time past resulted in their disqualification to even continue occupying regal power and authority in the one realm where they had originally been placed.

Thus, an irony of the entire matter is seen in that which will occur beyond the Millennium, which could only result in Satan's further hatred for and onslaught against Christians. Satan and his angels will not only relinquish their God-appointed positions over the earth but they will relinquish these positions to individuals who will eventually move out into the far reaches of the universe itself and evidently occupy comparable positions to those which they at a time, in the distant past, sought to occupy.

Satan's knowledge of these things is why the Apostle Paul closed his epistle "to the saints...at Ephesus" with information and instructions concerning the warfare in which Christians find themselves. He had been writing about the Christians' position in the heavenlies (present and future) throughout the epistle. *This is what Ephesians is about.*

Christians have been saved and positioned in the heavenlies, "in Christ," *for a purpose.* And whether Christians understand this purpose or not, *one can rest assured that Satan and his angels understand and know what's happening,* resulting in the existing onslaught against Christians by the world-rulers of this present darkness.

(In relation to man's calling to one day occupy regal positions in heavenly places, there is an interesting paradox when this is viewed in the light of the aspirations of both saved and unsaved man today.

Unsaved man on the earth has no calling to go out into the heavens; but, nonetheless, he expresses a desire to go anyway [to the moon, to Mars, and beyond within man's present space program]. Saved man on the earth, on the other hand, has a calling to one day go out into the heavens — the heavens associated with this earth during the Messianic Era, and the heavens associated with the universe at large in the ages beyond. But, in the main, saved man is not interested.

In short, unsaved man is interested in that which God has no interest in; and saved man, for the most part, shows little to no interest in that which occupies, in reality, the central place in God's interest surrounding the saved.

Saved man thinks in terms of dying [or being removed from the earth alive at the time of the rapture] and going to heaven, with that being somewhat the end of the matter. But Scripture deals with saved man after an entirely different fashion. Scripture deals with saved man in relation to a rule over this present earth for 1,000 years, from heavenly places [heavenly places in relation to the earth, not from the heavenly place where God presently dwells]; and Scripture deals with saved man beyond the 1,000 years ruling out in the universe from a new earth, a rule which will extend throughout the subsequent eternal ages.

The entire matter is *regal* in nature. *Regality* marks man's beginning in Genesis chapter one, and *this never changes throughout Scripture, throughout man's existence, which is eternal.*)

Proper Preparation

God has placed pastor-teachers in the Church to lead Christians from immaturity to maturity in the faith, and the revealed reason is given in Eph. 4:14:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

In the Epistle of Ephesians, instruction provided by pastor-teachers would, of necessity, have to center around

- 1) One's positional standing "in Christ" *in the heavenlies* (1:3, 20).
- 2) The "inheritance" awaiting Christians (1:11, 17, 18).
- 3) The very purpose for one's salvation (2:6, 7).
- 4) The "fellowship ['dispensation'] of the mystery" (3:1-11).
- 5) The necessity for maturity in the faith (4:11-16).
- 6) The necessity for being filled with the Spirit (5:18-20).
- 7) The spiritual warfare at hand (3:10; 6:10ff).

Concluding his epistle with the exhortation, "Put on the whole armor of God" (6:11), the writer uses similar wording in the Greek text to that which he had used in Eph. 4:14. This earlier verse

(4:14) concerns proper preparation through spiritual maturity in order to avoid being led astray by the “*cunning craftiness*” of those who “lie in wait to deceive.” And the later verse (6:11) concerns one being clothed in “the whole armor of God” in order that he might be able to “stand against the *wiles* of the devil.”

The thought in both instances has to do with a *settled plan, a systematic strategy* used by those who have set about to deceive and lead Christians astray relative to matters surrounding their calling, as revealed in Ephesians; and Christians, in both instances, are to be properly prepared for such deception.

Instruction is progressive throughout Ephesians (or elsewhere in Scripture), and the concluding exhortation in Eph. 6:10ff is really for Christians who have attained an element of spiritual maturity in their lives. This is very evident from what is stated in the passage.

There can be no such thing as a spiritually immature Christian being “strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might” (v. 10); nor can there be any such thing as a spiritually immature Christian being able to properly clothe himself in “the whole armor of God” and “stand against the wiles of the devil” (v. 11). Spiritually immature Christians have little to no understanding of the warfare, much less how to properly clothe themselves.

This can be easily demonstrated from an Old Testament type, which is the central type in the Old Testament dealing with this subject — the Israelites under Moses at Kadesh-Barnea, in a position to go in, take the land, and realize an inheritance therein.

The march from Egypt to Kadesh-Barnea was via the wilderness of Sinai, where detailed instructions from the Lord were given to the people of Israel through Moses. And when the Israelites subsequently reached Kadesh-Barnea, spies were sent into the land ahead of the nation to gather information concerning the land and the inhabitants therein.

These spies spent forty days and nights in the land, traversing it from one end to the other, and returned not only with information concerning the land and its inhabitants but with actual samples of the fruits of the land itself.

The people of Israel had received the Word of God at Sinai.

They had then heard the report concerning the land and the inhabitants therein, and they had tasted the actual fruits of the land at Kadesh-Barnea before thought was given to entering the land and combating the inhabitants. That is, the people of Israel had been led from a rudimentary knowledge of their salvation in Egypt (through death and shed blood, where the death of the first-born occurred via a substitute) to a mature knowledge concerning God's plans and purposes relating to the nation at Kadesh-Barnea (where a revealed inheritance lay before the people). And the entire matter had to do with the Israelites going into the land, warring against the inhabitants, being victorious over the inhabitants, and realizing God's purpose for the nation, within a theocracy.

And that which this overall type foreshadows, seen in the antitype today (*cf.* I Cor. 10:6, 11; Heb. 3, 4), is exactly the same. Growth from immaturity to maturity in the Christian life is likewise for a purpose (Heb. 5), and that purpose has to do with being able to achieve victory over the enemy and one day realize an inheritance in a heavenly land within a theocracy (Heb. 6, 10, 12).

Christians are to be fully capable of clothing themselves in the whole armor of God that they might be able to "withstand in the evil day." The word "withstand" is a translation of the Greek word *anthistemi*, which is a compound word comprised of *anti* ("against") and *histemi* ("to stand"). Thus, the thought, beginning in verse ten, is to be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might [note where one's strength lies — not in himself, but in the Lord]"; and in conjunction with an exhibition of this type strength, one is told, "Put on the whole armor of God," for only by so doing will he be able *to firmly stand against* the settled plan of Satan, the systematic strategy of Satan, holding his ground and giving no place to the enemy.

1) "Stand Therefore, Having Your Loins Girt About with Truth" (v. 14a)

Following the events of the Passover in Egypt during the days of Moses, 3,500 years ago (Ex. 12:1ff), the people of Israel were to be led out of Egypt in order to realize an inheritance in another land. They were to be removed from Egypt and established in the

land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And the people of Israel were to be established in this land in the position of God's firstborn son (the nation which God recognized as possessing the rights of primogeniture). As God's firstborn son, Israel would be the ruling nation within a theocracy, and the Gentile nations would then not only be ruled by Israel but these same nations would also be blessed through Israel (Gen. 12:2, 3; 22:17, 18; Ex. 4:22, 23; 19:5, 6).

Exactly the same things apply in relation to Christians, except a heavenly land is in view. Christ has died, his blood has been shed; and the firstborn has died vicariously, through the provided Substitute. And, exactly as in the type, an inheritance in another land is in view.

That is to say, an individual has been saved *for a revealed purpose*, and that purpose in the antitype is the same as seen in the type.

“And he brought us out from thence [out of Egypt], that he might bring us in [into the land to which they had been called], to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers” (Deut. 6:23).

Christians, from a typical standpoint, have been saved in Egypt (a type of the world) to realize an inheritance in Canaan (a type of the heavenly land to which they have been called). That is, Christians have been saved in the world in order to one day be established in a heavenly land as God's firstborn son (that “holy nation” which God recognizes as possessing the rights of primogeniture [Heb. 12:23; I Peter 2:9]); and as God's firstborn, Christians will rule as co-heirs with Christ, within a theocracy. The Gentile nations will not only be ruled by Christ and His co-heirs but these same nations will also be blessed through Christ and His co-heirs (Gen. 22:17, 18; Eph. 1:3; Phil. 3:20; Col. 1:5; Heb. 3:1; I Peter 1:4).

(Spiritual blessings in that day can and will flow not only from Christ and Israel on earth [Christ seated on David's throne, in the midst of the Jewish people] but through Christ and His co-heirs in the heavens as well [Christ seated on His Own throne, with His bride], in complete accordance with Gen. 12:3; 22:17, 18.

And this can be true because all those associated with Christ in this manner [both on earth and in the heavens] will be of the seed of Abraham [Gal. 3:29], the seed through whom God has decreed that all spiritual blessings are to flow.)

The Israelites in the type had been led from Egypt through the wilderness to the borders of the land of Canaan at Kadesh-Barnea. They were in possession of the Word of God received at Sinai, they had heard the report of the spies who had traversed the land of Canaan, and they had tasted the actual fruits of the land which the spies had brought back with them. The Israelites had moved from a simple knowledge of the rudimentary things surrounding the death of the firstborn in Egypt to an extensive knowledge concerning the plans and purposes of God for the nation (which centered around the land of Canaan and the purpose for Israel's calling).

In the terminology of Scripture, the Israelites had moved from a state of *gnosis* ("knowledge") to a state of *epignosis* ("mature knowledge [especially as it related to the things surrounding the purpose for their calling]"). They were now ready to enter the land, combat the "giants" inhabiting this land (Num. 13:32, 33), and possess the land in accordance with their calling and God's promise.

Their seeming inability to conquer the "giants," who were far stronger, was to be of no moment. They were to recognize that *the battle belonged to the Lord* (I Sam. 17:47) and that circumstances were not to be viewed from a naturalistic standpoint but from a Divine viewpoint. They were to know that the enemy could not be overcome within their own strength (Num. 14:42-45) but, rather, through the strength of the One dwelling in their midst.

Such was the attitude exhibited by Caleb and Joshua (two of the twelve spies) as they sought to present the truth of the matter to a people who had been troubled by the preliminary report given by the spies concerning the land and its inhabitants (Num. 13:26-30).

And this is what is in view in Eph. 6:14 when Christians are told to have their "loins girt about with truth."

“Truth” in this passage is *not* a reference to the Word of God. A person clothing himself to enter the conflict with the inhabitants of the land wherein his inheritance lies occurs, as in the type, at Kadesh-Barnea when he enters the conflict, not back in Egypt. At this point, the person properly clothing himself could only have previously moved from an immature understanding of the Word to one which would allow him to grasp various things about the spiritual warfare at hand. That is, such a person would not only be in possession of the Word but he would be in possession of an understanding of this Word, particularly as it relates to things surrounding the battle for the land and Christians ultimately holding regal positions therein.

Taking and using the Word *already in one’s possession* is seen later, in verse seventeen, not at this point in the instructions, in verse fourteen.

“Truth” in this passage is a reference to *entering the conflict after the same fashion Caleb and Joshua were exhorting the people to enter the conflict during their day*:

“Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” (Num. 13:30).

“Truth” with which one enters the conflict, in this respect, is *sincerity, earnestness* as the person goes forth, relying upon the Lord (“...be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might” [Eph. 6:10]).

One has to, first of all, be *sincere* and *earnest* about the conflict in which he finds himself engaged. This battle isn’t something which one can enter after any type frivolous fashion. There is a systematic, well-planned effort on the part of Satan to bring about a Christian’s defeat; and a Christian, to be victorious in battle, *must* exhibit the same type attitude as manifested by Caleb and Joshua.

(The “giants [Heb., *nephilim*, ‘fallen ones’]” inhabiting the land during Moses’ day were the offspring of a cohabitation of the sons of God with the daughters of men — the offspring of a cohabitation between fallen angels in Satan’s kingdom and female members of the human race.

Thus, the battle set before the Israelites for possession of the land, as the battle set before Christians for possession of a land today, involved things beyond the natural, requiring God's supernatural intervention on behalf of His people.)

2) "...and Having on the Breastplate of Righteousness"
(v. 14b)

The girdle is the first piece of armor mentioned in Ephesians chapter six; and a warrior arraying himself for battle was to put the girdle on first, for other pieces of the armor were attached to the girdle.

The breastplate, the next piece of armor mentioned, was normally attached to the girdle in both the front and the rear, making the girdle necessary for the breastplate to be held firmly in place.

The thought is that there must first be a Caleb- and Joshua-type attitude on the part of the Christian before going beyond this point in properly clothing himself. One must first have the girdle of sincerity, earnestness, truthfulness on before the breastplate can be properly affixed.

It is a simple thing to see that the breastplate can have nothing to do with the righteousness of God which has been imputed to every believer. The righteousness of God is a righteousness with which God clothes us at the point of salvation, as He clothed Adam and Eve with animal skin following their fall (requiring death and shed blood). The righteousness in view in Eph. 6:14 is a righteousness which the Christian himself is to put on. It is a righteousness to be put on by the one already in possession of the imputed righteousness of God.

This is the personal righteousness mentioned in Rev. 19:8, associated with the wedding garment. This garment is made up of "the righteousness of saints." The word "righteousness" is plural in the Greek text and should be translated "righteousnesses," or "righteous acts." These are the *justifying acts* referred to in James 2:21-25. A man is first justified by faith (Rom. 5:15-18), being clothed in the righteousness of God (spoken of in a singular sense — *one justifying act* [performed by Christ]); and the man is then to be justified by works (James 2:24), clothing himself through righteous

acts (spoken of in a plural sense — *justifying acts* [performed by the one already justified by faith, justified through the act of Another]).

Righteous acts performed by Christians simply have to do with exercising faithfulness within the scope of one's particular calling, fulfilling his particular responsibility as a servant in the Lord's house. And, as one exercises faithfulness, waiting upon the Lord, righteous acts will be the natural outworking of faithfulness as the person follows the leadership of the indwelling Spirit.

That is to say, in relation to that seen in Eph. 6:14, after one exhibits the proper attitude toward the battle at hand, he is then to exercise faithfulness as a servant in the house. Such will result in works, righteous acts, allowing that person to have on (he will have put it on himself) the breastplate of righteousness and allowing that person to one day be clothed (actually, he will one day clothe himself) in the wedding garment.

(For the proper relationship which *faith* and *works* occupy in relation to one another, refer to the author's book, SALVATION OF THE SOUL, Chapter V, "Faith Made Mature," and the Appendix, "Faith and Works.")

3) "And Your Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace" (v. 15)

Note the emphasis in verses eleven, thirteen, and fourteen relative to *standing* as one goes forth to battle: "to stand" (v. 11), "withstand [*lit.*, 'stand against']," "to stand" (v. 13), and "Stand" (v. 14). One must have solid footing to stand upon. Both feet must be firmly planted, "shod with the preparation ['readiness'] of the gospel of peace."

There are two aspects to the gospel in Scripture. One appears in connection with "peace *with* God," and the other appears in connection with "the peace *of* God."

"Peace *with* God" comes about through justification by grace through faith, as seen in Eph. 2:8, 9: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace *with* God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). This peace results from one being placed upon the foundation, with the most sure, steadfast footing possible, apart from which there can be no conflict.

However, distinctions between “peace *with* God” and “the peace *of* God” are not what is in view in Eph. 6:15, for availing oneself of the proper footwear (for both feet) is something which, contextually, occurs following salvation.

In a parallel passage to that which is in view, the latter part of Rom. 10:15 states,

“How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.”

The feet are seen as the vehicle of transportation for the messenger, as he goes about proclaiming good news concerning *peace*. Within the overall scope of the good news, as previously stated, there is a facet of the message having to do with “peace with God” (for the unsaved [Rom. 5:1]) and there is a facet of the message having to do with the “peace of God” (for the saved [Phil. 4:5-7]). The contextual emphasis in Rom. 10:15 though has to do with *the saved*, not with the unsaved.

Exactly the same thought is in view regarding the armor in Eph. 6:15. Having one’s feet properly shod has to do with proper preparation relative to the good news concerning *peace*, as it pertains to the saved, exactly as seen in Rom. 10:15; and this would be based on the person already having “peace with God,” as seen in Rom. 5:1.

The messenger’s feet being properly shod shows a proper preparation of the messenger as he goes about proclaiming this message concerning *peace*. And this message of *peace* would have two facets — *the peace of God* now (having to do with the present aspect of salvation, the outworking of the saving of the soul), culminating in a future *peace* when *the Prince of Peace* is Himself present (having to do with the future aspect of salvation, when the salvation of the soul will be realized).

4) “Above All, Taking the Shield of Faith...” (v. 16)

The weakness of the average Christian is lack of faith, wrought through the neglect of prayerful study in and meditation on the Word of God.

“Faith” is simply *believing God*, and God speaks to us today through *His Word*. This is the reason that “faith cometh by [‘out of’] hearing, and hearing by [‘through’] the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). We find what God has to say about a matter in His Word; and we can then either exercise faith through believing that which God has said, or we can fail to exercise faith through not believing that which God has said.

Caleb and Joshua at Kadesh-Barnea exercised “faith.” *They believed that which God had to say about entering into and possessing the land of Canaan* (Ex. 2:24, 25; 3:7, 8; 6:4-8; 13:5, 11, 19; Num. 13:30). However, the remainder of the nation, led astray by the “evil report” presented by the other ten spies, failed to exercise “faith.” *They didn’t believe God concerning entrance into the land*, and they even went so far as to consider appointing a new leader (someone other than Moses) and returning to Egypt (Num. 13:31-14:4).

Exactly the same thing confronts Christians today: Will you exercise faith concerning that which God has to say about entrance into the land (in line with that manifested by Caleb and Joshua)? Or, will you fail to exercise faith concerning that which God has to say about entrance into the land (in line with that manifested by the remainder of the nation)?

Caleb and Joshua possessed “the shield of faith”; the remainder of the nation though didn’t possess this shield. “The shield of faith” is put on through simply believing that which God has to say concerning entrance into the land. It is put on through trusting the Lord to see you safely through the conflict with the world-rulers of this present darkness, resulting in your realizing an inheritance in the land during that coming day.

Possessing the shield of faith would be synonymous with *earnestly striving with respect to the faith* in Jude 3 or *striving in the good contest of the faith* in I Tim. 6:12.

5) “And Take the Helmet of Salvation” (v. 17a)

This is something which a person already in possession of salvation is to, himself, put on; and it is to be put on in view of a warfare. Thus, it can be easily seen that putting on “the helmet

of salvation" has to do with things beyond that foreshadowed by the death of the firstborn and application of the blood in Egypt. Continuing with the type, it has to do with being properly arrayed (through having arrayed oneself) at Kadesh-Barnea, with a view to entering the land and combating the giants.

I Thessalonians 5:8 reveals that "the helmet of salvation" is *the hope of salvation*:

"But let us, who are of the day [Christians waiting and watching for their Lord's return (vv. 6, 7)], be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

"The hope of salvation" is a reference to the salvation which will be revealed at the time of Christ's return — the salvation of the soul. "Hope" is something which may or may not be realized (*cf.* Luke 23:8; Acts 16:19; 27:20). And the salvation of one's soul, inseparably connected with hope, has to do with realizing an inheritance as God's firstborn son in the land to which Christians have been called — something which Christians, individually, may or may not realize.

A Christian can forfeit his inheritance and lose his soul, which itself has nothing to do with his presently possessed eternal salvation. Again, bear in mind, *this is something (as seen in the type) which occurs at Kadesh-Barnea and beyond, not something which occurs back in Egypt.*

One clothes himself with the helmet of salvation — the hope of salvation — in view of achieving victory over the inhabitants of the land to which he has been called. His hope is that of being victorious — being an overcomer — and one day being privileged to ascend the throne and rule as co-heir with Christ in this land.

This is a hope which results in purification in a believer's life and is a hope which should be on the lips of every believer, as a ready testimony surrounding the purpose for his salvation (I Peter 3:15; I John 3:3).

(See the author's book, SALVATION OF THE SOUL, Chapter VI, "Hope, Inheritance, Salvation," for a more comprehensive discussion of this subject.)

6) "...and the Sword of the Spirit, Which Is the Word of God" (v. 17b)

A Christian having his "loins girt about with truth," having on "the breastplate of righteousness," having his "feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," taking "the shield of faith," and having on "the helmet of salvation" is then to take "the sword of the Spirit" — the Word of God — as he goes forth to combat Satan. After being properly arrayed in all the other revealed fashions, he is then to take the *one thing* which God has provided as a *weapon* to be used against the enemy.

II Timothy 3:16 in the KJV reads,

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God..."

The words, "given by inspiration of God," are a translation of one Greek word, *Theopneustos*, meaning "God-breathed." This is a compound word comprised of *Theos* ("God") and *pneuma* ("breath" in this particular usage [this is also the word used for "Spirit" in the N. T. — the Holy Spirit, man's spirit, and the use of spirit in general; also "wind" in John 3:8]).

That which is meant by and the implications of Scripture being God-breathed are given in a somewhat simple manner in Scripture, but one has to look at and compare related parts of both Testaments before he can really begin to see and understand that which is involved. A person has to reference passages in one Testament, then passages in the other. He has to compare Scripture with Scripture, *i.e.*, he has to compare "spiritual things with spiritual."

First note Heb. 4:12:

"The word of God is quick [*lit.*, 'alive'], and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword..."

Why is the Word of God "alive," "powerful," and "sharper than any twoedged sword"? The answer: *Because of its origin.* The Word is "*Theopneustos*"; The Word is "God-breathed."

But, what does that mean? And why is the Word "alive" because of its origin? This is where one has to go back to beginning

points in the Old Testament and find the first mention in Scripture of God bringing a matter to pass through the use of *His breath*.

This is necessary not only because of the need to compare Scripture with Scripture but also because of a principle of Biblical interpretation called, *The First-Mention Principle*. This principle has to do with *unchangeableness*, and it centers around an unchangeable structure of the Word given by the unchangeable God. Because of the inherent nature of the Word, the first time a subject is mentioned in Scripture, a pattern, a mold is established at that point which remains unchanged throughout all subsequent Scripture.

Remaining within this principle, the first time one finds the breath of God mentioned in Scripture is in Gen. 2:7, where life was imparted to man through God's breath. And, consequently, at this beginning point, this verse connects *life* with *the breath of God* after an *unchangeable fashion*.

God formed and fashioned man from the dust of the ground, but man was not created alive. Life was subsequently imparted through God breathing into man's "nostrils the breath of life," resulting in man becoming "a living soul."

Thus, in Gen. 2:7, the unchangeable connection between *God's breath* and *life in relation to man* is established and set. Only God can produce life, and any time life is produced beyond this point it *must always* be through the one means set forth at the beginning, revealed in Gen. 2:7.

There is *nothing more powerful* at a Christian's disposal than the Word of God. It was this Word which Satan chose to use against Christ in the wilderness, and Christ used this same Word as He countered Satan (Matt. 4:1-11).

And going forth, properly arrayed for battle, using the Word as a weapon against the world-rulers of this present darkness, a Christian, at the same time, is to constantly be in "prayer and supplication in the Spirit...watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (v. 18).

If the provided instructions are followed, victory after victory in the present spiritual warfare will ensue. But, if the provided instructions are not followed...

Appendix I

Amalek Flesh, Spirit

To see the true place and significance of the Amalekites in Scripture and to properly understand the typology involved different places where these people are mentioned, one needs to go back and look at Esau as a progenitor of the Amalekites. And it matters not that the Amalekites existed as a nation prior to this time, for the Amalekite nation is seen existing *apart from change* throughout its history, whether before or after the days of Esau's grandson, Amalek (though little is revealed about the Amalekites prior to Esau's progeny).

Esau is really the only link which Scripture provides to trace the origin of the Amalekites. They appeared during the days of Abraham apart from a reference to their origin. And, the fact that they were associated with Esau at a later point in time from their original appearance, must be looked upon as by Divine design, for a particular reason.

It is within the person of Esau that characteristics are seen which depict *the true nature* of the Amalekites (within a spiritual frame of reference), allowing that which God has for man to see in passages such as Ex. 17:8-16 to become self-evident.

Rights of the Firstborn

Esau was the firstborn son of Isaac, *a man of the world*, who looked upon matters — particularly matters pertaining to his

birthright (his rights as firstborn, the main thing singled out in Scripture about Esau) — as *the world* viewed them rather than as God viewed them. It is said of Esau that he “despised his birthright” (Gen. 25:34).

The Septuagint (Greek version of the O.T.) uses a word for “despised” which means that Esau regarded his birthright as a *paltry possession*, as something *insignificant* or *of little value*. He regarded his birthright as *practically worthless*. And, Esau, looking upon his birthright after this fashion, sold his rights as firstborn to his twin brother, Jacob, for a single meal of “bread and pottage of lentiles.” He sold his rights as firstborn to satisfy his hunger, to satisfy a fleshly gratification.

The account of Esau selling his birthright and not realizing its value until it was too late forms the fifth and final major warning in the Book of Hebrews (12:16, 17). This account in Hebrews chapter twelve forms the apex toward which all things in the book move. The preceding four warnings have to do with different facets of the overall teaching pertaining to the birthright; and chapter eleven, the chapter on “faith” leading into chapter twelve, forms both a summation for the preceding warnings and an introduction for the final warning, tying everything together with the thought of *faithfulness to one’s calling*.

Esau looked upon matters from the vantage point of the world. He saw things from a *fleshly* perspective rather than from a *spiritual*. And it was only at a time when it was too late that he gave thought to the spiritual, allowing him to see the birthright in its true light.

Thus, “Esau” typifies *the fleshly man*; and his brother, “Jacob [actually, ‘Israel’],” typifies *the spiritual man*. This would be after a similar fashion to the way Ishmael and Isaac are set forth in preceding Scripture.

(Referring to a more specific part of the type, the name, “Jacob,” has to do with *the fleshly [or natural] man*; and the name, “Israel,” has to do with *the spiritual man* [cf. Gen. 32:28-30; Ps. 147:19, 20; Isa. 9:8]. Note, for example, that the separate creation performed by God in Isa. 43:1 [establishing a second creation within mankind, leaving two

creations, Jew and Gentile] had to do with “Jacob,” not with Israel. Thus, this creation, because it was of *the natural man*, could be passed on through procreation.

Also note in Luke 1:32, 33 that Christ’s future reign is to be over “the house of *Jacob*,” and it is to last “forever [Gk., *eis tous aionas* (‘with respect to the ages’ — not only the Messianic Era but also all the succeeding ages comprising eternity)].” This verse, referring to *the natural man*, reveals that the Israelites will not only reside in natural bodies on this present earth throughout the Messianic Era but also on the new earth throughout the eternal ages as well [in complete keeping with the type body Lazarus possessed when he was raised from the dead, foreshadowing the future resurrection of Israel (John 11:6, 7, 43, 44).]

Seeing how Scripture presents Esau in connection with the rights of the firstborn is *the key* to correctly understanding the various spiritual lessons inherent in the different places where the Amalekites are mentioned, for this is exactly the fashion in which they appear in Scripture. The main thing marking the Amalekites would be that of *possessing the mind of Esau toward the things of God, particularly those things concerning the rights of the firstborn*. And, during Moses’ day, they are first seen in Scripture setting themselves in opposition to *God’s firstborn son, Israel* (Ex. 4:22, 23).

In the type, Israel was called out of Egypt to inherit the rights of the firstborn, within a theocracy, in another land. This was the direction toward which all things surrounding Israel moved (Ex. 15:1-18).

But, *then Amalek appeared and stood in the way*, seeking through any means possible to stop Israel at this point in the journey, short of the goal of the nation’s calling.

In the antitype, every Christian is a “child” of God, or “son,” as seen in Heb. 12:5-8, *awaiting the adoption, to be followed by a realization of the inheritance belonging to firstborn sons*. And this inheritance has to do with another land (*heavenly*, rather than earthly [cf. Eph. 1:11-14; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 3:1]). This is the direction toward which *all things* in the lives of Christians are presently moving, whether Christians know it or not (most don’t).

And Amalek, the man of flesh, is presently making his appearance — attacking, exactly as in the type (though *the light*

now exists, *the darkness* remains [*cf.* Gen. 1:3-5; II Cor. 4:6]). And Amalek will seek, through every means possible, to stop Christians short of the goal.

In this respect, the man of flesh, typified by Amalek, is presented in Scripture as one whose main goal centers around *opposing those called to inherit the rights of the firstborn*. He is the one who *stands in the way*, seeking through every means possible to prevent individuals from coming into a realization of the inheritance to which they have been called.

And how is Amalek to be defeated? That's what the account of the Israelites' encounter and battle with Amalek in Ex. 17:8-16 is about. This section of Scripture reveals how the man of flesh is to be defeated, so that redeemed individuals can be *victorious* in the present warfare, allowing them *to one day realize the rights of the firstborn, in another land, within a theocracy*.

Slay Amalek, Or...

Either *slay Amalek*, as the Lord commands, or *Amalek will, in the end, rise up and slay you*. This is a teaching graphically set forth in the Books of I and II Samuel (*cf.* Num. 14:42, 43; 20:2-21).

Saul, the first king in Israel, was told by Samuel,

"Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have..." (I Sam. 15:3).

But Saul rendered incomplete obedience. He spared Agag, *the king* of the Amalekites; and he saved *the best* of Amalek's possessions — the sheep and oxen "to sacrifice unto the Lord," along with the fatlings, the lambs, and everything that appeared good *in his sight* (I Sam. 15:7-15).

This resulted in the Lord, through Samuel, rejecting Saul as king over Israel (I Sam. 15:16-28). And in later years, because Saul had not previously carried out the Lord's command concerning Amalek, an Amalekite appeared and slew Saul after he had been mortally wounded in a battle with the Philistines.

The account of Saul's death in I Sam. 31:1-6 and the account given to David by the Amalekite who killed Saul in II Sam. 1:2-10

must be compared to see and understand exactly what occurred. Saul had been mortally wounded in battle, he fell on his sword in an attempt to kill himself, but he failed in the attempt. An Amalekite then appeared; and, responding to Saul's question, "Who art thou?", he said, "*I am an Amalekite*" (II Sam. 1:7, 8).

Then Saul said,

"Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me" (II Sam. 1:9).

And the Amalekite, relating the story to David, said,

"So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm..." (II Sam. 1:10).

Saul, in the beginning, had been commanded to slay Amalek. But he didn't. And, in the end, after Saul had "fallen," Amalek not only *slew him* but *stripped him of his regality*.

That is the central point in the Old Testament to which the warning in Rev. 3:11 relates:

"Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, *that no man take thy crown.*"

Either *slay Amalek now*, as the Lord commands, or *he will bring you down and, in the end, rise up, slay you, and take your crown.*

And the "crown" has to do with *the regal part of the rights of the firstborn*. It has to do with occupying a position with Christ in the coming kingdom, for only crowned rulers will ascend the throne with Christ and realize the other two aspects of the birth-right (being not only *kings* but *priests* [*king-priests*], and receiving *a double portion of all the Father's goods* as co-heirs with the "King of kings, and Lord of lords").

Means and Length of the Battle

In the account of the battle with Amalek in Ex. 17:8-16, Moses, accompanied by Aaron and Hur, ascended a nearby hill while the

Israelites fought with Amalek in the valley below. And during the battle, as long as Moses held “the rod of God” high in his hand, the Israelites prevailed. But when he lowered the rod (a sceptre [Ex. 4:20-23]), Amalek prevailed (vv. 10, 11).

There would be a dual type in relation to Moses holding the sceptre on the top of the hill. Though Christ, fulfilling one part of the type, would need no help, Christians, fulfilling the other part of the type, *would* need help. And Aaron and Hur can be seen in the second part of the type.

One part of the picture concerns Christ fighting the battle on the Christians’ behalf, and the other part of the picture concerns Christians engaged in the battle as well. And Christians grow weary in the battle and need help from fellow-Christians also engaged in the battle. Christians are to help one another in this respect.

That’s what Heb. 10:23-25 is about. We are told to “hold fast the profession of our faith [*lit.*, ‘the confession of the hope’] without wavering”; and we are told to associate ourselves with other Christians *of like mind* to encourage, exhort, and pray for one another, “and so much the more,” as we “see the day approaching.”

It is, at times, a lonely and weary battle in the place of exile; and Christians have been exhorted to help one another in the race of the faith. They are exhorted *to encourage one another and help one another hold the sceptre high* as each goes forth, *properly arrayed*, to combat the enemy with *the Sword of the Spirit* (Eph. 6:10-18).

And the battle, after this fashion, is to be fought “until the going down of the sun” (v. 12), which can only depict a battle lasting *the entire duration of the Christian life*. Christians are in the race of the faith for the long haul, and the battle exists throughout the entire course of the race.

When Moses began to grow weary in the battle, Aaron and Hur not only helped hold his hands up but they also placed a stone under Moses so that he could sit, though still holding the sceptre high. And, through Aaron and Hur’s help, Moses was able to continue after this fashion for the entire duration of the time. Scripture reads, “...his hands were steady until the going down of the sun” (v. 12).

The “stone” upon which Moses sat itself pointed to *the kingdom*

of Christ, to which the “rod,” the sceptre, he held pointed (Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45). Then, beyond that, Moses, Aaron, and Hur had gone up to the top of a particular hill — “the hill”; and the word “hill,” as “mountain,” when used in a symbolic sense in Scripture, signifies *a kingdom* (Isa. 2:2-4). Typically, they fought the battle from the top of a particular kingdom as they held up the sceptre.

Everything about realizing victory in the battle against Amalek centers around one thought — *taking one’s eyes off the things pertaining to the present kingdom under Satan and fixing them on the things pertaining to the coming kingdom under Christ.*

In the words of Gen. 19:17,

“...escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.”

Appendix II

Crowns Before the Throne

Who Will Cast These Crowns?

Why Will These Crowns Be Cast?

When Will These Crowns Be Cast?

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter [‘after these things’].

And immediately I was [‘I became’] in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

And round about the throne were four and twenty seats [‘thrones’]: and upon the seats [‘thrones’] I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:1, 2, 4, 10, 11).

Immediately following events pertaining to the judgment seat, attention is again called to that previously seen in Rev. 1:10 — John being removed from Man’s Day and placed in the Lord’s Day, depicting the Church being removed from Man’s Day and placed in the Lord’s Day. And, calling attention to the same event again at this point in the book would show the dispensational nature of the removal of the Church — a removal occurring at

the end of the dispensation (at the end of that seen in chs. 2, 3).

But, with events pertaining to the judgment seat already having been dealt with (in chs. 2, 3, viewed from the perspective of ch. 1), John is now shown subsequent events. In this chapter, John is shown events which will occur immediately following those pertaining to the judgment seat and the revelation of the bride; and these subsequent events will occur preceding events pertaining to the seven-sealed scroll (5:1ff) and the beginning of the Tribulation, as the first seal of the scroll is broken (6:1ff).

(Note that Revelation chapters two and three present a dual aspect of teachings surrounding the Church. These two chapters present:

- 1) A history of the Church throughout the dispensation.
- 2) The Church in Christ's presence at the end of the dispensation, being judged.

The description of Christ seen in ch. 1 is that of a *Judge*, not that of a Priest [shown through the girdle about the breasts rather than the waist, along with the description in general]. And *the complete Church* is seen in His presence at this time [*all seven Churches, showing completeness, showing all Christians being present at this time*].

One aspect of that seen in chs. 2, 3 depicts this future judgment of Christians. In each of the seven letters [seven epistles] to the Churches, *works*, with a view to *overcoming*, are seen. And, as revealed elsewhere in Scripture, *works* and *overcoming* cover the complete scope of that which will be seen at the judgment seat. A Christian's "works" will be dealt with, showing whether the Christian has overcome or has been overcome [I Cor. 3:11-15].)

The Heavenly Scene

Immediately after attention has been called to the same event seen in Rev. 1:10 (Rev. 4:1, 2a), John, rather than seeing a judicial scene (as in ch. 1), now sees a rainbow encircled throne, with God seated on the throne (vv. 2b, 3). And surrounding this throne, John sees twenty-four other thrones and twenty-four crowned "elders" seated on these thrones (v. 4).

Then John begins to describe various things about God's throne, which he both sees and hears — "lightnings," "thunderings," and

“voices” coming out of the throne, and “lamps of fire burning before the throne” (v. 5). And “in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne” John sees four living creatures who “rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come”; and these living creatures “give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth forever and ever” (vv. 6-9).

Then the scene returns to the twenty-four elders, who rise from their thrones, fall down before God, worship Him, cast their crowns before His throne, and express adoration to the One worthy “to receive glory and honor and power” (vv. 10, 11).

If an apex is to be found in the Book of Revelation, aside from Christ’s return in chapter nineteen, the action of these twenty-four elders would have to be considered. Their action — *relinquishing their crowns to the One Who originally placed them in the positions which they occupy* — is significant beyond degree in relation to the central message of this book.

Crowns, Regality, Government

“Crowns” have to do with *regality*, and *the government of the earth* is in view throughout the Book of Revelation. At this point in the book, the judgment of Christians, with a view to *regality*, will have just occurred; and, with a view to this same *regality*, Christ, following this, is seen as the One about to redeem the forfeited inheritance through taking the seven-sealed scroll from His Father’s right hand (ch. 5).

Angels have ruled over the earth since time immemorial — since that time when God established the government of the earth in the beginning. Angels will still be exercising this same rule over the earth at this point in the book (chs. 4, 5), and angels will continue ruling until Christ and His co-heirs (forming His bride) take the kingdom, following Christ’s return to the earth (Heb. 2:5).

Accordingly, neither Christ nor Christians will receive the crowns which they are to wear during the Messianic Era until after Christ returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation.

The crown which Christ will wear at this time is presently

being worn by Satan, as he continues to exercise power over the earth. And the crowns which Christians will wear in that day are presently being worn by two segments of angels — the angels presently ruling with Satan, and the angels who refused to follow Satan when he sought to exalt his throne.

When Satan sought to exalt his throne — following his being placed over the earth, with a large contingent of angels ruling the earth with him — only one-third of these ruling angels followed Satan, with the other two-thirds refusing to follow him (*cf.* Isa. 14:12-14; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:3, 4). And though the angels not following Satan didn't continue ruling with him, they could not immediately relinquish their appointed positions. Rather, they had to retain their positions, remaining crowned, for a time.

A principle of Biblical government necessitates that an incumbent ruler retain his crown until the one replacing him is not only on the scene but ready to ascend the throne. *Only then* can an incumbent ruler relinquish his crown.

(For example, note the account of Saul and David, forming a type. Saul, though disqualified, retained his crown and continued to reign until David was not only present but ready to ascend the throne. Then, Saul's crown was taken, given to David, and David [along with certain faithful men] ascended the throne and reigned in the stead of Saul and those who had ruled with him [I, II Samuel].

And it will be exactly the same in the antitype. Satan, though disqualified, will retain his crown and continue to reign until Christ is not only present but ready to ascend the throne. Then, Satan's crown will be taken, given to Christ, and Christ [along with certain faithful individuals] will ascend the throne and reign in the stead of Satan and those who had ruled with him [Rev. 19:11-20:6].)

This same established principle must prevail relative to the angels refusing to follow Satan in his attempt to elevate his throne. They must retain their crowns until those who are to replace them, those who are to wear these crowns, are not only on the scene but ready to ascend the throne.

These relinquished crowns though will be worn *only after* Christ returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation, overthrows Satan

and his angels, and forcibly takes their crowns. *Only then* will Christ be in possession of *all the crowns* which He and His bride are destined to wear as they ascend the throne and rule the earth.

Thus, with the introduction of crowns cast before God's throne in Rev. 4:10, 11, only one group of individuals could possibly be in view (if one remains within context and keeps in mind the earth's government in both history and prophecy). These twenty-four elders can only represent angelic rulers. *Angels alone* will possess crowns in relation to the government of the earth at this time (as they do during the present time).

(Some Bible students, on the basis of the pronouns used in Rev. 5:9, 10 — "us" and "we" [KJV] — have understood the twenty-four elders to represent redeemed men, not angels. However, the majority of the better Greek manuscripts render the pronouns in v. 10 as "them" and "they" [*ref.* ASV, NASB, NIV, Wuest, Weymouth], giving rise to the thought that the pronoun "us" in v. 9 is probably a scribal insertion, being spurious [*ref.* Alford, Lenski].

But the matter is really not left to manuscript evidence alone. That the pronouns "them" and "they" are correct is evident from the context. Note that the song in vv. 9, 10 is apparently sung not only by the "twenty-four elders" but also by the "four beasts [living creatures]" as well. Then, other angels join them in vv. 11ff, with all of the angels together voicing additional, related statements.)

And at this point in the book, through the action of the twenty-four elders casting their crowns before God's throne, the way will be opened for God to transfer the government of the earth from the hands of angels to the hands of man.

These crowns cast before God's throne, as previously seen, can only have to do with *the government of the earth*. And, at this point in the book, they can be worn by *angels alone*. *The Son* will not yet have taken the kingdom, though the Father will have previously delivered it into His hands (*cf.* Dan. 7:13, 14; Luke 19:15; Rev. 11:15; 19:11ff).

These crowns are relinquished to God — with a view to man ruling in the kingdom — so that God can appoint those who had previously been shown qualified at events surrounding the judgment seat [chs. 1-3] to positions of power and authority; and those

whom God appoints will wear these crowns in Christ's kingdom.

These crowns are cast before God's throne (*cf.* 4:1-4; 5:1-7) because *the Father alone* is the One Who places and/or removes rulers in His kingdom (Dan. 4:17-37; 5:18-21). *He alone* is the One Who placed those represented by the twenty-four elders in the positions which they occupied; and *He alone* is the One Who will place individuals in particular positions in the kingdom of Christ (Matt. 20:20-23).

The transfer of the government of the earth, from the hands of angels to the hands of man, in reality, is what the first nineteen chapters of the Book of Revelation are about; and, as well, this is what the whole of Scripture preceding these nineteen chapters is also about. In this respect, these twenty-four elders casting their crowns before God's throne forms a key event which one must grasp if he would properly understand the Book of Revelation and Scripture as a whole.

Christ and His bride, in that coming day, will rule the earth in the stead of Satan and his angels. And, in the process of ruling in this manner, they will wear *all the crowns* worn by Satan and his angels prior to his fall.

Action of the Elders

Thus, that which is depicted through the action of the twenty-four elders in Rev. 4:10, 11 is contextually self-explanatory. This has to do with the government of the earth, it occurs at a time following events surrounding the judgment seat but preceding Christ taking the seven-sealed scroll from His Father's right hand and subsequently breaking the seals, and it occurs at a time when Satan's reign is about to be brought to a close.

After events in Revelation chapters one through three have come to pass, *for the first time in man's history*, the person (the bride) who is to rule with the One to replace Satan (Christ) will have been made known and shown forth. And events in the fourth chapter reflect this fact.

Only one thing could possibly be in view at this point in the book, for the bride will not only have been made known but will

be ready for events pertaining to the transfer of power to begin. The twenty-four elders casting their crowns before God's throne can only depict the angels who did not go along with Satan in his rebellion relinquishing their crowns, with a view to those comprising the bride wearing these crowns during the Messianic Era.

But the crowns worn by Satan and those angels presently ruling with him are another matter. These crowns will have to be taken from Satan and his angels by force when Christ returns to overthrow Gentile world power at the end of the Tribulation (a power exercised during Man's Day under Satan and his angels [Dan. 10:13-20]).

(The fact that angels represented by the twenty-four elders are not presently ruling with Satan can be shown not only by their present position — in God's presence, in heaven — but by the Greek word which is used for the type crown which they are seen wearing.

There are two words in the Greek text for "crown" — *stephanos*, and *diadema*. Comparing Scripture with Scripture, with *regality* in view, one major distinction stands out concerning how these two words are used. *Diadema* refers to the type crown worn by a monarch, one presently exercising regal power. *Stephanos*, on the other hand, is used in an opposite sense. It is used to show someone crowned but not presently exercising regal power.

For example, the crown seen on Christ's head in Rev. 14:14, preceding His reign, is referred to by the word *stephanos* in the Greek text. A crown on Christ's head at this time could only anticipate His impending reign — the same as the crown on the woman's head in Rev. 12:1 (also referred to by the word *stephanos*), with the woman representing Israel, God's firstborn son, about to exercise the rights of primogeniture, as Christ, God's firstborn Son, is about to exercise these same rights as well.

Then, when Christ returns to the earth to take the kingdom, He will have many crowns upon His head; and the Greek text uses *diadema* rather than *stephanos* to refer to these crowns, for Christ will be returning as "King of kings, and Lord of lords" [Rev. 19:12, 16].

The twenty-four elders in chapter four cast crowns referred to as *stephanos* before the throne, indicating that, though crowned, these elders were not exercising regal positions. And the many crowns which Christ will have on His head at the time of His return are undoubtedly these same crowns (Rev. 19:12). But, anticipating that day when Christ reigns, the Book of Revelation uses the word *diadema* to refer to these crowns, for

Christ will be exercising *a regal position*, with Satan about to be overthrown.

The crowns on Christ's head at this time though will not be worn by Christ when He rules the earth, for He is to wear the crown presently worn by Satan [the incumbent ruler] in that day. Rather, these crowns will be given to those forming the bride [whom the Father will previously have appointed to various positions of power and authority with His Son]; and this will occur following that time when the remainder of the crowns having to do with the earth's government are forcibly taken from Satan and his angels.)

Twenty-Four, Thirty-Six

The identity of the *twenty-four elders* is shown not only by their actions and the place where this occurs in the book but also by their *number*. Comparing Revelation chapters four and twelve (4:4, 10, 11; 12:3, 4), it appears evident that the government of the earth — originally established by God prior to Satan's fall — was representatively shown by *three sets of twelve, thirty-six crowned rulers*. "Three" is the number of *Divine perfection*, and "twelve" is the number of *governmental perfection*.

Those angels who did not follow Satan in his attempt to exalt his throne would be represented by the twenty-four elders — *two sets of twelve, showing two-thirds of the original contingent of angels ruling with Satan*. And the angels who did go along with Satan, presently ruling with him, would be represented by *a third set of twelve, showing the other one-third of the original contingent of angels ruling with Satan* (Rev. 12:3, 4).

In this respect, these three representative sets of twelve would show *Divine perfection in the earth's government*. And also in this respect, this same perfection in the structure of the earth's government has not existed *since Satan's attempt to exalt his throne*.

But, this structured perfection will one day again exist in the earth's government. When Christ and His bride ascend the throne together, crowns worn by those represented by all three sets of twelve will be brought together again. Then, *Divine perfection* will once again exist in the government of the one province in God's universe where imperfection has existed for millenniums.

Appendix III

The Rule of Man

Part I

Man's Rule During the Millennium

Man's rule during the coming age will be confined to this earth. It is this one province in the kingdom of God over which Satan and his angels rule, and it is this same province over which man will one day rule in the stead of angels. *Christ* will rule in the stead of Satan, wearing the crown which Satan presently wears; and those ascending the throne and ruling as *joint-heirs with Christ* will wear crowns presently worn by two classes of angels — fallen and unfallen, but all originally associated with Satan's rule (II Sam. 1:10; 2:11; 5:3-5; Rev. 4:10, 11; 19:12).

A Rule Over the Earth

Israel will rule *upon the earth* at the head of the nations, with Christ seated on David's throne in the midst of His people. Christians though, along with certain Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs, will rule *from the heavens over the earth*, seated on the throne with Christ.

In this respect, Christ will have a dual reign; and governmental power and authority will be exercised from both *an earthly* and *a heavenly* sphere. Christ will sit on David's throne in the city of Jerusalem upon the earth, and He will also sit upon His Own throne in the new Jerusalem in the heavens above the earth (Luke 1:32, 33; Rev. 3:21).

It will actually be those ruling from the heavens who will ascend the throne and exercise power as joint-heirs with Christ at this time. Israel upon the earth will simply be the ruling nation; and though power and authority will emanate from the *two thrones* upon which Christ will sit (both *David's throne upon earth* and *His Own throne in the heavens*), the individual, joint-heir relationship which will exist in the heavenly realm will not exist in the earthly.

Those comprising the earthly seed of Abraham do not possess the same promise as those comprising the heavenly seed in this respect. Though both are to “possess the gate” of the enemy (rule over the Gentiles) and the Gentile nations are to be blessed through both (Gen. 22:17, 18), only those comprising the heavenly seed will ascend the throne to rule as joint-heirs with Christ.

Satan and his angels presently rule *from the heavens over the earth*. Satan is the “anointed cherub [messianic angel]” placed over this earth, along with a great host of subordinate angels who rule with him (Ezek. 28:14; Eph. 6:12; Rev. 12:7). Angels ruling under Satan exercise their power and authority *through rulers upon the earth*. They possess counterparts in the earthly sphere, through whom they rule. In this respect, there is a gradation of rulers upon the earth which corresponds to a gradation of rulers in the heavens.

During Daniel's day, following the conquest of Babylon by the Medes and Persians, attention was called to *heavenly rulers* referred to as “the prince of the kingdom of Persia,” “the kings of Persia,” “the prince of Greece,” and “Michael your prince” (Dan. 10:12, 13, 20, 21).

A messenger had been dispatched from heaven and sent to earth in response to Daniel's prayer. In order to reach earth, this messenger had to travel through the realm in which Satan and his angels ruled, and he was detained in this realm by the angel in Satan's kingdom who ruled over Persia — “the prince of the kingdom of Persia.”

Michael came to help, and during this time the messenger remained in this heavenly realm with “the kings of Persia.” These kings were apparently subordinate rulers who exercised power from the heavens with the “prince of the kingdom of Persia” over the Persian kingdom upon earth.

One can only deduct from Dan. 10:12-21 that the gradation of rulers in the earthly kingdom of Persia had a corresponding gradation of rulers in the heavenly kingdom, with the rulers in the heavenly sphere exercising power *through* those in the earthly sphere. Also the heavenly messenger, while speaking to Daniel, referred to “the prince of Greece” (v. 20), an apparent allusion to the Grecian kingdom (possessing both heavenly and earthly rulers) which would one day rise to a position of power and conquer the Medo-Persian kingdom.

One other interesting piece of information is also given in this chapter of Daniel. “Michael your prince” (v. 21) is a reference to *the heavenly ruler over Israel*, showing a sharp distinction between Israel and the Gentile nations. Though Israel is a nation among nations upon earth, Israel, with respect to the nation’s calling, is not to be “reckoned among the [Gentile] nations” (Num. 23:9).

Israel alone, of all the nations, possesses no ruling angel in Satan’s kingdom. Israel is *a special creation in Jacob* (Isa. 43:1), allowing this nation to be recognized after a separate fashion from the Gentile nations. Israel’s prince is *Michael*, a ruling angel in God’s kingdom who exercises power and authority separate from the power and authority exercised by Satan and his angels.

It is this present angelic rule from the heavens, referred to in Daniel chapter ten, that Christ and His co-heirs will exercise in the stead of angels during the coming age (Heb. 2:5-10). As it is today, so will it be then: Rulers in the heavenly realm will exercise power *through* rulers in the earthly realm. There will be earthly rulers throughout the various Gentile nations as well as in Israel. The times of the Gentiles will have ended, and the Gentiles will be subordinate to Israel’s rule upon earth; and rulers in the heavens will exercise power *through* rulers in both Israel and the Gentile nations on earth.

A Rule for the Overcomers

Man’s rule, realizing the purpose for his existence, will begin when the millennial kingdom has been established; and this rule will continue throughout the eternal ages. Israel and the Gentile

nations will continue to exist as separate, distinct entities right on into the eternal ages on the new earth, apparently figuring prominently in God's government of the new earth; and those ruling as co-heirs with Christ will exercise a type power and authority which will not end after the Millennium has run its course but extend on into the eternal ages as well.

A *sharp distinction* though must be recognized between the exercise of power and authority during the Millennium and the exercise of power and authority during the eternal ages. Christians who reign with Christ during the Millennium will continue to reign with Christ throughout the eternal ages, but it must be recognized that the overcomer's promises are *strictly millennial* in their scope of fulfillment.

Overcomers will be rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ for faithfulness during the present time, with a view to being recompensed during the one thousand years Christ reigns over the earth. In this respect, it is incorrect to refer to *rewards* as being "eternal," for they are not. Christians will exercise power after an entirely different fashion from a different throne during the eternal ages.

That the overcomer's promises are *millennial alone* in their scope of fulfillment can be demonstrated several ways. And this would be in perfect keeping with the foundational framework of Scripture, set forth at the very beginning — showing everything occurring throughout the six days (foreshadowing the present 6,000 years, Man's Day) pointing to that which would be realized on the seventh day (foreshadowing the future 1,000-year Sabbath, the Lord's Day).

Within a positive framework, it can be shown that the overcomer's promises in Rev. 2, 3 are millennial alone in their scope of fulfillment. And, within a negative framework, it can be shown that the forfeiture of one's birthright can occur only under conditions which will exist during the Millennium, not beyond.

The Overcomer's Promises

In Rev. 2:26, 27, overcoming Christians have been promised "power over the nations." They will rule the Gentile nations with "a rod of iron," and this authoritarian rule is compared

to the power which a potter could command over his vessels by shattering them into fragments at will — “...as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers.” Such a scene can exist *only* during the Millennium.

The entire purpose for the Millennium is to bring all things under subjection to Christ at the one place in the universe where sin entered, producing disarray. And a rule such as that described in Rev. 2:26, 27 will occur during this time in order to bring this to pass.

God is going to take one thousand years to allow His Son to reinstitute *complete order* in that part of the kingdom where *disorder* occurred. After the Son has accomplished this work, He will deliver “up the kingdom to God, even the Father” (I Cor. 15:24-28); and an authoritarian rule with a rod of iron over the nations of the earth will be a thing of the past.

In Rev. 3:21, overcoming Christians have been promised that they will be allowed to sit with Christ on His throne:

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”

Such a promise could not possibly extend into or be fulfilled during the eternal ages, for Christ will not be seated on a throne fitting the description set forth in Rev. 3:21 during ages beyond the Millennium.

The Son today is seated at His Father’s right hand, on His Father’s throne (though He is exercising the office of High Priest rather than reigning with His Father). During the Millennium the Son will be seated on His Own throne as the great King-Priest (He will have terminated His present high priestly ministry, will have left His Father’s throne, and will have assumed the long-awaited, promised position on His Own throne).

At the end of the Millennium though, Christ will relinquish this position (for all things will have been brought under subjection) and once again assume a place on the throne with His Father. This throne will be called, “the throne of God and of the Lamb” (Rev. 22:1, 3), and Christ will then reign with His Father apart from exercising any type priestly office (there will be no sin following

the Millennium and thus no need for a priestly ministry).

Thus, promises such as those in Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21 *must* be looked upon as millennial in their scope of fulfillment.

Forfeiture of One's Birthright

There are two classic examples in the Old Testament of individuals forfeiting the rights belonging to the firstborn — Esau and Reuben. Esau forfeited his birthright for a single meal (Gen. 25:27-34; 27:1-38), and Reuben forfeited his birthright because of sexual impropriety (Gen. 35:22; 49:3, 4). Esau's birthright went to his younger brother, Jacob; and Reuben's birthright was divided among three of his younger brothers — Judah, Levi, and Joseph.

The fifth and last of the five major warnings in the Book of Hebrews has to do with the possibility that Christians can, in like manner, forfeit their birthrights, disqualifying them from exercising the rights of primogeniture during the coming age (Heb. 12:14-17). The account of Esau forfeiting his birthright is set forth as a type, with Esau's experience foreshadowing that which can also be experienced by Christians.

Esau considered his birthright to be a thing of little value until after the rights belonging to him as firstborn had been forfeited and he awoke to the stark reality of that which had occurred. Then, and only then, did Esau realize the true value of the birthright. Esau, seeking to reverse that which had occurred, tried to get his father to change his mind and bless him also, but to no avail (*cf.* Gen. 27:38; Heb. 12:17). The birthright was no longer his and could not be retrieved. As a result, Esau "lifted up his voice, and wept" (*cf.* Gen. 25:34; 27:38).

Esau's condition and state of mind at this time point to the same condition and state of mind which will exist among Christians who forfeit their birthrights. This forfeiture will be revealed at the judgment seat of Christ, and the results of this forfeiture will exist for the duration of the Millennium. The same cry by Christians which Esau voiced will produce the same results. The blessing belonging to the firstborn will have been bestowed upon faithful Christians; and the Father will not, He cannot, change His mind

and bless the unfaithful also, else He would violate His Own Word.

The results of such a forfeiture though cannot exist beyond the Millennium. All tears will be wiped away at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 21:4 [the reference to all tears being wiped away prior to the Millennium in Rev. 7:17 is only for a select group of individuals realizing an inheritance in the kingdom]), and conditions relating to the forfeiture or nonforfeiture of one's birthright cannot really apply beyond this point in time.

The wiping away of all tears at the end of the Millennium would portend equality within a realm where equality had not previously existed. It would clearly appear that during the eternal ages distinctions among Christians such as those set forth in the overcomer's promises or conditions having to do with the forfeiture or nonforfeiture of one's birthright will no longer exist.

(Note something though in connection with the overcomer's promises being *millennial in their scope of fulfillment, not eternal*. Gradations of power and authority in the human realm, of a different nature, may very well exist beyond the Millennium, during the eternal ages. Gradations of power and authority presently exist in the angelic realm, something which undoubtedly will continue during not only the Millennium but the eternal ages beyond the Millennium. And, during the eternal ages, similar gradations of power and authority may very well exist within the human realm as well.

Aside from the preceding type approach to the matter, Scripture is silent on the subject.)

The Rule of Man

Part II

Man's Rule During the Eternal Ages

At the end of Man's Day, immediately preceding the beginning of the Millennium, a change in *the government of this earth* will occur; then, at the end of the Millennium, immediately preceding the beginning of the eternal ages, a change (though of a different nature) in *the government of the universe* will occur. And man will

be actively involved in changes which will occur at both times.

Scripture provides a great deal of information concerning man's part in the government of the earth during the Millennium. The whole of Scripture, after some fashion, is focused upon this time. When one moves beyond the Millennium though, Scripture provides very little information concerning the exact place which man will then occupy within God's universal government. There are only several brief statements in Scripture concerning government within the kingdom of God beyond the Millennium. But within these brief statements enough is revealed to clearly show that God has far-reaching plans for man which only begin to unfold during the Millennium.

Viewing that which is revealed in the whole of Scripture concerning the government of the universe within God's kingdom, a person can be drawn to only one conclusion: When God created man, there were actually both near and far purposes in view. The near-purpose had to do with *the government of this earth*, and the far-purpose had to do with *the government of the universe*. In this respect, the Millennium is only the beginning of an unending number of ages during which *man will exercise power and authority, realizing the purpose for his existence*.

During the Millennium, Christ will sit on *His Own throne* and rule over this earth, and others will ascend the throne and rule as co-heirs with Him. And Christ, with His co-heirs, will take one thousand years, ruling with a rod of iron, to effect order out of disorder. Once *complete order* has been restored, the kingdom will be turned back over to the Father; and numerous changes, having to do with the government of the universe during all the subsequent ages, will resultingly occur (I Cor. 15:24-28).

When that part of the kingdom previously placed under the Son's control has been turned back over to the Father, "the Day of the Lord" will end and "the Day of God" will begin. At that time, the present heavens and earth will be destroyed, and a new heavens and a new earth will be brought into existence.

(The "heavens" would refer to that part of the heavens associated with this earth and kingdom, not the galaxy or universe as a

whole. Scripture outlining the destruction of both the heavens and the earth [II Peter 3:10-12] could possibly be brought to pass through God causing our sun to nova. Note that there will no longer be a need for the sun [Rev. 21:22-25].)

After the new heavens and new earth have been brought into existence (II Peter 3:13; Rev. 21:1), God will then change the location of His throne from which He rules the universe. The throne of God today is located in *a northernmost point in the universe* (Isa. 14:13), north of this present earth. God's throne will remain in this place during the Millennium; but during the eternal ages, God's throne will be located *in the new Jerusalem*, which will be the capital of the new earth. And not only will God's throne be in this new locality, but the Son will sit on this throne with His Father. God's throne, at this time, will specifically be called, "the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev. 21:3-5; 22:1, 3).

God's Rule Over the Universe

God rules the universe today from His throne *in the far reaches of the North*, but He will one day rule the universe from His throne in the new Jerusalem. This is a change which will occur at the end of the Millennium and exist from that point throughout the eternal ages.

Through viewing the overall scope of the kingdom of God in Scripture, there is a clear inference that this earth is only one province among many in the kingdom. God's rule in this kingdom extends throughout all the galaxies of the universe; and from a Scriptural perspective, innumerable provinces similar to the earth exist elsewhere in the universe, apparently in all the galaxies (Ps. 103:19-22).

Scripture provides a glimpse into this facet of God's government of the universe in the Book of Job. In Job 1:6; 2:1, on two different occasions, the "sons of God" are seen presenting themselves before the Lord, with Satan appearing "among them." Satan, a son of God appearing "among them," demonstrates *equality with them* (all angels are "sons of God" because of a special, individual

creative activity of God). Satan was the messianic angel ruling over one province in God's kingdom (the earth), and the only logical conclusion which could follow is that the other sons of God were messianic angels ruling over other provinces in God's kingdom (other worlds).

The appearances of these sons of God could only be *congresses of these messianic angels*, who apparently appeared at regularly scheduled intervals in God's presence to provide a report relative to their provinces in the kingdom. Such meetings would occur at the "mount of the congregation ['meeting place in the mount'], in the sides of the north ['in the utmost parts of the north']" (Isa. 14:13).

A "mount" in Scripture signifies *a kingdom* (Isa. 2:2-4; Dan. 2:35, 44, 45). The thought from the expression "mount of the congregation" in Isa. 14:13 would thus be, *the meeting place [where the messianic angels assembled] to render a report concerning activity in their province, within God's kingdom, located in God's presence at a northernmost point of the universe.*

The earth is one of nine planets revolving around a medium-size star (our sun), and it has been estimated that our own galaxy contains between two to four hundred billion such stars (suns) — some much larger, some much smaller. The distance from the earth to the nearest star outside our solar system is four and one-third light years, and the distance to the farthest star in our galaxy is thousands of light years.

It is one hundred thousand light years across our galaxy and between two million and two and one-half million light years from our galaxy to the nearest neighboring galaxy. Beyond that, man has been able to reach out with telescopes and view stars estimated to be billions of light years removed from this galaxy (a light year is the distance light travels in one year — approximately, six trillion miles).

In the light of God's government of the universe, as revealed in Scripture, it is interesting to note how a number of present-day astronomers view our own galaxy as they study the heavens through their telescopes. Some of these individuals believe it is probably the rule rather than the exception that other stars (suns) have revolving planets, forming solar systems similar to our own

system with its nine planets. Astronomers cannot see these planets. But, through the use of computerized lighting techniques developed in recent years, systematic blockages of light can be detected — blockages of a nature which could only be attributed to planets revolving around stars (suns). Also, information derived through the use of the Hubble telescope in more recent times has provided additional data relating to this discovery.

Any way one views the matter, the vastness of the universe over which God rules is staggering. David could look into the heavens during his day, viewing only a small part of one galaxy (only a minute part is visible to the naked eye [not more than about 2,000 stars can be seen by the naked eye at any one time — approximately 1/500,000th of the total visible in the most powerful telescopes, or between approximately 1/100,000,000th to 1/200,000,000th of the estimated total in this one galaxy alone]), and proclaim, “When I consider thy heavens, the works of thy fingers...What is man, that thou art mindful of him?” (Ps. 8:3, 4). And man today can view the heavens through telescopes, seeing things far beyond what David could see with the naked eye, and do no more than respond with similar thoughts, asking the same question.

David gave the answer to the question, and the answer is still the same today and will remain the same throughout eternity. *Man is the one whom God created to have dominion over the works of His hands* (v. 6).

Man’s Place in God’s Eternal Rule

The eighth Psalm could be understood *in its ultimate scope* in the sense of dominion out in the heavens. Such dominion during the coming age must, of necessity, be confined to *the earth*; but during the eternal ages, dominion exercised by man will extend into *the heavens* as well.

It seems apparent that *apart from man* the earth would be no more than just another province in God’s kingdom, ruled over by a messianic angel. But the creation of man has *changed* all of this. Man’s creation has offset the scales completely, for, following man’s creation, the earth was revealed to not only be *the*

most significant place in the galaxy but in the entire universe as well.

The reason for all of this is evident. The creation of man is *peculiar to this earth*, and man was created in *God's image and likeness* for the specific purpose of *possessing dominion over the works of God's hands*. Dominion throughout the universe is exercised by angels, and angels were not created in God's image and likeness.

Man was made "a little lower than the angels," for he was created to possess dominion held by angels, which man did not hold following his creation (nor has man held it to this day). Even Christ appeared on this earth, apart from His glory, in the same position as man — "a little lower than the angels" (Heb. 2:7, 9).

Such though will change at the beginning of the Millennium and change again after a different fashion at the beginning of the eternal ages. At the beginning of the Millennium, man will replace angels ruling over one province and rule in their stead. During the eternal ages though, man will not necessarily replace angels in other provinces, as on the province ruled by Satan and his angels (that which awaits Satan and his angels was occasioned by sin, and there is no record or intimation that sin entered any other province in the universe). Man in that day may possibly occupy positions under God over provincial governors. Such a thought would be in perfect keeping with Paul's question in I Cor. 6:3, "Know ye not that we shall judge ['rule' (cf. v. 2)] angels?" Then, again, man might rule new worlds or ungoverned worlds. We're simply not told.

When God created man after His image and likeness, immediate plans for man had to do with *this earth*. However, since man will exercise regality with Christ from a throne having to do with *the administration of universal government* following the Millennium, an entirely new light is cast upon God's creative activity in the first chapter of Genesis.

God, at the time He created man, had far-reaching plans for His creature, as well as the earth. And these far-reaching plans will be realized only when *complete order has been restored in the one province where sin entered, a new earth has been brought into existence, and universal power emanates from the throne of God and of the Lamb in the new Jerusalem, the capital of the new earth.*

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Christians are presently engaged in a battle against powerful angelic rulers in the spirit world. These angels, ruling in the kingdom of Satan, are striving for *the souls of men*; and the outcome of this conflict, like any conflict, is determined by proper or improper preparation as one engages the enemy.

A properly prepared Christian can enter the conflict and consistently win battle after battle, but an improperly prepared Christian entering the conflict can only experience defeat time after time.

Victory is achieved through engaging the enemy within the framework of the Lord's instructions in Ephesians 6:10ff. A Christian though who engages the enemy after any other fashion is entering the conflict apart from the Lord's instructions, leaving himself in a very vulnerable position, one in which the enemy can consistently achieve victory.

Thus, in this respect, *victory* on the one hand or *defeat* on the other is determined by the Christian's preparation for the conflict at hand. A Christian can either *heed the Lord's instructions* or *he can ignore the Lord's instructions*. There is no middle ground (Matthew 12:30; Luke 11:23). The former will produce *readiness for battle and result in victory*, but the latter will leave the Christian *very vulnerable to attack and can only result in defeat*.

Victory for the Christian will actually be determined by how badly he wants to win. The overriding thought in Ephesians has to do with *individuals being saved for a revealed purpose*. Christians have been saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8) in order to realize an inheritance in heavenly places (1:3, 11, 18; 2:6, 7; 3:1-6). The task of a pastor-teacher is to lead Christians into a mature knowledge of this inheritance, a mature knowledge of the things surrounding the purpose for their salvation (4:11ff), resulting in their being filled with the Spirit (5:18ff) and being able to engage the enemy after the fashion given at the end of this epistle (6:10ff).

How badly do Christians really want to achieve victory over the enemy and one day realize the proffered inheritance with God's Son? *That is the question which will determine what a Christian does about the Lord's instructions concerning proper preparation for the battle at hand.*
