

REVELATION 1

Revelation Chapter 1

THE SOURCE OF THE REVELATION

1:1 The Revelation [Deut 29:29] of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel [Gabriel- Dan 10:21] unto His servant John: [4SP 211]

1:2 who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

1:3 Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

THE SALUTATION

1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him [God, the Father] which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne;

1:5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness [Rom 4:17; Col 1:18; 1Cor 15:20; Acts 26:23], and the first-begotten of the dead [Christ], and the prince of the kings of the earth [Eph 1:20, 21]. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1:7 Behold, He cometh with clouds [2nd Advent- Acts 1:9, 11; Matt 24:27; 1Thess 4:16]; and every eye [all that are alive] shall see Him, and they [Dan 12:12] also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen [2Thess 1:6-10]. [4SP 443]

1:8 I am [God] Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, said the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

THE VOICE AND THE VISION

1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom [2Tim 2:12] and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. [4SP 84]

1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day [Sabbath]; and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

1:11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

Seven Churches Introduction

The writing of Revelation, AD 95 or 96.

Seven churches are to be understood to mean not merely seven literal churches of Asia, but seven periods of the Christian church, from the days of the apostles to the close of probation. 1897 DAR 357.2

Condition of the churches in the days when the sealing work is in progress- Isa 4:1 – SNH SSP 249.1



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1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks [7 Churches]; [4SP 442]

1:13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man [Jesus], clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

1:14 His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire;

1:15 And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters'.

1:16 And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shines in His strength.

1:17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

1:18 I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys [has authority/ right- Rev 9:1] of hell and of death.

1:19 Write the things which thou has seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou saw in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels [messengers] of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou saw are the seven churches. [Represented as thus throughout all time]

← The Holy Place of the Sanctuary (prior to 1844)

Verses 13-15:

As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will attempt to personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, **Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the**



Revelation. [Revelation 1:13-15.] The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air, "Christ has come! Christ has come!" The people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands, and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed his disciples when he was personally upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and **then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed.** He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overwhelming delusion. Like the Samaritans who were deceived by Simon Magus, the multitudes, from the least to the greatest, give heed to these sorceries, saying, This is "the great power of God." {4SP 442.1}



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1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John:

2 who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3 Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

This book is the revelation of Jesus, as revealed to and written down by John. God the Father communicated the revelation to Christ and He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John.

3

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

5 and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first-begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Most of the events brought to view in Revelation lie beyond the lifetime of John's generation or the actual churches to who they are addressed. Consequently, these churches are seven time periods of the Christian church; from the days of the apostles to the close of probation and on to the end of this world. The seven Spirits which are before His throne are representative of the Holy Spirit. "Him which is, and which was, and which is to come" is a reference to the Father on His throne.

7 Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.

Here John carries us forward to the second advent of Christ in glory. He comes with clouds, in like manner as He ascended, Acts 1:9-11. He comes not as a thief in the sense of stealing in secretly and quietly upon the world. It will be with the brilliancy and splendor of the lightning as it shines from the east to the west, Matthew 24:27.

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It will be with the sound of a trumpet that will pierce to earth's lowest depths, and with a mighty voice that shall wake the sleeping saints from their dusty beds, Matthew 24:31. To represent two comings, a private or secret and a public one, in connection with the Second Advent, as some do, is wholly unwarranted from the Scriptures.

"They also which pierced Him" will be raised to see His triumphant return; to witness His return and then be slain themselves by His glory. Daniel also speaks of this special resurrection; "**Many [not all]** of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt", Daniel 12:1-2. This is a special resurrection occurring just prior to the general resurrection when **all** the saints who sleep in their graves will then rise to meet their Lord in the air. The wicked dead, along with those who pierced Him and were again slain by the brightness of His coming, will remain in their graves a 1,000-years, Revelation 20:1-6. Here they will wait for the second and last resurrection of all the wicked, when they will receive the final execution of their judgment. This is why Christians are not to fear death, but fear the second death!

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, said the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Like Daniel before him, John tells us the place and the circumstances under which the revelation was given. First, he introduces the thought of tribulation as part of the necessary preparation for entry into the kingdom of God. At the second advent of the Savior, the tribulation will be over, and the children of God will bask in the sunlight of the presence of the King of kings throughout eternity.

4

Patmos is a small, barren island off the west coast of Asia Minor. It was used under the Roman Empire as a place of banishment. The year is about 94 AD. John was banished for preaching the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day; and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.

The expression "in the Spirit" seems to denote the highest state of spiritual elevation into which a person can be brought by the Spirit of God. It marked the beginning of his vision. "On the Lord's Day", like all of the early Church, John kept the true Sabbath of the fourth commandment, the seventh day. This is the true Lords day, the one God set aside for man to rest and to worship Him, our Creator.

11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

14 His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire;

15 And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters'.

16 And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shines in His strength.

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17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

“I turned to see the voice” and John sees Jesus walking amongst seven golden candlesticks. John is overcome by the presence of Jesus, and under a keen sense of all human unworthiness. A comforting hand is laid upon him, and a voice of sweet assurance tells him not to fear. He says, I “have the keys of hell and of death”; the righteous dead are in safe keeping. An enemy takes them away from us for a while, but a friend holds the key to the place of their temporary confinement. The wicked have no such assurance, this belongs only to those who love, obey and confess Christ as their savior.

19 Write the things which thou has seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

A command is given to John to write the revelation, which would relate chiefly to things which were then in the future. In some few instances, events in the past or taking place at that time were referred to; but these references are for the purpose of introducing events to be fulfilled after that time link in the chain of truth might be lacking.

20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou saw in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou saw are the seven churches.

The care and presence of the Lord are not with a specified number of churches but with all His people; not only in the days of John but with them through all time. “Lo, I am with you always”, said He to His disciples, “even unto the end of the world”.



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God's Love Letter

Revelation 1:1-6

1 Corinthians 14:22

Ellen G White, Letter 329 1905; Notebook Leaflets, Volume 2 pg. 157

The truth for this time, God has given us as a foundation for our faith. He Himself has taught us what is truth. A few are still alive who passed through the experience gained in the establishment of this truth. The standard bearers who have fallen in death, are to speak through the reprinting of their writings. I am instructed that thus their voices are to be heard. They are to bear their testimony as to what constitutes the truth for this time. We are not to receive the words of those who come with a message that contradicts the special points of our faith. And while the Scriptures are God's Word, and are to be respected, the application of them, if such application moves one pillar from the foundation that God has sustained these fifty years, is a great mistake.

Ellen G White, Manuscript Releases, Vol. 1 pg. 61; Manuscript 174, 1899

Those who are preparing to enter the ministry, who desire to become successful students of the prophecies, will find "Daniel and the Revelation" an invaluable help. They need to understand this book. It speaks of past, present, and future, laying out the path so plainly that none need err therein. ... The great, essential questions which God would have presented to the people are found in "Daniel and the Revelation". There is found solid, eternal truth for this time. Everyone needs the light and information it contains.

Ellen G White, Manuscript Releases, Vol. 1 pg. 63; Manuscript 174, 1899

The interest in "Daniel and the Revelation" is to continue as long as probationary time shall last. God used the author of this book as a channel through which to communicate light to direct minds to the truth. Shall we not appreciate this light, which points us to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, our King?

6

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pgs. 14, 15

The prophecy as given to John is a revelation of Jesus Christ, and is the history of God's dealings with the church which bears the name, Christian. Daniel is a history of nations; the Revelation is ecclesiastical history, and into it, nations are introduced only when they affect the growth of the church. The life of Daniel shows how God can work through men in high positions: the preparation of John for his work as a prophet is the story of the transformation wrought in the heart of a fisherman by the Spirit of God. The Extremes of society were represented by these two men. The story of each is the narration of the events of a life in which love worked, and is an object lesson of the development of Christian character.

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pg. 15

A spirit of piety characterized the home; for beneath the rough exterior, was a desire to understand the Word of God.

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pg. 15

John represents those of the inner circle of discipleship. He was won by love, not argument. His heart was held by love, and the whole theme of all his writings is love. He saw only love in Christ, and he responded freely to that wondrous drawing power.

Revelation 1:1

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 324

It is for all the church in all time, so long as any of the events therein predicted remain to be accomplished. It is for all those who can claim the appellation of "His servants," wherever they may live.

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 324

It is not only the Revelation of Jesus Christ, but it is the Revelation which God gave unto Him. It comes, then, first, from the great Fountain of all wisdom and truth, God the Father; by Him it was communicated to Jesus Christ, the Son: and Christ sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John.

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Revelation 1:2, 3

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 325

Is there so direct and formal a blessing pronounced upon the reading and observance of any other portion of the word of God? What encouragement, then, have we for its study! And shall we say that it cannot be understood?

Is a blessing offered for the study of a book which it can do us no good to study?

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pg. 11

THE men whom God has chosen as a means of communication between, heaven and earth, form a galaxy of noted characters. The gift of prophecy is called the "best gift," and the church is exhorted to covet that "best gift."

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 324

The Revelation will accomplish the object for which it was given, and "His servants" will learn therefrom "the things which must shortly come to pass," and which concern their eternal salvation.

Revelation 1:4

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 330

"From Him which is, and which was, and which is to come," or is to be, — an expression which signifies complete eternity, past and future, and can be applicable to God the Father only. This language, we believe, is never applied to Christ. He is spoken of as another person, in distinction from the being thus described.

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 330

This expression probably has no reference to angels, but to the Spirit of God. It is one of the sources from which grace and peace are invoked for the church. On the interesting subject of the seven spirits, Thompson remarks: "That is, from the Holy Spirit, denominated 'the seven spirits,' because seven is a sacred and perfect number; not thus named as denoting interior plurality, but the fulness and perfection of His gifts and operations." Barnes says, "The number seven, therefore, may have been given by the Holy Spirit with reference to the diversity or the fulness of His operations on the souls of men, and to His manifold agency in the affairs of the world, as further developed in this book." Bloomfield gives this as the general interpretation.

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pg. 32

Jehovah, the Great I AM, who appeared to Moses in the burning bush, the Father of us all, who meets us where we are,—He, the Ever Present, breathed His blessing on the church called by the name of His Son. And from "the seven spirits which are before His throne," and from Jesus Christ, the visible manifestation of that Spirit, came the greeting of grace and peace to the companies who should be known by the name of the Anointed.

Revelation 1:5-7

1Thessalonians 4:16, 17

Daniel 12:2

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 334

Here a partial resurrection is brought to view, or a resurrection of a certain class of each, righteous and wicked, before the general resurrection of either class. Many, not all, that sleep shall awake. Some of the righteous, not all of them, to everlasting life, and some of the wicked, not all of them, to shame and everlasting contempt. And this resurrection transpires in connection with the great time of trouble such as never was, which just precedes the coming of the Lord. May not "they also which pierced Him" be among those who then come up to shame and everlasting contempt? What could be more appropriate, so far as human minds can judge, than that those who took part in the scene of our Lord's greatest humiliation, and other special leaders in crime against Him, should be raised to behold His terrible majesty, as He comes triumphantly, in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not His gospel?

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Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 334

Though this coming of Christ is to the wicked a scene of terror and destruction, it is to the righteous a scene of joy and triumph. "When the world's distress comes, then the saints' rest comes." That coming which is with flaming fire, and for the purpose of taking vengeance on the wicked, is to recompense rest to all them that believe.

Revelation 1:8

Ellen White, Review & Herald, February 18, 1896

What a Saviour we have! It was He that revealed Himself to John on the Isle of Patmos, and proclaimed, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." None but just such an ever-living, mighty God, could pay the ransom to save sinners from going down into the pit of death.

Revelation 1:9

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 335

The subject here changes, John introducing the place and the circumstances under which the Revelation was given. He first sets himself forth as a brother of the universal church, and their companion in the tribulations incident to the Christian profession in this life.

Revelation 1:10

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pgs. 34, 35

The Sabbath was a precious day to John, and it had been especially dear since that never to be forgotten Sabbath on which their Master rested in the tomb. ... To John on Patmos it was a day of holy joy. The Saviour, came divinely near, and as John contemplated scenes in his own association with Christ, the Man of God, his heart warmed with praise.

8

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 335

Exiled though John was from all of like faith, and almost from the world, he was not exiled from God, nor from Christ, nor from the Holy Spirit, nor from angels. He still had communion with his divine Lord. And the expression "in the Spirit" seems to denote the highest state of spiritual elevation into which a person can be brought by the Spirit of God. It marked the commencement of his vision.

Isaiah 58:13, 14

Genesis 2:2, 3

1828 Webster's Dictionary

Sanctified

1. Made holy; consecrated; set apart for sacred services.
2. Affectedly holy.

Exodus 20:8-11

Revelation 1:10b, 11

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pgs. 35, 36

He spoke in trumpet tones, like the clearest music, and the voice was as the sound of many waters; but still, to John He was the same Jesus whom he had known in Galilee and in Jerusalem.

Ellen G. White, The Paulson Collection, pgs. 385, 386

Matters of deep importance were opened before John which were to be given to the world to be read, understood, and appreciated, in the ages to come. Again and again the true witness says, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what

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the Spirit saith unto the churches." But it is evident from what is written that some who have ears to hear, will not hear, will not receive the message, and will not become wise in the scriptures. The Lord Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, gave a message to John in regard to the work of the churches; for he understood how great would be the danger of neglecting their God given work, and thus make a failure of diffusing light to others. The invitation of the gospel was to extend from Christ to the church, and from the church to the world. ... The work of diffusing the gospel is neglected by those who are specified as hearing. But when the professed people of God hear the message to some purpose, when they take on the burden of the work and say to others, "Come," then they will become laborers together with God.

Revelation 1:12-15

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pgs. 36, 37

Although this is a description of the personal appearance of Christ, it portrays His character as well. Those who continue to reveal God in the earth must, through the merits of Christ, manifest the same character as living epistles known and read of all men. The robe of His righteousness must cover the human frailties and imperfections; the truth of God must be the rule of life.

Revelation 1:16, 17

Uriah Smith, 1897; Daniel and the Revelation, pg. 342

Overcome by the presence of this august Being, and perhaps under a keen sense of all human unworthiness, John fell at His feet as dead; but a comforting hand is laid upon him, and a voice of sweet assurance tells him to fear not. It is equally the privilege of Christians to-day to feel the same hand laid upon them to strengthen and comfort them in hours of trial and affliction, and to hear the same voice saying unto them, "Fear not."

Revelation 1:18

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pgs. 37, 38

He who spoke to John was the One who commanded, and worlds stood forth in space. Christ now stood beside John, and the prophet, looking upon His glory, fell at His feet as one dead. He had walked with Him and talked with Him,—with this same man, Christ Jesus,—when He was on earth. He had asked to sit by His side in His kingdom. The glory of His presence now overcame John, but Jesus laid His right hand on him,—that hand which had so often rested there before.

Stephan N Haskell, 1905, The Story of The Seer Of Patmos, pg. 38

Christ appeared, walking in the midst of the candlesticks, which symbolize the churches; and He held in His hand the seven stars or angels, which direct the work of the churches, and which are light-bearers from His throne to those who represent the work of heaven on earth. God looks upon the Christian Church as He looked upon Christ in the days of His sojourn on earth. As He was attended by an angel, so the church is guided by the Spirit of God, and by the testimony of that Spirit.

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FOLLOWING TAKEN FROM "SOURCE BOOK FOR BIBLE STUDENTS"

Used by our pioneers for a study reference tool on many subjects

Seven Churches, Christ the Only Priest.—Nor was it of unimportant use to note the representation of Jesus Christ here given, as the priest of the churches, and the designation of their ecclesiastical presidents or bishops simply as angels, a term borrowed not from the temple, but the synagogue: in token, thus early, that the offices of the Levitical priests were to be regarded as fulfilled by Christ; and that the functions of the Christian bishop, or minister in the church, were those of leading the devotions, and directing and animating the faith of the flock; not functions sacrificial or mediatorial, as with the Levitical priests of old.—"Hora Apocalyptica," Rev. E. B. Elliott, A. M., Vol. I, Introduction, chap. 2, pp. 75, 76, 3rd edition. London: Seeley, Burnside, and Seeley, 1847. {1919, SBBS 487.1}

Seven Churches, Successive Periods.—Under this emblematical representation of the seven churches of Asia, the Holy Spirit has delineated seven different states of the Christian church, which would appear in succession, extending to the coming of our Lord, and the consummation of all things.—Vitringa, in commentary published in 1705; cited in "The Comprehensive Commentary," edited by Rev. William Jenks, on Rev. 2:1. Brattleboro, Vermont, 1838. {1919, SBBS 487.2}

Seven Churches, Early View of.—Let us proceed to that of Cocceius [1603-69]. {1919, SBBS 487.3}

According to this later author, the church of Ephesus is the apostolical church, i. e., that wherein the apostles preached. So that this period must be extended to the death of St. John. . . . {1919, SBBS 487.4}

The church of Smyrna signifies the church suffering in all places, and especially that of the three first ages. The persecution of ten days, according to this, must signify the ten persecutions which the church suffered during those three ages under the pagan emperors. This doth not fall out ill; but I fear it was chance that made this hit. . . . {1919, SBBS 487.5}

The epistle to the church of Pergamus is the third, and according to Cocceius, 'tis the church from Constantine's time to the birth of Antichrist. . . . {1919, SBBS 487.6}

The church of Thyatira is the fourth, and signifies, according to Cocceius, the church under the reign of Antichrist. Jezebel that appears in this epistle is the antichristian church. They that suffer Jezebel the prophetess are the elect mingled among the antichristian idolaters. . . . This falls out pretty well, but 'tis by mere chance; for how can that magnificent eulogy be applied to this period of the antichristian church, "I know thy works, and thy charity, and thy patience, and that thy last works are more than the first"? Never was the church so void of saints and of good works as in this sad period. {1919, SBBS 487.7}

Sardis is the fifth church and the fifth period, and according to Cocceius as well as to Forbes 'tis the reformed church. But I say hereto as I said before on occasion of Forbes, why should we say of our Reformation, "Thou hast a name to live, and behold thou art dead; strengthen the things which remain and are ready to die"? {1919, SBBS 487.8}

Philadelphia signifies brotherly love; this is the sixtn church which carries in its name the character of a church yet to come, wherein love and charity shall reign, but among a very small number of people. . . . {1919, SBBS 487.9}

Laodicea signifies the church that shall immediately precede the time wherein God shall pass that judgment spoken of in the eleventh chapter, verse 18, i. e., when the reign of Jesus Christ shall come to be established on the earth.—"The Accomplishment of the Scriptural Prophecies," Peter Jurieu, Part 1, chap. 1, pp. 11-14. London: 1687. {1919, SBBS 487.10}

Commencing this most important revelation by describing the things "which are," appears to be done for the purpose of holding up a glass or mirror for the church to view itself to the end of time. In the seven addresses, therefore, which follow, are described the various states in which, at one time or other, in one place or other, the church has ever

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appeared from that time to this.—"An Historical Exposition of the Prophecies of the Revelation of St. John," Matthew Habershon, pp. 7, 8. London: James Nisbet & Co., 1841. {1919, SBBS 487.11}

Note.—The seven churches cover the entire time between the first and the second advent of our Lord. Conditions in the actual church at Ephesus, where Paul labored and tradition says John lived, were representative of the apostolic age, say to about 100 a. d.: Smyrna, the time of the pagan persecution, to about 312 to 323, the times of the emperor Constantine, who professed Christianity; Pergamos, the time of the "conversion" of the empire, to the establishing of the Papacy, in the days of 533 to 538; Thyatira, the time of papal supremacy, during the long Dark Ages, and to a limited extent to the end; Sardis, the period following the papal supremacy, 1798 to 1833; Philadelphia, from the rise of the advent movement to 1844; and Laodicea, from the opening of the judgment hour in 1844 to the end. These conditions do not always begin and end abruptly by definite dates; they telescope or overlap, one blending into another.—Eds. {1919, SBBS 488.1}

Seven Churches, First Period, Character of Early Church.—The Christians are not separated from other men by earthly abode, by language, or by customs. They dwell nowhere in cities by themselves; they do not use a different language, or affect a singular mode of life. They dwell in the cities of the Greeks, and of the barbarians, each as his lot has been cast; and while they conform to the usages of the country, in respect to dress, food, and other things pertaining to the outward life, they yet show a peculiarity of conduct wonderful and striking to all. They obey the existing laws, and conquer the laws by their own living.—"Letter to Dignonet," early second century; cited in "General History of the Christian Religion and Church," Dr. Augustus Neander (translation by Joseph Torrey), Vol. 1, sec. 1, p. 69. Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1854. {1919, SBBS 488.2}

The distinguished virtues of the Christians must have shone forth the more brightly, as contrasted with the prevailing vices; their severity of morals, sometimes even carried to excess, as opposed to the general deprivation of the age; their hearty fraternal love, in contrast with that predominant selfishness which separated man from man, and rendered each distrustful of the other, insomuch that men could not comprehend the nature of Christian fellowship, nor sufficiently wonder at its fruits. "See," was the common remark, "how they love one another."—"General History of the Christian Religion and Church," Dr. Augustus Neander (Torrey's translation), Vol. I, sec. 1, p. 76. Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1854. {1919, SBBS 488.3}

Seven Churches, Smyrna; The Period of Early Persecution.—During the apostolic period, indeed, it would seem as if the providence of God interposed to preserve the church from a general persecution, in order that its foundations might be well laid throughout the world, before the violence of the heathen Roman Empire should be let loose against it. . . . But with the new period of the history of the church, commenced a new era in its tribulations.—"Seven Ages of the Church," Rev. Henry Cotterill, A. M., Theological Tutor in Brighton College, pp. 56, 57. London, 1849. {1919, SBBS 488.4}

Seven Churches, Smyrna; The "Ten Days" of Tribulation, by a Contemporary.—During the whole ten years of the persecution, there was no cessation of plots and civil wars among the persecutors themselves. . . . Such was the state of things throughout the whole period of the persecution. This, by the goodness of God, had entirely ceased in the tenth year, although it had already begun to relax after the eighth. . . . But this was not done by any mere human agency, nor was it, as might perhaps be supposed, by the compassion or the humanity of our rulers. For, so far from this, they were daily devising more and severer measures against us from the beginning of the persecution until then, constantly inventing new tortures from time to time by an increasing variety of machinery and instruments for this purpose. But the evident superintendence of divine Providence, on the one hand, being reconciled to his people, and on the other, assailing the author [Galerius] of these miseries, exhibited his anger against him as the ringleader in the horrors of the whole persecution. . . . Hence he was visited by a judgment sent from God, which beginning in his flesh proceeded to his very soul.—"Ecclesiastical History," Eusebius, book 8. chaps. 15, 16, pp. 325, 326 (translation by Rev. C. F. Crusé). London George Bell and Sons, 1889. {1919, SBBS 488.5}

It was not till a. d. 311, eight years after the commencement of the general persecution, ten years after the first measure against the Christians, that the Eastern persecution ceased. Galerius, the arch-enemy of the Christians, was struck

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down by a fearful disease. His body became a mass of loathsome, mortifying, and fetid sores—a living corpse, devoured by countless worms, and exhaling the odor of the charnel-house. He who had shed so much innocent blood, shrunk himself from a Roman death. In his extreme anguish he annealed in turn to physician after physician, and to temple after temple. At last he relented towards the Christians. He issued a proclamation restoring them to liberty, permitting them to rebuild their churches, and asking their prayers for his recovery.—"History of European Morals," William E. H. Lecky, M. A., chap. 3, 3rd par. from the end (Vol. I. p. 491). London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1869. {1919, SBBS 489.1}

Seven Churches, Revocation Edict by Galerius.—When a decree of this kind was issued by us, that they [Christians] should return again to the established usages of their forefathers, vast numbers were subjected to danger, many, when threatened, endured various kinds of death. But though we saw the great mass still persevering in their folly, and that they neither gave the honor that was due to the immortal gods, nor heeded that of the Christians, still having a regard to our clemency and our invariable practice, according to which we are wont to grant pardon to all, we most cheerfully have resolved to extend our indulgence in this matter also: that there may be Christians again, and that they may restore their houses in which they are accustomed to assemble, so that nothing be done by them contrary to their profession. In another epistle we shall point out to the judges what they will be required to observe, whence, according to this condescension of ours, they are obligated to implore their God for our safety, as well as that of the people and their own.—Decree of Galerius, in "Ecclesiastical History," Eusebius, book 8, chap. 17, p. 328 (translation by Rev. C. F. Crusé). London: George Bell and Sons, 1889. {1919, SBBS 489.2}

Seven Churches, Smyrna; A Catholic Writer on.—Smyrna stands for the second, or martyrs' age of the church, which extended from Nero's persecution to the edict of Milan, a. d. 313.—"The Apocalypse of St. John," J. J. L. Ratton, p. 145. London: Washbourne, 1912. {1919, SBBS 489.3}

Note.—Balaam's counsel to Balak was that Israel should be persuaded to coin in the idolatrous practices: and so was Israel corrupted by the surrounding heathenism. Numbers 22 to 25; 31:13-16.—Eds. {1919, SBBS 489.4}

Seven Churches, Pergamos; Satan's Seat as to Period: Of Compromise with Paganism.—Such was the tendency of the times [fourth century] to adulterate Christianity with the spirit of paganism, partly to conciliate the prejudices of worldly converts, partly in the hope of securing its more rapid spread. There is a solemnity in the truthful accusation which Faustus makes to Augustine: "You have substituted your agapa for the sacrifices of the pagans; for their idols your martyrs, whom you serve with the very same honors. You appease the shades of the dead with wine and feasts; you celebrate the solemn festivals of the Gentiles, their calends and their solstices; and as to their manners, those you have retained without any alteration. Nothing distinguishes you from the pagans, except that you hold your assemblies apart from them."—"History of the Intellectual Development of Europe," John William Draper. M. D., LL. D., Vol. I, chap. 10, pp. 309, 310. New York: Harper & Brothers. {1919, SBBS 489.5}

Seven Churches, Pergamos; Gibbon on Corruption of Christianity.—The sublime and simple theology of the primitive Christians was gradually corrupted; and the monarchy of heaven, already clouded by metaphysical subtleties, was degraded by the introduction of a popular mythology, which tended to restore the reign of polytheism. . . . {1919, SBBS 490.1}

The Christians frequented the tombs of the martyrs, in the hope of obtaining, from their powerful intercession, every sort of spiritual, but more especially of temporal, blessings. . . . Edifying pictures, which could not long escape the abuse of indiscreet or idolatrous devotion, represented the image, the attributes, and the miracles of the tutelar saint. . . . The most respectable bishops had persuaded themselves that the ignorant rustics would more cheerfully renounce the superstitions of paganism if they found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of Christianity. The religion of Constantine achieved, in less than a century, the final conquest of the Roman Empire: but the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals.—"The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Edward Gibbon, chap. 28, pars. 3, 4 (Vol. III, pp. 161-163). New York: Harper & Brothers. {1919, SBBS 490.2}

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Seven Churches, Pergamos; Repeating Israel's Sin.—Paganism could not overcome the church as an enemy: the danger now arises from its friendship. The experiment is now tried, whether, by an alliance with Christianity, under the plea of attachment to Christian doctrines and practices, and of a desire to conciliate the heathen world, this new Israel, which cannot be crushed, may be gradually corrupted. The successful result of this attempt may be seen to the present day, in the virtual paganism of a large majority of the professedly Christian world, in which every abomination which the early church resisted unto blood, may be found disguised under Christian titles. . . . The martyr worship of the Nicene church was in all respects the counterpart of the "offerings of the dead" in the worship of Baalpeor.—"Seven Ages of the Church," Rev. Henry Cotterill, A. M. (Theological Tutor, Brighton College), pp. 89-91. London, 1849. {1919, SBBS 490.3}

Seven Churches, Pergamos; Appropriateness of City as Representing Satan's Seat.—And this [in Crete] is a shrine of Asclepius, and just as the whole of Asia flocks to Pergamum, so the whole of Crete flocked to this shrine.—"Life of Apollonius," Philostratus, book 4, chap. 34; Loeb's Classical Library, Vol. I, p. 429. {1919, SBBS 490.4}

Another form of the sun divinity, or Teitan, at Rome, was the Epidaurian snake, worshiped under the name of Asculapius [Asclepius], that is, "the man-instructing serpent." Here, then, in Rome was Teitan, or Satan, identified with the "serpent that taught mankind," that opened their eyes (when, of course, they were blind), and gave them "the knowledge of good and evil." In Pergamos, and in all Asia Minor, from which directly Rome derived its knowledge of the Mysteries, the case was the same. In Pergamos, especially, where pre-eminently "Satan's seat was," the sun divinity, as is well known, was worshiped under the form of a serpent and under the name of Asculapius, "the man-instructing serpent." According to the fundamental doctrine of the Mysteries, as brought from Pergamos to Rome, the sun was the one only god.—"The Two Babylons," Rev. Alexander Hislop, pp. 278, 279. London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 1907. {1919, SBBS 490.5}

Seven Churches, Pergamos; City Itself a Center of Idolatry and Intolerance.—Since the deified Augustus had not opposed the founding at Pergamos of a temple to himself and the city of Rome; I, with whom all his actions and sayings have the force of laws, have followed an example already approved.—Tiberius (accepting proposition of Spain to erect temple to himself), "Annals," Tacitus, book 4, par. 37 (Vol. I, p. 179). {1919, SBBS 491.1}

Note.—Pergamos was the originator in the West of the deification and worship of the emperor. It was refusal of the demand that they offer incense before the statue of the emperor that had sent many Christians to death. And let us recall that this Pergamos period of the church was also the age that saw the exaltation of the Bishop of Rome, who sat on the seat of the Casars, to be supreme in the professed church, sitting as God in the temple of God.—Eds. {1919, SBBS 491.2}

Seven Churches, Pergamos; Catholic Writer on.—The third stage of the church, called Pergamos, extended from the edict of Milan, a. d. 313, to the fall of the Roman Empire in the beginning of the sixth century.—"The Apocalypse of St. John," J. J. L. Ratton, p. 149. London: Washbourne, 1912. {1919, SBBS 491.3}

Seven Churches, Pergamos: Doctrine of Balaam.—See Apostasy; Babylon. {1919, SBBS 491.4}

Seven Churches, Thyatira; Early English Expositor on.—This state of the corruption of the church of Christ, by the popish doctrines of the Church of Rome, and the Pope's tyrannizing over the consciences of men, most plainly mark this era of the church, which began at the time when the Pope was declared supreme over all other bishops, and lasted till his power and reign met with a check at the Reformation, when began the Sardian church-state, which still continues.—"Letter upon the Downfall of Antichrist," Rev. A. Maddock. London, 1779. (Bound with "Fleming's Tracts," British Museum Library.) {1919, SBBS 491.5}

Seven Churches, Thyatira; Catholic Writer on.—Thyatira, the fourth age of the church, began when the downfall of pagan Rome was accomplished and the devil was chained up for a thousand years. . . . The body of the church, freed from the tonic of persecution, fell away from its high calling and embraced luxury. This message reveals the interior condition of the church of the Middle Ages, which extended from the sixth to the sixteenth century. [p. 155] . . . {1919, SBBS 491.6}

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If we apply this letter to the fourth, or millennial, age of the church, which lasted about a thousand years, it may be said to coincide with it from the historic point of view in a remarkable manner. This period has been called by the church "the age of faith," and by the world "the Dark Ages." What the world calls "dark" from a spiritual point of view, generally means "light." But both the church and the world speak of this period as "the Middle Ages." In this it may be that we have built better than we knew; for Thyatira is the middle church of the seven, and consequently stands as the symbol of the church of "the Middle Ages." [p. 158] . . . {1919, SBBS 491.7}

The material prosperity of the church culminated in the Middle Ages. Its revenues from lands and property of all kinds, from endowments and bequests, increased enormously. It became one of the richest institutions of the world. In the train of wealth came luxury, and in the lap of luxury lay vice. "Then the concupiscence of the flesh, and of the eyes, and the pride of life, extended to the clergy of the church. These, secure of the indulgence of a corrupt age and thinking it safe to do so, gave themselves up to voluptuous living, and fell into presumption, as ordinarily happens in such cases. But these were the vices of Jezebel, the wife of Achab." (Holzhauser, Vol. I, p. 145.) {1919, SBBS 492.1}

Many of the Popes struggled in vain against the evils which afflicted the church. . . . The church makes no claim to impeccability, or sinlessness, either as to its head, the Pope, or as to its members individually. It is in this book revealed that many of the hierarchy would fall into gross sins in the Middle Ages. History tells us that they did so.—"The Apocalypse of St. John," J. J. L. Ratton, pp. 155-159. ("Imprimatur Edm. Can. Surmont Vicarius Gen.") London: Washbourne, 1912. {1919, SBBS 492.2}

Note.—How true it is, as Wylie says: "The noon of the Papacy was the midnight of the world."—"The History of Protestantism," chap. 4. {1919, SBBS 492.3}

This Catholic author (Ratton) fails to note that this epistle was not addressed to the great ruling body represented by Jezebel and her ways, but to the church of believers suffering under this period—"the rest in Thyatira," the remnant who kept the light of faith burning through the Dark Ages.—Eds. {1919, SBBS 492.4}

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Seven Churches, Sardis; Reformation Times and Later.—This fifth great scene in the Christian drama has been faithfully exhibited on the stage of time; and it will be readily identified, in what is emphatically called the Reformation, and the consequences that flowed from it in that and the succeeding ages.—"An Historical Exposition of the Prophecies of the Revelation of St. John," Matthew Habershon, p. 79. London: James Nisbet & Co., 1841. {1919, SBBS 492.5}

Seven Churches, Sardis; Reformation to be Continuous.—I charge you before God and his blessed angels, that you follow me no farther than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of his Holy Word. I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who have come to a period in religion, and will go at present no farther than the instruments of their reformation. Luther and Calvin were great and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God. I beseech you, remember it-'tis an article of your church covenant—that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written Word of God.—John Robinson, pastor at Leyden, Holland, in Farewell to Pilgrims sailing for New World, July, 1620; cited in "A History of the United States," George Bancroft, Vol. I, chap. 8, pp. 306, 307. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., {1919, SBBS 492.6}

Although the Reformation began well and threatened to sweep Romanism to the sea, winning seemingly the favor and overwatching providence of the Lord, it came, nevertheless, to a sudden and mysterious halt, failing to complete its work in the very countries where it began. Some of the "things which remain" in Protestantism "are ready to die," and the exhortation to Sardis to be "watchful and strengthen" them was never more pertinent and appropriate than now. {1919, SBBS 492.7}

The forecast of Sardis and the history of Protestantism fit each other like hand and glove. With the page of history closed and the facts of Protestantism ignored, the prophecy remains as the declaration of the continued failure and departure of the professing church.—"The Coming of Christ, Pre-Millennial and Imminent," I. M. Haldeman (Baptist), p. 101. New York: Charles C. Cook, 1906. {1919, SBBS 493.1}

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Seven Churches, Sardis; Catholic Writer on.—As a symbol of the fifth age of the church, it [Sardis] extended from the Council of Trent to the first half of the nineteenth century, a period of about 280 years. During the greater part of this time the church suffered persecution in one direction or another. {1919, SBBS 493.2}

The Sardinian age is commonly known as the Reformation period.—"The Apocalypse of St. John," J. J. L. Ratton, p. 166. London: Washbourne, 1912. {1919, SBBS 493.3}

Seven Churches, Sardis; Condition Recognized in Period Itself.—If it should be asked, What time it is with us now? whereabouts we are? and what is yet to come out of the night? as a faithful watchman, I will give you the best account I can. I take it, we are in the Sardinian church state, in the last part of it, which brought on the Reformation, and represents that. We are in the decline of that state, and there are many things said of that church which agree with us, as that we have a name that we live, and are dead, etc. It is a sort of twilight with us, between clear and dark, between day and night.—Sermon by Dr. Thomas H. Gill, 1748, "Second Advent Library, No. 1," p. 209, Jan. 1, 1842. {1919, SBBS 493.4}

The epistle to the church of Sardis is so strongly characteristic of the reformed churches at this day, that little more need be done than to read that epistle to see our own likeness. [Rev. 3:1.] . . . We have the name of a purely reformed church, who protests against the errors of popery, doctrinal and practical; but are we not dead as to faith and good works? . . . As the downfall of the Pope and the Turk is an event wherein all Christians are greatly interested, so it is what all earnestly desire should be speedily accomplished. The near approach of that happy time is a pleasing prospect. It cannot be far off. . . . {1919, SBBS 493.5}

Before the fall of Antichrist there will be, it is reasonable to believe, . . . a removing of our candlestick towards the close of the Sardinian church-state; a setting of it up, in all probability, in America, which will form the commencement of the Philadelphia church-state. These events will be brought about gradually; therefore will, in all probability, take up some years to complete them.—"Letter upon the Down-fall of Antichrist," Rev. A. Maddock (1777). London, 1779. (Bound with "Fleming's Tracts," British Museum Library.) {1919, SBBS 493.6}

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Note.—As the end of the long period of papal supremacy was drawing near, the dead formalism of that time was stirred by the great revival of the eighteenth century, under Wesley and his Methodist associates, and Whitefield and others, growing into the general evangelical and missionary awakening as the time of the end came, with the revival of interest in prophetic study that prepared the way for the advent movement. (See Increase of Knowledge; Advent Movement of 1844.) Britain and Europe were the scenes of this wonderful rebirth of missionary activity; but as the flame caught in the West, the New World, with its mixture of all nations and tongues, was evidently to be the providential base for the development of the definite advent movement, for which the great awakening of the time of the end was a preparation. This forecast, of 1777, from a view of the prophecies, seems a remarkable one, and shows how truly the book of prophecy was being unsealed as the time referred to in Daniel 12:4 came.—Eds. {1919, SBBS 493.7}

Seven Churches, Philadelphia; As Seen Shaping by Observer in Britain, 1777.—A general stupor and carelessness concerning the things of God, the great and foundation truths of the gospel, and our own souls, have seized upon Protestants in general; we have lately fallen in love with, or, at least, have ceased to hate, popish tenets. . . . These signs declare the times. They show the Sardinian church-state to be drawing toward its period. The light of our candlestick is extinguishing, and America seems to be the happy land where God will set it up chiefly in the next church-state. This was the opinion of the divine Herbert, among others, who about one hundred and fifty years ago, could sing, in his "Church Militant," {1919, SBBS 493.8}

"Religion stands on tiptoe in our land,

Ready to pass to the American strand." {1919, SBBS 494.1}

It was our Lord's command that the gospel should be first preached at Jerusalem. From thence it spread; and the sound thereof went out into all parts of the known world, but especially westward of Jerusalem churches were established, as all the particular epistles of the New Testament testify, the churches to which they were written all lying to the west. The course of the gospel was from Jerusalem to Greece, from thence to Italy, France, Great Britain,

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Germany, and all over Europe; Egypt, Abyssinia, and if not all, yet the greatest part of Africa, have heard the joyful sound. It therefore seems to be very probable at the least, and the present appearance of things corroborates the opinion, that from Great Britain the gospel will proceed to America, and the candlestick of the Philadelphian church be set up and spread there. . . . It is very probable, the gospel continuing his course still further towards the west, . . . that the candlestick of the next church-state will be set up, and the chief seat of the Philadelphian church, be in that country, as the chief seat of the Sardinian church is in Britain.—"Letter upon the Downfall of Antichrist," Rev. A. Maddock, of Creaton, Guilsborough, Northamptonshire, England, Oct. 4, 1777, to the Rev. Mr. M. Browne. (Bound with "Fleming's Tracts," British Museum Library.) {1919, SBBS 494.2}

Seven Churches, Philadelphia.—See Advent Movement of 1844. {1919, SBBS 494.3}

Seven Churches, Thyatira; Age of Papal Supremacy and Persecution.—See Papacy; Papal Supremacy; Persecution; Reformation. {1919, SBBS 494.4}

Seven Churches, Laodicea; Christ the Lord of Creation.—[Greek word, transliterated "arche"] is often used for pre-eminence, principedom, and also (very naturally) for rulers, princes. Luke 20: 20; 12: 11; Titus 3: 1; Eph. 1: 21; 3: 10; 6: 12; Col. 2: 10, 15; 1 Cor. 15: 24; Rom. 8: 38; Col. 1: 16. . . . Why, then, when we have the [Greek words, transliterated "archon ton basileon"] ["ruler of the kings"] before us of 1: 5 where such a sense is certain, should we hesitate to give the like sense here, viz., Head or Lord of the creation of God?—"A Commentary on the Apocalypse," Moses Stuart, Vol. II, pp. 99, 100. Andover: Allen, Morrill, and Wardwell, 1845. {1919, SBBS 494.5}

Note.—The appeal of Christ to his people in the Laodicean period, the last church, in the name of the Lord of creation, is parallel with the call of the last message of reform in Revelation 14, for men to give glory to him as Creator, "and worship him that made heaven, and earth." The time of the last church is the judgment hour, and the message for the hour is to prepare men to meet the judgment. To give this message and to meet the test of the judgment, the experience called for by the True Witness is essential,—a turning from formalism and self-righteousness, partaking of Christ's righteousness, with the blessed assurance of overcoming grace and the overcomer's reward.—Eds. {1919, SBBS 494.6}

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