

Introduction to BOOK *of* REVELATION

and its internal meaning as given in the
"APOCALYPSE REVEALED" by Emanuel Swedenborg

Everett K. Bray

PREFACE

This study is intended to help the reader observe for himself that the last book of the Bible, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ," is a picture of the entire range of human states from the worst unto the highest, as they become manifested in the light of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ as He reigns in the Spiritual World.

It is meant to serve as an outline of the high points of the Book of Revelation and to assist the studious reader to hold in mind an outline of the unfolding scenes of the book. This vision given to John is a manifestation of a world and persons not seen by our natural eyes and yet seen by the spiritual eyes of John.

A further purpose is to give some measure of the inner meaning of the Book as it is seen in heaven and described for us in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. For the full inner truth of the Book of Revelation, this pamphlet should be read in connection with the illumined pages of "APOCALYPSE REVEALED" by Emanuel Swedenborg, from which come all quotations used. (Bible passages are in italics.)

This message to John was a prediction of the state of the Christian Church as the Lord saw it would be at the time of the Final Judgment, which occurred, not in this world, but in the spiritual world in the year 1757 and was witnessed and recorded by Emanuel Swedenborg.

This Judgment was to make way for the beginning of a New Church on earth. Its effect was to clear the atmosphere of the World of Spirits, through which life and light from the Heavens could reach the souls and minds of men. This greatly increased man's freedom of rational thought and action. It is significant that since that event, the world in which we live has rapidly become new, both as to man's mastery of nature and to his aspirations for Christian brotherhood.

In Revelation I, *things that must shortly come to pass*, means here: surely come to pass. Also at the end of the Book where Jesus says, *Behold, I come quickly*, means that He will surely come.

Emanuel Swedenborg saw the Final Judgment on the two major evils that had developed in the Christian Church at that time. One was claiming salvation by faith alone and the other, the love of power by ruling over the souls of men. The first characterized the Church of the Reformed (Protestant) and the other, the Church of Rome (Catholic).

Evidence that the Book of Revelation is not to be interpreted literally is shown at the very beginning by the words, *he sent and signified it by his angel*, meaning that this was done in terms of signs — thus, by representatives and symbols.

The language of the Bible, like every creation of the Lord, embodies within it the will, the purpose and the thought in the Mind of the Lord — see Isaiah 55:8-13, as well as His practice in the Gospels of speaking in parables, as, e.g., Mark 4:34 and John 16:25. As the Lord's Purpose is in everything of His creation, that it may fulfill its purposed ends or uses, so His ends and means are necessary for man's spiritual life and growth and are present in everything of the Word. Between things natural and things spiritual there is a perfect "correspondence" or relationship. To illustrate: Man's spirit or mind has parallel or corresponding needs to those of the body. "Heat" and "cold" and "light" and "darkness," "food" and "drink," "height" and "depth," and "narrowness" and "breadth," and "growth" and "strength," etc., apply equally to the experience of man in his physical life and in his spiritual life. So do the things of land, sea and air equally

correspond to things in the life of man's spirit or mind. A man's mind is "a garden," "a field," "a woods," "a wilderness," "a desert," "a sea," "an earth" — perfect or imperfect. "A heaven" — in the sense of a sky — "clear" or "cloudy" in the day, or black, or lighted by moon or stars at night. So the "heaven" of our natural sight, or that of our "spiritual sight" may be a dwelling place of "clouds." And as the natural sun does wonderful things with the clouds of the sky, so can the "Sun" of our soul do wonderful things "in the clouds" of our minds when He comes through them.

All objects represent things or states of the spirit of man, according to their nature, or the use of them. A mountain represents elevation of spirit with emphasis on love. When the situation dealt with is good and in order, the significance is that of love to the Lord; but when the situation is one of evil, the signification is that of love of self; by the same principle, hills represent the love of the neighbor, or the love of the world. Or to state the principle another way: when an object or act is in the service of the Lord, its representation is good; when opposed to Him, it is evil.

Evils live in human hearts and falsities in human minds; and not out of them, for the "Church" is constituted of individuals who are of the "Church" because they have established some relationship with the Lord. The extent and quality of that relationship determines the kind and measure of "Church" they are. Any of the evils described in this book can plague any one of us, unless we live close to the Lord.

The reader must begin his study of each chapter with the Bible text before him.

Everett K. Bray

PREFACE TO

"THE APOCALYPSE REVEALED" By EMANUEL SWEDENBORG

Many have toiled in the explanation of the Apocalypse: but, as the spiritual sense of the Word had been hitherto unknown, they could not see the arcana which lie concealed in it, for these the spiritual sense alone discloses; therefore expositors have made various conjectures and the most have applied what is in it to the states of empires, mingling also some ecclesiastical matters. But the Apocalypse, in its spiritual sense like the whole Word, does not treat at all of worldly, but of heavenly things; hence not of empires and kingdoms, but of heaven and the church. It is to be known that after the final judgment, which was accomplished in the spiritual world in the year 1757, — described in a small, special work, published at London in 1758, — a New Heaven of Christians was formed; but of those only who could receive the Lord as the God of heaven and earth, according to His words in Matthew 28:18 and who at the same time had repented in the world of their evil works. From this heaven the New Church on earth, which is the New Jerusalem, is descending and will descend. That this church will acknowledge the Lord alone, is manifest from these passages in the Apocalypse: *There came unto me one of the seven angels and spoke with me, saying, Come, I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife: and he showed me the great city, holy Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God* (chp 21: 9,10). And again: *Let us be glad and rejoice; for the time of the marriage of the Lamb is come and His wife hath made herself ready. Blessed are they that are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb* (chp 19: 7, 9). That there will be a New Heaven and that the New Church on earth will descend from it, is manifest from these words there: *I saw a new heaven and a new earth; and I saw the holy city Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new: and He said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful* (chp 21: 1, 2, 5). The New Heaven is a new heaven from Christians: the New Jerusalem is a new church on earth, which will act as one with that new heaven. The Lamb is the Lord as to His Divine Human.

To this something shall be added for illustration. The Christian heaven is below the ancient heavens. Into it, from the time of the Lord, when He was in the world, were admitted they who worshiped one God under three Persons and who at the same time had not the idea of three Gods; and this for the reason that a Trinity of Persons had been received in the whole Christian world. But they who cherished no other idea of the Lord's Human than as of the human of another man, could not receive the faith of the New Jerusalem; which is, that the Lord is the only God, in whom is the Trinity. These were therefore separated and sent

away to the extremes: it was given me after the final judgment to see the separations and removals. For the whole heaven is founded upon a just idea of God and the whole church on earth and in general all religion; since by it there is conjunction and by conjunction light, wisdom and eternal happiness.

Everyone can see that the Apocalypse can by no means be explained but by the Lord alone; for each word therein contains arcana, which would never be known without special enlightenment and thus revelation: therefore, it has pleased the Lord to open the sight of my spirit and to teach me. Do not believe, therefore, that I have taken anything here from myself, nor from any angel, but from the Lord alone. The Lord also said to John through the angel, *Seal not the words of the prophecy of this Book* (chap. xxii: 10); by which is meant that they are to be made manifest.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

CHAPTER 1

The Lord appears to John in the Isle of Patmos when John is in the spirit on the Lord's Day. What is revealed to John in the first chapter is as a vestibule leading to all that is manifested to him in the rest of the book. In this vestibule stands the Lord Jesus Christ in the world of spirits (so very like His appearance to Peter, James and John on the Mount of Transfiguration —Mark 9; Matt. 17). *His head and his hands were white as wool and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.*

This picture is one of a glowing Personality. The details are representative of His divine qualities. Remember, this is Jesus Christ, the Divine Man, as God of heaven and earth. See Matt. 28; John 1.

He stands in the midst of seven golden candlesticks (or lamp stands) which represent the church on earth; and holds aloft in His right hand seven stars (the church in heaven). Out of His mouth goes a sharp two edged sword. When John beholds Him he falls at His feet as dead. This forever identifies this Presence as Jesus Christ revealing Himself to us as He is now in heaven.

Jesus says, Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that lives and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which you have seen and the things which are and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which you 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 you saw are the seven churches.

CHAPTERS 2 and 3

These contain messages to the seven (meaning all) churches. By the seven churches are meant "all in the Christian World who have any religion." It is important to recognize the fact that to each of the seven churches its good and true qualities are named which are acceptable to the Lord as essentials of His church; while at the same time evil and false qualities are named which, in His sight, must be rejected, repented of and left behind. (Although no evils and falsities are named in the Philadelphia church, she is nevertheless warned to hold fast what she has, lest she lose her crown.) This process of accepting the good and true and rejecting the evil and false goes on throughout the chapters of this book until we come to the last two chapters.

CHAPTER 4

The door opens in heaven revealing to John the Lord God upon the throne. He sees four and twenty elders who are angels in heaven, acknowledging and worshiping the Lord. The four beasts (living creatures — cherubs) represent good affections belonging to the church on earth and in heaven which acknowledge and worship the Lord. The four and twenty elders represent truths of the mind acknowledging and worshiping the Lord on earth and in heaven. These beasts and elders represent those qualities and persons in the Christian church that acknowledge and worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

There were twelve disciples surrounding the Lord on earth, which was the beginning of the Christian church. Here in Chapter 4 we have twelve more added to give us the church in heaven (as well as the church on earth).

CHAPTER 5

The book, *written within and, on the backside, sealed with seven seals, in the right hand of the one on the throne*, represents the Word of God by which each one's life is laid open and judged. No one in heaven or earth is worthy or able to open this book and loosen the seals except the Lamb, who is the Lord Jesus Christ. Every individual's life character, as it has been formed by his life in this world, is called his book of life.

This testifies that "the Lord in His Divine Human will execute judgment from the Word and according to it because He is the Word; and this is acknowledged by all in the three heavens." By "all in the three heavens" is meant "every creature which is in the heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea and all that are in them" (verse 13).

CHAPTER 6

The first seal, when opened, shows a white horse representing those who are in truths grounded in good (verses 1, 2). The second seal, when opened, shows a red horse representing those who are without good (verses 3, 4). The third seal, when opened, shows a black horse representing those in contempt of the truth (verses 5, 6). Each of these horses represents a quality of the understanding of the Word. The fourth seal, when opened, shows a pale horse representing the understanding entirely vastated (emptied) of good and truth (verses 7, 8). The fifth seal, when opened, shows those souls under the altar who are guarded by the Lord in the lower earth, or world of spirits, on account of evil; that they are to be liberated at the time of the Final Judgment (verses 9-11). The sixth seal, when opened, shows the state of those who are in evils and hence in falsities; what it is at the day of the final judgment (verses 12-17).

CHAPTER 7

This chapter has the appearance of being parenthetical or of having inserted a picture which does not have the appearance of being connected between the opening of the sixth seal and the seventh seal. It is necessary for us to have this in mind before continuing to the opening of the seventh seal. This chapter deals with those who are and will be in the Christian heaven, namely:

First, "of the separation of them from evil" (verses 1-3) — the four angels holding back the four winds.

Second, "Those who are in love to the Lord and hence in wisdom" of whom are the higher heavens (verses 4-8) — "a hundred and forty four thousand, sealed in their foreheads" — meaning, not a number but ALL in the whole Christian world who acknowledge that the Lord Jesus Christ has all power and all authority in heaven and earth; and that His Human is Divine. * All numbers in the Word are representative of qualities of life and are not to be limited by taking them literally. *See Matt. 28:18.

Third, "those who are in charity and its faith from the Lord because they have fought against evils; of whom are the lower heavens" — *a great multitude which no man could number* (verses 9-17).

It is well to observe throughout the Book of Revelation (which is the book of JUDGMENT) that there are represented alternatively pictures of the good and true (that is, truly angelic and heavenly, as pictured in this chapter) and the infernal and false (that is, in enmity against heaven and the Lord and entirely diabolical, as pictured in Chapter 9).

CHAPTER 8

Here is the opening of the seventh seal out of which is unfolded another series of seven, seven angels sounding trumpets. This series of seven continues through to Chapter 11, verse 15, where the New Church in heaven is seen.

Verses 1-6. The Church of the Reformed (Protestants) is here treated of, as to the quality of those who are in faith alone — a doctrine of salvation through faith without the love and works of charity (human nature is always looking for a substitute for the actual living of a Christian life). The subject is the preparation of the spiritual heaven for communication with them the opening of the seventh seal, showing the seven angels standing before the Lord, given seven trumpets and another angel having a golden censer filled with incense which he offered *with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.*

When this angel casts fire from the censer on the earth, the seven angels prepare themselves to sound their trumpets (which is preparation of the spiritual heaven for communication with those who are in the doctrine of faith alone).

Verse 7. The first angel sounds. "The exploring and manifesting of those in the Reformed Church who are in the interiors of that faith," represented by hail and fire mingled with blood (falsities and evil loves profaning the Word) cast upon the earth (church): and the third part (all) of trees and green grass burned up (all understanding of the Word perishing).

Verses 8, 9. The second angel sounds. The mountain burning with fire represents "the appearance of infernal loves of those who are in the externals of the church in faith alone."

Verses 10, 11. The third angel sounds. A great star called wormwood (self intelligence) falls upon the third part (all) of the rivers and upon the fountains of waters (infernal falsities), destroying all truths of the Word.

Verses 12, 13. The fourth angel sounds. *The third part of the sun, the third part of the moon and the third part of the stars were smitten.* The sun is love of the Lord, the moon is faith in Him and the stars are knowledges of His salvation. The third part of them (all love and faith and knowledges) is destroyed in the Reformed Church.

CHAPTER 9

Verses 1-12. The fifth angel sounds, "Exploring and manifesting the state of life of those in the Reformed Church who are called learned and wise from the confirmations of faith separated from charity and of justification and salvation by it alone." By the locusts coming out of the bottomless pit and going to battle, is meant: arguments of the learned in the church and confirmations in faith alone without works. The woes are lamentations in the heavens over the desolation in the church.

Verses 13-19. The sixth angel sounds, "Exploring and manifesting the state of life of those in the Reformed Church who are LESS learned and wise and are in faith alone and live as they like." By the four angels loosed from the River Euphrates and all they do, is meant the evil spirits destroying rational truths (and truths supported by false reasoning).

Verses 20, 21. *By the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues,* is meant: those who were not quite so dead spiritually but still believed in faith alone.

CHAPTER 10

Verses 1-10. This chapter has the appearance of being parenthetical between the sounding of the trumpets of the sixth and seventh angels. We have here a mighty angel holding a little book open, which is the Word, teaching that the Lord is God and that His Human is Divine. This was distasteful to the Reformed Church which was in faith alone.

Verse 11. This signifies that the church must further be taught of what quality they are, who are in faith alone and continue to believe that faith alone saves.

CHAPTER 11

Verses 1, 2. This whole chapter describes the measuring of the quality of the church in the spiritual world at the time of the Last Judgment.

Verses 3-6. The two witnesses are: first, the doctrine that the Lord is God and His Human Divine; and second, the doctrine that men should live according to the Ten Commandments.

Verses 7-10. "But they altogether rejected them": their dead bodies — rejected doctrines — were left in the streets in contempt by those who rejected and rejoiced over their destruction.

Verses 11, 12. "They were raised up again": the two witnesses were raised again and carried into heaven, to the great dismay of those who thought they had killed them.

Verse 13. "They who rejected them perished": a great earthquake (a great change in their inner state) slew them (brought them into the hell which all along had been in the quality of their interior life). The *seven thousand* represent the wholly profane among them, but a *remnant* (a few) repented and praised the Lord.

Verse 14. A *second woe is past* (more lamentation) and the *third woe* comes quickly.

Verses 15-19. The *seventh angel* (the holiness of heaven itself) sounds. "The state of the New Church is made manifest from the New Heaven." On account of this New Church, the four and twenty elders sang, *The kingdoms of this world* (heaven and the church) *are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ* (the Divine Human) *forever*. Those who destroy the church are themselves rejected in this judgment in the spiritual world.

CHAPTER 12

This is a continuation of what is witnessed at the sounding of the seventh angel. By "*a woman*," the New Church is meant, a new dispensation of Divine Truth; *clothed with the sun*, the Lord's Divine Love; by the child which she brought forth, the doctrine of the New Church. The moon under her feet means the faith of the Divine Wisdom. *And upon her head a crown of twelve stars*, means the knowledges of salvation by life from the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

And "they in the present church are also treated of; who from doctrine believe in a Trinity of Persons and in the duality of the Person of Christ" (meaning a Divine Christ and a merely human Jesus) and "in justification by faith alone," these are meant by the dragon. The dragon (*that old Serpent, the Devil and Satan*) takes us back to the Garden of Eden, where as "*the Serpent*," he utterly rejects the Word of God, putting the claims of the senses above revelation. Here he accepts the Word of God, but so manipulates it as to nullify its plainest meanings. "The persecution of the New Church by these on account of its doctrine and its protection by the Lord until from a few it spreads among many, are then treated of."

CHAPTER 13

This continues the description of the work and effects of the dragon.

Verses 1-10. The doctrine and faith of the dragon continue to be described. By *a monstrous beast coming out of the sea blaspheming the name of God and attacking the patience and faith of the saints*, is meant the perversion of laymen of the Reformed Church as seen in the light of the Spiritual World at that time.

Verses 11-17. And the same perversion among the clergy is meant by the beast coming out of the earth, persuading the people that faith alone saves. The multitude of converts to this false preaching was claimed as miraculous proof of their doctrines in the Reformed Church. The mark upon their right hand and upon their foreheads, means confirmation of the perversion that salvation is by faith alone from belief in the merit of Christ.

Verse 18. *Here is wisdom* — to see and understand the quality of that doctrine which is, that faith alone saves. The number, *six hundred three score and six* (666), signifies falsification in this Reformed Church of every truth in the Word by means of its doctrine of salvation by faith alone.

CHAPTER 14

Verses 1-5. "The New Christian Heaven is described." This resumes the pictures of Chapters 5 and 7 and the conclusion of Chapter 11, verses 15-19.

Verses 6, 7. "The preaching of the Lord's coming and the New Church" is signified by the angel with the everlasting gospel saying, *Fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters.* Compare the first chapter of the Gospel of John, verses 1-14, which shows that Jesus is the Creator of heaven and earth.

Verse 8. *And there followed another angel,* warning of the desolation of the church that is in the love of power.

Verses 9-11. "And a third angel warns of the damnation of these who accept the mark of the beast." The mark of the beast is a sign of conversion demanded from those people who claim that salvation is by faith alone — a false, pernicious doctrine which they confirm.

Verse 12. This refers to the patience of the saints who keep the commandments of God and worship the Divine Human

Verses 14-16. These cover further explorations and manifestations of the falsities and evils in the Reformed Church at that time. The *white cloud* represents the Word interiorly understood. "The Lord opening it and thrusting in the sickle to reap," represents the Lord effecting the judgment by means of the TRUTHS of the Word.

Verse 17. The angel from the temple with a sharp sickle (truth) represents the spiritual heaven. Swedenborg describes three heavens: The Celestial, Spiritual and Natural; in each of these are two *kingdoms* spoken of as Celestial and Spiritual. Another angel from the altar having power over fire (love) represents the celestial heaven. The angel from the celestial heaven commands the angel from the spiritual heaven to thrust in the sickle (truth) into the church on earth.

"By these words the Lord's operation from the good of His love by the divine truth of His Word" is signified.

Verse 18. This divine love and truth pouring into the state of the church on earth reveal its qualities as to charity and faith.

Verse 19. "Gathering the vine of the earth (the church) and casting it into the great winepress of the wrath of God," means the state of utter evil and falsity to which the church has descended.

Verse 20. *And the winepress was trodden without the city,* refers to Jerusalem or the church. In Chapter 11, verse 8, this city is called Sodom and Egypt, because all things of the good and the truth of the church are profaned by those in faith alone.

And blood came out of the winepress even unto the horse bridles, means "violence done to the Word by the direful falsifications of truth" . . . "whereby the understanding (horse) is so closed that man is scarcely capable any longer of being taught and thus led by divine truths from the Lord."

By a space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs, is meant the church brought to utter desolation, empty of every good and every truth.

CHAPTER 15

Following out what has issued from the sounding of the seventh angel (Chapter 11, verse 15), here begins a new series of seven —the seven angels having the seven vials filled with the seven last plagues. These continue to be referred to until Chapter 21, verse 9, where one of these angels calls John to see the bride (the Holy City — the church wholly purified and united with the Lord — the NEW Jerusalem).

Verse 1. Here are the seven angels (the whole heaven) having the seven last plagues — the effect of the Lord's goods and truths as they penetrate into the depths of evil in human hearts. *For in them is filled up the wrath of God:* their own wrath directed against God because He requests of them a life according to His Word. God is never angry nor wrathful. It is men who are angry and wrathful because they resent His truth and laws which are His way of life.

Verses 2-4. *By on the sea of glass mingled with fire* (outmost boundaries of heaven), are meant those who have accepted the beast and his image and his mark because they have rejected faith alone and the doctrine of salvation by it. They are singing the song of Moses (acknowledging and living according to the

Ten Commandments) and the song of the Lamb (acknowledging the divinity of the Lord's Human and living the life of charity).

Verse 5. *The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened* the inmost of heaven was seen where the Lord is in His Holiness in the Word and in the Law, which is the Ten Commandments.

Verse 6. *The seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen and having their breasts girded with golden girdles*, signifies preparation by the Lord for influx from the inmost of heaven into the church, that its falsities and evils might be disclosed universally and thus the evil be separated from the good. The garments of the angels who represent the Lord are the same as the garments of the Lord in Chapter 1, verse 13.

Verse 7. *And one of the four beasts* (a heavenly affection —Chapter 4) *gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God*, means "the inmost heaven full of divine truth and love, spiritual and celestial. Smoke signifies the divine truth in ultimates" (thought and affections in the presence of the Lord).

And no man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled, means that the heaven was so full of spiritual and celestial divine truth that no more spiritual and celestial divine truth could be endured until the judgment was completed and the end of the church was seen.

CHAPTER 16

Here the seven angels with the seven vials, one after another, pour out the contents of their vials, each one carrying judgment upon specific falsities and evils of the church.

Verses 1-6. The first angel pours his vial upon the earth (clergy who most deeply confirm the falsifications of the Word). The second angel pours his vial upon the sea (laymen). The third angel pours his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters and they become blood. This represents that the truth of the Lord's Word in the mind of the Reformed Church was rejected and perverted at that time by their doctrine of faith alone. *They became blood*, means profanation of truth. *They are worthy*, means they have brought this evil upon themselves.

Verse 7. *Another angel out of the altar* (representing the good of love) confirms what was said by the angel of the water (representing the truth of the Word). Both these angels have the same message but one explores truth and the other good.

Verses 8, 9. *The fourth angel poured his vial upon the sun* (the divine love of the Lord). This represents the Lord's love pouring into men's minds filled with the lusts of evil. Their resistance to the Lord's love scorches them.

Verses 10, 11. *The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat* (throne) *of the beast* (the beast whose number is 666 and whose doctrine of salvation is faith alone). Even this pain causes no repentance or reformation.

Verse 12. *The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates*. This represents the influx of the Lord pouring into the interior REASONINGS of those who confirm justification by faith alone.

Verses 13, 14. The utterances coming out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet have the appearance of frogs. They represent the absurd degree to which go reasonings and lusts of falsifying truths by the Reformed Church. When confronted by the challenge of divine truths their insane reasonings lead them to battle against the Word of the Lord.

Verses 15, 16. *Coming as a thief in the night*, means judgment comes unexpectedly. *Blessed is he that watches* and uses truths. Those who do not are gathered into Armageddon (love of honor, dominion and super-eminence) where in desperation they try to impose their false teachings upon those who acknowledge the divine truth of the Word and who love the Lord. This is the beginning of the New Church and the death of the old Reformed Church.

Verse 17. *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air*, represents descent of the Divine Love and Wisdom (seventh angel), whereby everything of the mind or understanding of those who are in this

doctrine of the Reformed, is fully revealed for what it is and shown to be false and without any basis of truth. Those of the Reformed Church now see and admit that in the sight of heaven and the presence of the Lord there is no light and no life in any of their reasonings and doctrines.

Verse 18. Voices, thunder, lightning and a great earthquake represent the alarm and convulsions caused in the minds of those in faith alone when their church foundations fall out from under them.

Verse 19. In this verse we are shown that the judgment was not confined to the Reformed (Protestants) alone, but the Roman Catholic religion (the love of rule from the love of self) was also judged and partook of the painful experience of seeing itself rejected in the light of heaven.

Verse 20. *Every island fled away and the mountains were not found*, means there was no longer any truth or faith nor good of life with them.

Verse 21. The *hail that fell out of heaven*, means the rejections of the divine truth and *blaspheming God* means the rejection of the Lord by the love of self and the love of dominion.

The sounding of the seventh angel, with the pouring out of his vial upon the air, shows that the climax of judgment is upon the love of ruling over the souls of men (*great Babylon*).

CHAPTER 17

This chapter gives a tremendous and monstrous picture of the character of self love and the perversions of life that grow out of it. It makes unmistakable the necessity of complete rejection and condemnation of the evils of man's natural heredity.

Jesus said, *Verily, verily, I say to you, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus says to Him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say to you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* (John 3:3-6.)

The nature of this rebirth is explained in John 1:13, *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* This rebirth means to accept the will of God in place of our own will.

What we see in this chapter is a pretense of having received the will of God and made it our own, while continuing to obey SOLELY the will of the love of self and the world and calling it the religion of the Lord. Such religion in any life or in any time results in serving hell and calling it heaven. The same pretension is made by the dragon in Chapter 12 and by the beast in Chapter 13.

In Chapter 13 we have the beast, whose number is 666, declared to be *the number of a man*, representing those who manipulate the teachings of the Holy Word to confirm themselves in the doctrine of salvation by faith alone.

In Chapter 17 we have the false doctrine represented by a woman *arrayed in purple and scarlet color* (evil and falsity), sitting *upon a scarlet colored* (evil) *beast*. She is *full of names of blasphemy having seven heads and ten horns* (exactly as the beast in Chapter 13 who had his power from the dragon which also had seven heads and ten horns). This woman represented the falsifications of the Church of Rome at that time.

Verse 1. Here another of the seven angels having the seven vials reveals the complete perversion of womanhood as representing the church in relation to the Lord: while in Chapter 21 we have one of the seven angels having the seven vials revealing the perfect, holy womanhood in relation to the Lord *as the bride, the Lamb's wife, descending out of heaven from God* as the golden Holy City. While these seven headed monsters represent complete profanation of what is holy, the seven angels represent the holiness itself.

Verse 2. Here the whore is committing fornication with the kings and inhabitants of the earth. This means profaning and polluting the holy truths and goods of the Word of God.

Verses 3, 4. These are explained above in the sixth paragraph under Chapter 17.

Verse 5. The name on the woman's forehead reminds us of the mark of the number of the beast which was put upon the forehead or the hand of every convert who has this doctrine (faith alone). Her name shows the hidden qualities of the Roman Catholic religion of that time; how it perverted and defiled all things which related to the Word and thence to the church.

Verse 6. What John sees here causes him to wonder with *great admiration* (great amazement).

Verse 7. The seven heads represent profanation of all things holy and ten horns represent the great power with which this profanation is propagated.

Verse 8. *The beast that you saw was and is not*, represents the Word officially acknowledged as holy by the Roman Catholic religion of that day, "yet in reality NOT acknowledged in life."

Verse 9. *And here is the mind which has wisdom*, has a spiritual understanding of the Word. *The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits*: in the literal sense the seven mountains mean Rome because it was founded upon seven hills; but in the spiritual sense this means the divine goods and divine truths of the Word. The time came when the Roman Catholic leaders found they could exalt themselves to superiority over the Word by taking to themselves the authority that belonged to the Word. By doing this, they took away the holiness of the Word and destroyed it.

Verse 10. *And there are seven kings* (seven holy, ruling truths of the Word): *five* (ruling truths of the Word) *are fallen and one is* (still acknowledged at the time predicted in John's vision, namely, ALL AUTHORITY IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH IS GIVEN TO THE LORD): *and the other is not yet come* (acknowledgment that the LORD'S HUMAN IS DIVINE).

And when he comes, he must continue a short space. This means that the truth that the Lord's Human is divine will be a stumbling block to the Roman Catholic religion when they come to acknowledge (in the judgment) the implications of their doctrine of total authority of the Roman Catholic Church. In "True Christian Religion," number 821, it is said, "All those of the Catholic religion who in the former world thought more of God than of the papacy and from a simple heart did works of charity, when they find themselves living after death and have been instructed that the Lord Himself the Saviour of the world reigns here, are easily led away from the superstitions of that religion."

The Roman Catholic Church claimed for itself the divine of the Lord's Human. Thus they transferred the Lord's authority to themselves. Thus they perverted it and destroyed themselves spiritually.

Verse 11. *And is of the seven*, means that the seven mountains represent the divine goods of the Word, all the divine teachings that the Word presents. The beast which is of the eighth mountain, means the Divine Good Itself — the very Person of God Himself the supreme of the church.

And goes into perdition, means He is good itself and is rejected.

Verse 12. *And the ten horns . . . are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet*, represents those who are only externally in the Roman Catholic Church and on whom its hold is insecure.

Verse 13. *These have one mind and shall give their power and strength to the beast* (the Word), means they unanimously acknowledge that government and domination from the church are solely through the Word.

Verse 14. *These shall make war with the Lamb and the Lamb shall overcome them*, means that "He will contend with those who are well disposed but are not yet in truths; and He will convince them through the Word that the Divine Human is the God of heaven and earth," *and they that are with Him are called and chosen and faithful* (those saved from Roman Catholic falsities).

Verses 15-17. The teachings and authority of the Roman Catholic Church are received in varying degree in different places, some (people) even casting off her teachings and authority.

CHAPTER 18

Verses 1-8. These mean that "the Roman Catholic religion will perish because of her adulteries and profanations of the truths of the Word and thence of the church."

Verses 9, 10. These concern "the highest in the ecclesiastical order there, what their quality is and concerning their mourning."

Verses 11-16. These concern "the lower clergy and their mourning."

Verses 17-19. These concern "the laity and the common people who are in obedience to the clergy."

Verses 20-22. These refer to "the joy of the angels on account of the removal of the Roman Catholic religion," in the Spiritual world.

Verses 23, 24. Concerning "the destruction of the Roman Catholic religion in the Spiritual world because it has no interest, enlightenment, or acknowledgment in the truths of the Word or reception of them."

CHAPTER 19

The four and twenty elders and the four beasts come again in this chapter as they were in Chapters 4 and 5.

Verses 1-5. Here is sung "The glorification of the Lord by the angels of heaven because the Roman Catholic religious persuasion is removed in the Spiritual world, whereby they have come into the light and into their happiness."

Verse 6. "Annunciation (announcement) concerning the Lord's coming and concerning the New Church from Him." By "New Church" Swedenborg did not mean a sect or denomination, but a new dispensation of divine truth out of heaven from the Lord.

Verses 7, 8. These refer to the Lord's wife. In Chapter 21 she is called the bride, the Lamb's wife. Here she is *arrayed in fine linen* (the righteousness of saints), *clean and white*. This woman of sacred purity (righteousness) represents the pure church that has become wholly regenerated and wholly united with the Lord.

Verse 9. *The marriage supper of the Lamb* represents the last state of the church, which is its evening just before the morning when the church is made NEW.

Verse 10. The angel tells John not to worship him and says, *I am thy fellow servant and of ypur brethren that have the testimony of Jesus*. This shows conclusively that the angel is not one of a separate creation or race but is one who (like John) has lived a Christian life upon the earth.

Verses 11, 12. John sees the Lord upon a white horse (the pure understanding of the Word), "from which He executes judgment and separates the good from the evil."

Verse 13. *He was clothed with a vesture* (the Word) *dipped in blood* (profaned by those who have rejected it) and *His name is called the Word of God*.

Verse 14. The armies which followed Him upon white horses are those who are in divine truths and goods in the new Christian heaven — in the interior understanding of the Word. Their understanding of the Word and of the Lord as the Word, has been purified by regeneration.

Verse 15. *A sharp sword*, means the dispersion of falsifications by means of truths from the Lord. *The Word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* (Hebrews 4:12.)

Verse 16. *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written* which is the Word of God. This shows the same truth that we saw in Chapter 5, that the Word was sealed with seven seals and no one was able or worthy to open it but the Lamb — thus the Lord Himself, who is declared to be *King of Kings and Lord of Lords* in this verse 16.

True was the insight of those who followed Him into Jerusalem singing, *Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven and glory in the highest.* (Luke 19:38.)

Verses 17, 18. The angel standing in the sun represents the Lord. The angel crying with a loud voice notifies all to come unto the supper of the great God where they eat *the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great*. Eating flesh, means the acceptance and assimilation of the goods of the Word and thence of the church.

Verse 19. This means that all the interiorly evil, who have professed faith alone (the beast) with the kings (falsifications) and their followers, will fight against the Lord's divine truths in His Word and will infest those who will be of the Lord's New Church.

Compare, with the above, Chapter 12, where the dragon persecutes the woman (the New Church) in the wilderness and the man child (the doctrine of the New Church in regard to the Lord and a life according to the Commandments).

Verse 20. "This means all those who profess faith alone and are interiorly evil, as well the laity and common people as the clergy and the learned, who by reasonings and attestations that faith alone is the only means of salvation, have induced others to receive that faith and to live according to it." This is the work of the beast and the false prophet making their mark upon the hand and the forehead of their converts (Chapter 13).

These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. This means they were cast into the hell where are their loves of falsity and lusts of evil.

Verse 21. This becomes clear when we read, in Luke 19:27, where Jesus says, *But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring here and slay them before me.* This is a reference by the Lord Jesus to fulfillment of the prediction concerning Him in Isaiah 11:4, which reads, *With righteousness shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.*

These verses make clear that *the Sword of Him that sat upon the horse, that proceeded out of His mouth,* means the truth by which He judges and which condemns the evil and the false.

CHAPTER 20

Verses 1-3. These things concern the removal of those who are meant by the dragon. The thousand years during which the dragon (those in faith alone) is shut up, means that for a time, during the last judgment, they are separated from the world of spirits and have no communication with it.

And after that he must be loosed a little season, means: after those in the lower earth (lowest plane in the world of spirits) have been elevated into heaven, the dragon is again allowed to associate with those in the world of spirits. This is because "the good are prepared in that world for heaven and the evil for hell. The good are proved and discover what the quality of their loves is by association with the evil."

When the dragon is called "devil," it means those who are in the evils of life. When he is called "Satan," it means those who are in the falsifications of faith.

Verse 4. This concerns "the ascent of those from the lower earth who worship the Lord and shun evils as sins."

Verse 5. *But the rest of the dead* (they who worship the Lord and live according to His Commandments but whose quality is not proved and explored) *lived not again* (are not taken up into heaven) *until the thousand years* (not any definite period of time) *are finished.* This means, until the ascent of those from the lower earth who worship the Lord and shun evils as sins.

The first resurrection does not mean the first resurrection but "the very primary (first essentials) of resurrection, thus salvation and life eternal."

Verse 6. *Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection,* means that they who come into heaven "have the felicity of life eternal and enlightenment by conjunction with the Lord." "By the second death is signified spiritual death (the death of all interest in what is good and true)."

Verses 7, 8. When those have been lifted up from the lower earth, then Satan (those in the falsifications of salvation by faith alone) goes out to deceive all those who are in good. Gog and Magog mean those who are in external, natural worship (mere form), separate from internal, spiritual worship (love of the Lord and the neighbor).

Verses 9, 10. The dragon (Satan, i.e., all the hells of falsity) goes about trying to overwhelm the whole world of religion; but in the end the power of the Lord's love and the light of the Lord's wisdom rob him (those in faith alone) of every vestige of power and every semblance of truth, until their truly infernal quality is obvious to all and they go to their place in the hells where they continue to be ruled by their loves. "For everyone in hell is tormented by his own love and its lusts, for these make the life of everyone there and it is the life which is tormented; wherefore there are degrees of torment there according to the measure of each one's evil and falsity."

Verse 11. John sees the great white throne with the Lord Jesus Christ upon it, before whom the evil flee from the holiness of His presence.

Verse 12. Here the books that were opened are the interiors of the minds of those who are judged. The book of life is the Word.

Verses 13-15. Here the external and natural mind of the church is judged. *Death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them.* Note Chapter 1:18, where Jesus says, *I am he that lives and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.* Here, at the end of the judgment, death and hell are delivered up before Him who is here upon the white throne.

CHAPTER 21

This Chapter and Chapter 22 treat "of the state of heaven and the church after the last judgment."

"It is obvious that the pictures which we see are representations of a life that was yet to be realized. Here are the symbols, signs, representatives by which the Divine Author is clothing the vision of human living such as He wills it to be and such as He provides that it may be. Here is a picture of human living such as it is in heaven always and such as it may now begin to be on earth." (From "Where Heaven Begins," by E. K. Bray, page 31.)

A new heaven and a new earth are seen, means a New Church —the church NEW in heaven and upon earth, wherein the Lord will be present with men and will be acknowledged and worshiped and served as the One Only God of heaven and of earth; and wherein His Human will be acknowledged as Divine. Verses 1 and 2 are thus explained.

Verse 3. *The tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people and God himself shall be with them and be their God.* This is a complete acknowledgment and awareness of the Lord with men.

Verses 4, 5. These are obvious.

Verses 6, 7. The complete rejection that is to be in the New Church of everything false and evil and the supreme devotion to the Lord and to the holiness and life according to His Word, are expressed in the words, *It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is are thirsty of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God and he shall be my son.*

Verse 8. This refers to those who reject the truth and life of the New Church, as seen in Chapters 19 and 20.

Verse 9. This is the last time we hear of the seven vials (referred to in Chapter 15 and next in Chapter 17:1). Note that these seven angels are always *clothed in pure and white linen and having their breasts girded with golden girdles,* showing that all they do is done from the Lord.

Verse 10. Beginning with this verse the angel carries John away in the spirit into a great and high mountain and shows him the bride, the Lamb's wife, in the form of a glorious, holy city, descending from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, filled with the glory of God.

All of the particulars of the description of this city are divine representations of all things of the New Church in heaven and descending from heaven to earth. All the measurements and all the forms and all the activities and condition of this city, are descriptions of the divine principles of life as lived by the people of this New Church.

The precious stones represent so many divine truths. The gold represents the qualities of pure love of the Lord and the neighbor. The streets of gold represent the quality of life that prevails with those who so receive the Lord's love that they live according to those righteous principles of neighbor love which always conform to what we call the Golden Rule.

The fact that the length and breadth and height of this city are equal, means that every truth is matched by a corresponding good of life; that is, good (length) and truth (breadth), when lived to the full, represent the height and so complete the cube.

That the gates of this city are open day and night and to every quarter, means that in this New Church lives the Lord, ever calling to men of all types and conditions to come to Him and live. The fact that every gate is a single pearl, means that everyone who enters that city will do so by way of a gate of pearl, i.e., through an experience of the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ, showing that the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the same.

The nations of them which are saved, means those who are in some good of life; and the kings of the earth, those who are in some divine truths. The perfect purity of life that constitutes this Holy City (the Church made new, descending out of heaven) is manifest by the words: *There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life* (verse 27).

The book of life is the entire Word — the Bible. This is called the Lamb's book of life because He is the fulfillment of the whole Word (the book of life). Note Chapter 5 where the Lamb alone is able to loose the seals and open the Word. In Chapter 19, note: verse 12, *he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself*; and verse 13 and *his name is called the Word of God*. Here in Chapter 21, verse 27, we again have the Lamb's book of life. The book of life is referred to in Chapters 3, verse 5; 13, verse 8; 17, verse 8; and 20, verse 12.

CHAPTER 22

Close attention to the contents of the Twenty first and Twenty second Chapters of Revelation, shows that the Garden of Eden life is here restored within the framework of the Holy City. All the items that are found in the Second Chapter of Genesis, describing the Garden of Eden, are found here in these two chapters.

There in Eden, they were in the simplicity of a garden. Here, they are within the complexity of a great city. There were two people; here are multitudes. There was the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Here is the tree of life in great abundance, bearing fruit every month. Here the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (the trouble making tree) is not found.

There, was gold, bdellium and onyx — thus, metals and precious stones. Here, gold is so increased that the city is built of it and the streets are paved with it. The foundations of the city are garnished with all manner of precious stones and each of the twelve gates of the city is of one pearl. Even the wall of the city is of jasper — thus translucent — letting the divine light of the city shine through to invite those who are outside.

There, the river was divided into four heads. Here, the river is one, issuing out from under the throne of God. It is called the river of the water of life. It is clear as crystal. In the midst of this river and on either side grows the tree of life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations in great abundance. Truly the garden is restored with great increase.

In Eden man was placed in the garden by the Lord, even as we today come into this world by natural birth without any choice on our part. But here, men, by way of a second birth, come by invitation and chosen acceptance on their part, into the city with the garden restored.

Verse 4. In Chapter 7, verse 3, we first see the seal of the Lord's servants in their foreheads. This means they receive the Lord interiorly in life. In contrast to this we find, in Chapter 13, the beast rejecting the Lord and sealing his converts in their foreheads in evidence of their commitment to a life of rejection of the Lord and His life of love.

Here, in Chapter 22, verse 4, *his name shall be in their foreheads*. Here, with the judgment behind and the Holy City entered, we come to this restoration of the seal in their foreheads with the Lord's name there. This means their interior reception of the Lord in all His love and wisdom.

And they shall see his face (the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ). Note the following in Second Corinthians, Chapter 4, verse 6: *For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

Verses 8, 9. Note that this seems to be the angel who, in Chapter 21, verse 9, shows John the city coming out of heaven; and, in verse 17, measures the city and its wall *according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel*. The measure of a man suggests here a contrast to the measure of the man whose mark was the beast in Chapter 13.

Again in Chapter 22, verses 8, 9, the angel refuses to be worshiped by John, declaring himself to be his fellow servant —thus, a man like John, but now an angel in heaven.

Verses 10-15. These seem obvious.

Verses 16-21. From verse 16 to the conclusion of this chapter, is the culmination of the Book in the light of its open declaration (the Revelation of Jesus Christ). He concludes the Book when He says, *I Jesus have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the root and the off spring of David and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that hears say, Come. And let him that is thirsty come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book. He who testifies these things says, Surely I come quickly (certainly). Amen. And the church responds through the person of John, Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

In these last two chapters of Revelation, the promise of the whole Bible and the significance of its record come to fulfillment as the faithful, through the church, come by redemption and salvation into heaven. — AMEN.

The attentive reader who has come through these notes and has reflected on what takes place in the mind when obscure and hidden meanings become clear, will appreciate the significance of those words **Behold, He comes with clouds*. In the verse by verse unfolding of the inner light of these chapters, he will have experienced a new coming of the Lord to his soul. We join in the Book's concluding prayer, *Even so, come, Lord Jesus*.

EVERETT K. BRAY

*Rev. 1:7; Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27.

"It has been shown — that the final judgment does not take place on earth, but in the spiritual world, where all from the beginning of creation are together; and because this is so, it cannot come to the knowledge of any man when the final judgment was accomplished; for everyone looks for it on earth and then at the same time for a change of all things in the heaven before the eyes and on earth and with the human race therein. Lest therefore the man of the church should live in such faith from ignorance and they who think of the final judgment should await it forever, whence at length faith

will perish as to those things which are said of it in the literal sense of the Word; and lest perchance therefore many should recede from faith in the Word, it has been given me to see with my eyes that the final judgment has now been accomplished and that the evil have been cast into hell and the good taken up into heaven and thus that all things have been reduced to order and thereby the spiritual equilibrium restored between good and evil, or between heaven and hell."

The Final Judgment Number 45 by EMANUEL SWEDENBORG