

Habakkuk's Two Tables #42

PART SIX: 1989

THE SEVEN CHURCHES

THE GOSPEL OF REVELATION

“As we near the close of this world's history, **the prophecies relating to the last days especially demand our study.** The last book of the New Testament is full of truth that we need to understand. Satan has blinded the minds of many, so that they have been glad of any excuse for not making the Revelation their study.

“The book of Revelation, in connection with the book of Daniel, **demands** close study. Let every God-fearing teacher consider how most clearly to comprehend and present **the Gospel that our Saviour came in person to make known to His servant John,—**‘The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass.’ None should become discouraged in their study of Revelation because of its apparently mystical symbols. ‘If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.’ ‘Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand.’ We are to proclaim to the world **the great and solemn truths contained in the book of Revelation.** Into the very designs and principles of the church of God **these truths are to enter.** There should be **a closer and more diligent study of this book,** a more **earnest presentation of the truths it contains,** truths which concern all who are living in these last days. **All who are preparing to meet their Lord should make this book the subject of earnest study and prayer.** It is just what its name signifies,—**a revelation of the most important events that are to take place in the last days of this earth's history.** John, because of his faithful trust in the word of God, and the testimony of Christ, was banished to the Isle of Patmos. But his banishment did not separate him from Christ. The Lord visited His faithful servant in his banishment, and gave him instruction regarding what was to come upon the world.

“**This instruction is of the greatest importance to us;** for we are living in the last days of this earth's history. Soon we shall enter upon the fulfilment of **the events** which Christ showed John were to take place. As **the messengers of the Lord present these solemn truths,** they must realize that they are handling subjects of eternal interest, and they should seek for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, that they may speak, not their own words, but the words given them by God.

“**The book of Revelation must be opened to the people.** Many have been taught that it is a sealed book, but it is sealed to those only who reject truth and light. **The truths that it contains must be proclaimed,** that people may have **an opportunity to prepare for the events which are so soon to take place.** The Third Angel's Message must be presented as the only hope for the salvation of a perishing world.

“The perils of the last days are upon us, and in our work **we are to warn the people of the danger they are in.** Let not **the solemn scenes that prophecy has revealed are soon to take place be left untouched.** We are God's messengers, and we have no time to lose. Those who would be co-workers with our Lord Jesus Christ will show a deep interest in the truths found in this book. With pen and voice they will strive

to make plain the wonderful things that Christ came from heaven to reveal.” *Signs of the Times*, July 4, 1906.

THE SOLEMN EVENTS

“That time is at hand. **Today the signs of the times declare that we are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events.**” *Education*, 179.

WHICH WE MUST KNOW

“In the Revelation the Lion of the tribe of Judah has opened to the students of prophecy the book of Daniel, and thus is Daniel standing in his place. He bears his testimony, that which the Lord revealed to him in vision of **the great and solemn events which we must know as we stand on the very threshold of their fulfillment.**” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 109.

THE CLOSING OF PROBATION

“Today, in the spirit and power of Elias and of John the Baptist, **messengers of God’s appointment are calling the attention of a judgment-bound world to the solemn events soon to take place in connection with the closing hours of probation and the appearance of Christ Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords.** Soon every man is to be judged for the deeds done in the body. The hour of God’s judgment has come, and upon the members of His church on earth rests the solemn responsibility of giving warning to those who are standing as it were on the very brink of eternal ruin.” *Prophets and Kings*, 715–716.

NOTHING ELSE

“The **solemn messages** that have been given in their order in the Revelation are to occupy **the first place in the minds of God’s people. Nothing else is to be allowed to engross our attention.**” *Testimonies*, volume 8, 301–302.

SEVEN CHURCHES

“The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in **different periods** of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods **in the history of the world.**

“Christ is spoken of as walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks. Thus is symbolized **His relation to the churches.** He is in constant communication with His people. He knows their true state. He observes their order, their piety, their devotion. Although He is high priest and mediator in the sanctuary above, yet He is represented as walking up and down in the midst of His churches on the earth.” *Acts of the Apostles*, 585–586.

1856

“Some, I saw, would gladly return. Others will not let this message to the Laodicean church have its weight upon them. They will glide along, much after the same manner as before, and will be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Those only who zealously repent will have favor with God.” *Testimonies*, volume 1, 144.

MILLER'S RULES

“Those who are engaged in proclaiming the third angel’s message are searching the Scriptures upon the same plan that Father Miller adopted.” *Review and Herald*, November 25, 1884.

“Preachers and people have looked upon the book of Revelation as mysterious and of less importance than other portions of the Sacred Scriptures. But I saw that this book is indeed a revelation given for the especial benefit of those who should live in the last days, to guide them in ascertaining their true position and their duty. **God directed the mind of William Miller to the prophecies and gave him great light upon the book of Revelation.**” *Early Writings*, 231.

“The seven churches of Asia is a **history of the church of Christ in her seven forms, in all her windings and turnings, in all her prosperity and adversity, from the days of the apostles down to the end of the world.** The **seven seals** are a history of the transactions of the powers and kings of the earth over the church, and God’s protection of his people **during the same time.** The seven trumpets are a history of **seven peculiar and heavy judgments sent upon the earth, or Roman kingdom.** And the seven vials are the seven last plagues sent upon Papal Rome. Mixed with these are many other events, woven in like tributary streams, and filling up the grand river of prophecy, until the whole ends us in the ocean of eternity.

“This, to me, is the plan of John’s prophecy in the book of Revelation. And the man who wishes to understand this book, must have a thorough knowledge of other parts of the word of God. The figures and metaphors used in this prophecy, are not all explained in the same, but must be found in other prophets, and explained in other passages of Scripture. Therefore it is evident that God has designed the study of the whole, even to obtain a clear knowledge of any part.” William Miller, *Miller’s Lectures*, volume 2, lecture 12, 178.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

“The seals are introduced to our notice in the 4th, 5th, and 6th chapters of Revelation. The scenes presented under these seals are brought to view in Revelation 6, and the first verse of Revelation 8. They evidently cover events with which the church is connected from the opening of this dispensation to the coming of Christ.

“**While the seven churches present the internal history of the church, the seven seals bring to view the great events of its external history.**” Uriah Smith, *The Biblical Institute*, 253.

THE SAME PERIOD OF TIME

“We have now traced the churches, the seals, and the beasts, or living beings, as far as they will compare as covering **the same periods of time.** The seals are seven in number, the beasts but four. And it may be well here to notice, that at the opening of the first, second, third and fourth seals the first, second, third and fourth beasts are heard to say ‘Come and see;’ but when the fifth, sixth and seventh seals are opened, there is no such voice heard. **Neither do the last three churches, and the last three seals, compare, as covering the same periods of time,**

as the first four churches, and the first four seals do. But, as we have shown, the churches, seals and beasts do agree, as covering **the same periods of time** for the space of nearly 1800 years, till we come down to a little more than half a century of the present time.” James White, *Review and Herald*, February 12, 1857.

PERGAMOS & THYATIRA REVELATION 2:12–29

THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY

Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only **he who now letteth will let**, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:5–8.

POWER (496) SEAT (330) & AUTHORITY (533)

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. Revelation 13:2.

A HOST WAS GIVEN HIM—31, 508, 330, 496, 538–1260

Yea, he magnified *himself* even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily *sacrifice* was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given *him* against the daily *sacrifice* by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered. Daniel 8:11–12.

THE DAILY TAKEN AWAY (508) (538)

And from the time *that* the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Daniel 12:11.

THEY PLACE THE ABOMINATION THAT MAKETH DESOLATE—496, 395–538, 508, 538

For the ships of Chittim shall come against him: therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant: so shall he do; he shall even return, and have intelligence with them that forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily *sacrifice*, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. Daniel 11:30–31.

DANIEL 11:40–45

“We have no time to lose. Troublous times are before us. The world is stirred with the spirit of war. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place. The prophecy in the eleventh of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Much of the history that has taken place in fulfillment of this prophecy will be repeated.

“In the thirtieth verse a power is spoken of that ‘verses 30 through thirty-six quoted.’

“Scenes similar to those described in these words will take place.” *Manuscript Releases*, number 13, 394.

THE THIRD & FOURTH SEAL

Revelation 6:6–8

“The same spirit is seen today that is represented in Revelation 6:6–8. History is to be repeated. That which has been will be again.” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 9, 7.

EPHESUS & SMYRNA

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12.

“Many will be imprisoned, many will flee for their lives from cities and towns, and many will be martyrs for Christ’s sake in standing in defense of the truth.” *Selected Messages*, book 3, 397.

EPHESUS, PHILADELPHIA & LAODICEA

Early Writings, 258–260; *The Great Controversy*, 611; Joel

EPHESUS AND LAODICEA

“Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey.’ Isaiah 59:14, 15. This was fulfilled in the life of Christ on earth. He was loyal to God’s commandments, setting aside the human traditions and requirements which had been exalted in their place. Because of this He was hated and persecuted. **This history is repeated.**” *Christ’s Object Lessons*, 170.

“The work of John the Baptist, and the work of those who in the last days go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah to arouse the people from their apathy, are in many respects the same. His work is a type of the work that must be done in this age. Christ is to come the second time to judge the world in righteousness. The messengers of God who bear the last message of warning to be given to the world, are to prepare the way for Christ’s second advent, as John prepared the way for his first advent. In this preparatory work, ‘every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain’ for **history is to be repeated**, and once again ‘the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.’” *Southern Watchman*, March 21, 1905.

“Satan is working that **the history of the Jewish nation may be repeated in the experience of those who claim to believe present truth.**” *Selected Messages*, book 2, 111.

SARDIS, PHILADELPHIA & LAODICEA

“Oh, what a description! How many there are in this fearful condition. I earnestly entreat every minister to study diligently **the third chapter of Revelation**, for in it is portrayed **the condition of things existing in the last days**. Study carefully every verse in this chapter, for through these words Jesus is speaking to you.” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 18, 193.

PIONEER UNDERSTANDING

“In all the land saith the Lord; TWO PARTS therein shall be cut off, and die; but the THIRD shall be left therein. God says he will bring the THIRD PART through the fire, and refine them. They shall call upon him, and he will hear them. He will say IT IS MY PEOPLE; and they shall say the LORD IS MY GOD.’ First part, SARDIS, the nominal church or Babylon. Second part, Laodicea, the nominal Adventist. Third part, Philadelphia, the only true church of God on earth, for they ask to be translated to the city of God. Revelation 3:12; Hebrews 12:22–24. In the name of Jesus, I exhort you again to flee from the Laodiceans, as from Sodom and Gomorrah. Their teachings are false and delusive; and lead to utter destruction. Death! DEATH!!* eternal DEATH!!! is on their track. Remember Lot’s wife.” Joseph Bates, *Review and Herald*, volume 1, November 1850.

SARDIS:

“Sardis not only represents ‘those escaping’ or ‘that which remains’ after the great apostasy and terrible persecutions of the Middle Ages, but some authorities believe that the word *ardis* means ‘remnant’ of ‘an escaped few,’ and therefore represent Protestantism after what was vital in it had evaporated so that there are only a few faithful ones remaining. There would be a ‘remnant’ who would continue the work of reform even after the Reformation had waned and Protestantism in general was dead. There would be ‘a few names,’ or ‘a few souls’ (*Moffatt*), in Sardis who had ‘not defiled their garments.’” Taylor Bunch, *The Seven Epistles of Christ*, 186.

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown: but **these shall escape out of his hand**, *even* Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. Daniel 11:41.

HASKELL

“It should be remembered that, as the experience of **Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamos, will be repeated in the last church** before the second coming of Christ, so the history of **Thyatira** will have its counterpart in the last generation.” Stephen N. Haskell, *Story of the Seer of Patmos*, 69.

“He applied the test, but all pointed forward to the year 1843 as the time when the world must welcome its Saviour. **The condition of the people at the first advent of Christ was now repeated.**” Stephen N. Haskell, *Story of the Seer of Patmos*, 75.

“There was a time in the history of **Pergamos**, when Christianity thought Paganism was dead; but in reality, the religion which was apparently vanquished, had conquered. Paganism baptized, stepped into the church. **In the days of Sardis this history was repeated.**” Stephen N. Haskell, *Story of the Seer of Patmos*, 75, 76.

“Upon this last church—the remnant,—shine **the accumulated rays of all past ages.**”
Stephen N. Haskell, *Story of the Seer of Patmos*, 69.