

The Good Word

PUBLISHED WITH THE BLESSING OF BISHOP AUXENTIOS OF ETNA AND PORTLAND



TREATISE ON CHRIST AND ANTICHRIST, PART II

ST. HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME, (CON'T)

36. For he [St. John the Theologian] sees, when in the isle Patmos, a revelation of awful mysteries, which he recounts freely, and makes known to others. Tell me, blessed John, apostle and disciple of the Lord, what didst thou see and hear concerning Babylon? Arise, and speak; for **it** sent thee also into banishment.¹

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters; 2 with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. 3 And he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold, and precious stone, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of the fornication of the earth. 5 Upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth (Rev. 17:1-5).

37. 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. 7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and the ten horns. 8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder (whose name² was not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world) when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet shall be.

38. 9 And here is the mind that has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 10

1. {St. John was exiled to the island of Patmos by the Roman Emperor Domitian in the 15th year of his reign (AD 95-96) according to St. Irenaeus, Eusebius of Caesarea, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Blessed Jerome. Source: Archbishop Averky (Taushev), *The Epistles and the Apocalypse*, Holy Trinity Seminary Press, Jordanville, NY, 2018, p. 233.}

2. Here: το ονομα, the name. Others have τα ονοματα, the names.

And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. 11 And the beast that was and is not, (even he is the eighth,) and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. 12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. 13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. 14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

39. 15 And he saith to me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 16 And the ten horns which thou sawest, and the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. 17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. 18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

40. 18:1 After these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. 2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. 3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. 4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: 5 for her sins did cleave even unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

41. 6 Reward her even as she rewarded (you), and double unto her double, according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. 7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. 8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. 9 And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication, and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, 10 standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas! that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. 11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man shall buy their merchandise any more. 12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and

all thine³ wood, and all manner {of} vessels of ivory, and all manner {of} vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, 13 and cinnamon, and spices, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and goats, and horses, and chariots, and slaves (bodies), and souls of men.¹⁴ And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly have perished from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. 15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16 and saying, Alas, alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! 17 for in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, 18 and cried, when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city? 19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her fatness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

42. 20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye angels, and apostles, and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. 21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. 22 And the voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; 23 and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. 24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth (Rev. 17:6-18:24).

43. With respect, then, to the particular judgment in the torments that are to come upon it in the last times by the hand of the tyrants who shall arise then, the clearest statement has been given in these passages. But it becomes us further diligently to examine and set forth the period at which these things shall come to pass, and how the little horn shall spring up in their midst. For when the legs of iron have issued in the feet and toes, according to the similitude of the image and that of the terrible beast, as has been shown in the above, (then shall be the time) when the iron and the clay shall be mingled together {cf. Dan. 2:31-45}. Now Daniel will set forth this subject to us. For he says, *And one week will make (or confirm) a covenant with many, and it shall be that in the midst (half) of the week my sacrifice and oblation shall cease (Dan. 9:27)*. By one week, therefore, he meant the last week which is to be at the end of the whole world of which week the two prophets

Enoch and Elias will take up the half. For they will preach 1,260 days clothed in sackcloth, proclaiming repentance to the people and to all the nations.

44. For as two advents of our Lord and Saviour are indicated in the Scriptures, the one being His first advent in the flesh, which took place without honor by reason of His being set at nought, as Isaiah spake of Him aforetime, saying,

2b We saw Him, and He had no form nor comeliness, 3 but His form was despised (and) rejected (lit. = deficient) above all men; a man smitten and familiar with bearing infirmity, (for His face was turned away); He was despised, and esteemed not (Isa. 53:2-3).

But His second advent is announced as glorious, when He shall come from heaven with the host of angels, and the glory of His Father, as the prophet saith,

Ye shall see the King in glory (Isa. 33:17): and, I saw one like the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven; and he came to the Ancient of days, and he was brought to Him. 14 And there were given Him dominion, and honor, and glory, and the kingdom; all tribes and languages shall serve Him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away (Dan. 7:13-14).

Thus also two forerunners were indicated. The first was John the son of Zacharias, who appeared in all things a forerunner and herald of our Saviour, preaching of the heavenly light that had appeared in the world. He first fulfilled the course of forerunner, and that from his mother's womb, being conceived by Elisabeth, in order that to those, too, who are children from their mother's womb, he might declare the new birth that was to take place for their sakes by the Holy Ghost and the Virgin.

45. He, on hearing the salutation addressed to Elisabeth, leaped with joy in his mother's womb, recognizing God the Word conceived in the womb of the Virgin. Thereafter he came forward preaching in the wilderness, proclaiming the baptism of repentance to the people, (and thus) announcing prophetically salvation to the nations living in the wilderness of the world. After this, at the Jordan, seeing the Saviour with his own eye, he points Him out, and says, *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)*! He also first preached to those in Hades becoming a forerunner there when he was put to death by Herod, that there too he might intimate that the Saviour would descend to ransom the souls of the saints from the hand of death.⁴

3. {The fragrant wood of the sandarac tree, a type of conifer.}

4. {Dismissal Troparion, Vespers Aug 19, for The beheading of the Holy and Glorious Prophet; Forerunner, and Baptist John: "... Wherefore, having contested for the truth, thou didst rejoice to announce the good tidings even to those in Hades: that God hath appeared in the flesh, taking away the sin of the world and granting



46. But since the Saviour was the beginning of the resurrection of all men, it was meet that the Lord alone should rise from the dead, by whom too the judgment is to enter for the whole world, that they who have wrestled worthily may be also crowned worthily by Him, by the illustrious Arbiter, to wit, who Himself first accomplished the course, and was received into the heavens, and was set down on the right hand of God the Father, and is to be manifested again at the end of the world as Judge. It is a matter of course that His forerunners must appear first, as He says by Malachi and the angel,

I will send to you Elias the Tishbite before the day of the Lord, the great and notable day, comes; 6 and he shall turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, lest I come and smite the earth utterly (Mal. 4:5-6).

These, then, shall come and proclaim the manifestation of Christ that is to be from heaven; and they shall also perform signs and wonders, in order that men may be put to shame and turned to repentance for their surpassing wickedness and impiety.

47. For John says,

And I will give power unto my two witnesses {by tradition Enoch and Elijah}, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth (Rev. 11:2).

That is the half of the week whereof Daniel spake:

These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the Lord of the earth {cf. Zechariah 4}. And if any man will hurt them, fire will proceed out of their mouth, and devour their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. 6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters, to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will. 7 And when they shall have finished their course and their testimony (Rev. 11:4-7a)

what saith the prophet:

the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them (Rev. 11:7b),

because they will not give glory to Antichrist. For this is meant by the little horn that grows up. He, being now elated in heart, begins to exalt himself, and to glorify himself as God, persecuting the saints and blaspheming Christ, even as Daniel says,

I considered the horn and, behold, in the horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things; and he opened his mouth to blaspheme God ... And that horn

us great mercy," The Menaion, Volume 12, The Month of August, Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, MA, 2005, p. 169.}

made war against the saints, and prevailed against them until the beast was slain, and perished, and his body was given to be burned (Dan. 7:8-9, 21, 11).

48. But as it is incumbent on us to discuss this matter of the beast more exactly, and in particular the question how the Holy Spirit has also mystically indicated his name by means of a number, we shall proceed to state more clearly what bears upon him. John then speaks thus:

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns, like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exercised all the power of the first beast before him; and he made the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 And he did great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 14 and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword and did live. 15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16 And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their forehead; 17 and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for if is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred threescore and six (Rev. 13:11-18).

49. By the beast, then, coming up out of the earth, he means the kingdom of Antichrist; and by the two horns he means him and the false prophet after him.⁵ And in speaking of *the horns being like a lamb*, he means that he will make himself like the Son of God, and set himself forward as king. And the terms, *he spake like a dragon*, mean that he is a deceiver, and not truthful. And the words,

he exercised all the power of the first beast before him, and caused the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed,

signify that, after the manner of the law of Augustus, by whom the empire of Rome was established, he too will rule and govern, sanctioning everything by it, and taking greater glory to himself. For this is the fourth beast, whose head was wounded and healed again, in its being broken up or even dishonored, and partitioned into four crowns; and he then (Antichrist) shall with knavish skill heal it, as it were, and restore it. For this is

5. {The beast which arises out of the sea in Rev. 13:1 is considered by almost all interpreters to be the Antichrist, whereas the beast coming out of the earth in Rev 13:11-13 is most commonly considered to be the false prophet, the helper of the Antichrist. See the Orthodox commentaries of St. Andrew of Caesarea and Archbishop Averky.}



what is meant by the prophet when he says, *He will give life unto the image, and the image of the beast will speak*. For he will act with vigor again, and prove strong by reason of the laws established by him; and he will cause all those who will not worship the image of the beast to be put to death. Here the faith and the patience of the saints will appear, for he says:

13:16 And he will cause all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their forehead; 17 that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name (Rev 13:16-17).

For, being full of guile, and exalting himself against the servants of God, with the wish to afflict them and persecute them out of the world, because they give not glory to him, he will order incense-pans to be set up by all everywhere, that no man among the saints may be able to buy or sell without first sacrificing; for this is what is meant by the mark received upon the right hand. And the word—*in their forehead*—indicates that all are crowned, and put on a crown of fire, and not of life, but of death. For in this wise, too, did Antiochus Epiphanes the king of Syria, the descendant of Alexander of Macedon, devise measures against the Jews. He, too, in the exaltation of his heart, issued a decree in those times, that

all should set up shrines before their doors, and sacrifice, and that they should march in procession to the honor of Dionysus, waving chaplets [or wreaths] of ivy (2 Mac. 6:7);

and that those who refused obedience should be put to death by strangulation and torture. But he also met his due recompense at the hand of the Lord, the righteous Judge and all-searching God; for he died eaten up of worms. And if one desires to inquire into that more accurately, he will find it recorded in the books of the Maccabees.

50. But now we shall speak of what is before us. For such measures will he, too, devise, seeking to afflict the saints in every way. For the prophet and apostle says:

Here is wisdom, Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred threescore and six (Rev. 13:18).

With respect to his name, it is not in our power to explain it exactly, as the blessed John understood it and was instructed about it, but only to give a conjectural account of it; for when he appears, the blessed one will show us what we seek to know. Yet as far as our doubtful apprehension of the matter goes, we may speak. Many names indeed we find, the letters of which are the equivalent of this number: such as, for instance,

the word *Titan*, an ancient and notable name; or *Evanthas*, for it too makes up the same number; and many others which might be found. But, as we have already said, the wound of the first beast was healed, and he (the second beast) was to make the image speak, that is to say, he should be powerful; and it is manifest to all that those who at present still hold the power are Latins. If, then, we take the name as the name of a single man, it becomes *Latinus*. Wherefore we ought neither to give it out as if this were certainly his name, nor again ignore the fact that he may not be otherwise designated.⁶ But having the mystery of God in our heart, we ought in fear to keep faithfully what has been told us by the blessed prophets, in order that when those things come to pass, we may be prepared for them, and not deceived. For when the times advance, he too, of whom these things are said, will be manifested.

51. But not to confine ourselves to these words and arguments alone, for the purpose of convincing those who love to study the oracles of God, we shall demonstrate the matter by many other proofs. For Daniel says,

And these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon (Dan. 9:41).

Ammon and Moab (*Gen. 19:37-38*) are the children born to Lot by his daughters, and their race survives even now.

And Isaiah says:

And they shall fly in the boats of strangers, plundering the sea together, and (they shall spoil) them of the east: and they shall lay hands upon Moab first; and the children of Ammon shall first obey them (Isa. 11:14).

52. In those times, then, he shall arise and meet them. And when he has overmastered three horns out of the ten in the array of war, and has rooted these out, viz., Egypt, and Libya, and Ethiopia, and has got their spoils and trappings, and has brought the remaining horns which suffer into subjection, he will begin to be lifted up in heart, and to exalt himself against God as master of the whole world. And his first expedition will be against Tyre and Berytus [Beirut], and the circumjacent territory. For by storming these cities first he will strike terror into the others, as Isaiah says,

Be thou ashamed, O Sidon; the sea hath spoken, even the strength of the sea hath spoken, saying, I travailed not, nor brought forth children; neither did I nurse up young men, nor bring up virgins. 5 But when the report comes to Egypt, pain

6. {St. Hippolytus' use of these 3 names follows his teacher St. Irenaeus (see *Chapter 30, Against Heresies, Book V*, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. I*. Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1994, p. 559.)}



for Tyre shall seize them (Isa. 23:4-5).

53. These things, then, shall be in the future, beloved; and when the three horns are cut off, he will begin to show himself as God, as Ezekiel has said aforetime:

Because thy heart has been lifted up, and thou hast said, I am God (Eze.28:2).

And to the like effect Isaiah says:

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of heaven ... 14 I will be like the Most High. 15 Yet now thou shalt be brought down to hell (Hades), to the foundations of the earth (Isa.14:13-15).

In like manner also Ezekiel:

Wilt thou yet say to those who slay thee, I am God? But thou (shalt be) a man, and no God (Eze. 28:9).

54. As his tribe, then, and his manifestation, and his destruction, have been set forth in these words, and as his name has also been indicated mystically, let us look also at his action. For he will call together all the people to himself, out of every country of the dispersion, making them his own, as though they were his own children, and promising to restore their country, and establish again their kingdom and nation, in order that he may be worshipped by them as God, as the prophet says:

He will collect his whole kingdom, from the rising of the sun even to its setting: they whom he summons and they whom he does not summon shall march with him (An unknown prophet {previously quoted in Chapter 15, with no known patristic commentary on it to my knowledge}).

And Jeremiah speaks of him thus in a parable:

The partridge cried, (and) gathered what he did not hatch, making himself riches without judgment: in the midst of his days they shall leave him, and at his end he shall be a fool (Jer. 17:11).

55. It will not be detrimental, therefore, to the course of our present argument, if we explain the art of that creature, and show that the prophet has not spoken without a purpose in using the parable (or similitude) of the creature. For as the partridge is a vainglorious creature, when it sees near at hand the nest of another partridge with young in it, and with the parent-bird away on the wing in quest of food, it imitates the cry of the other bird, and calls the young to itself; and they, taking it to be their own parent, run to it. And it delights itself proudly in the alien pullets as in its own. But when the real parent-bird returns, and calls them with its own familiar cry, the young recognize it, and forsake the deceiver, and betake themselves to the real parent. This thing, then, the prophet has adopted as a simile,

applying it in a similar manner to Antichrist. For he will allure mankind to himself, wishing to gain possession of those who are not his own, and promising deliverance to all, while he is unable to save himself.

56. He then, having gathered to himself the unbelieving everywhere throughout the world, comes at their call to persecute the saints, their enemies and antagonists, as the apostle and evangelist says:

There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: 3 and there was a widow in that city, who came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. 4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; 5 yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her (Luke 18:2-5).

57. By the unrighteous judge, who fears not God, neither regards man, he means without doubt Antichrist, as he is a son of the devil and a vessel of Satan. For when he has the power, he will begin to exalt himself against God, neither in truth fearing God, nor regarding the Son of God, who is the Judge of all. And in saying that there was a widow in the city, he refers to Jerusalem itself, which is a widow indeed, forsaken of her perfect, heavenly spouse, God. She calls Him her adversary, and not her Saviour; for she does not understand that which was said by the prophet Jeremiah:

Because they obeyed not the truth, a spirit of error shall speak then to this people and to Jerusalem (Jer. 4:11).

And Isaiah also to the like effect:

Forasmuch as the people refuseth to drink the water of Siloam that goeth softly, but chooseth to have Rasin and Romeliah's son as king over you: 7 therefore, lo, the Lord bringeth up upon you the water of the river, strong and full, even the king of Assyria (Isa. 8:6-7, cf. 4 Kingdoms 15-16).

By the king he means metaphorically Antichrist, as also another prophet saith:

And this man shall be the peace from me, when the Assyrian shall come up into your land, and when he shall tread in your mountains (Mic. 5:5).⁷

58. And in like manner Moses, knowing beforehand that the people would reject and disown the true Saviour of the world, and take part with error, and choose an earthly king, and set the heavenly King at nought, says:

Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? 35 In the day of vengeance I will recompense (them), and in the time when their foot shall slide (Deut 32:34-35).

7. From Coxe, footnote 5, p. 216: Hippolytus follows the Hebrew, not the *LXX*, and substitutes *mountains* for *fortresses* {others substitute *palaces*}.



They did slide, therefore, in all things, as they were found to be in harmony with the truth in nothing: neither as concerns the law, because they became transgressors; nor as concerns the prophets, because they cut off even the prophets themselves; nor as concerns the voice of the Gospels, because they crucified the Saviour Himself; nor in believing the apostles, because they persecuted them. At all times they showed themselves enemies and betrayers of the truth, and were found to be haters of God, and not lovers of Him; and such they shall be then when they find opportunity: for, rousing themselves against the servants of God, they will seek to obtain vengeance by the hand of a mortal man. And he, being puffed up with pride by their subserviency, will begin to despatch missives against the saints, commanding to cut them all off everywhere, on the ground of their refusal to reverence and worship him as God, according to the word of Esaias:

Woe to the wings of the vessels of the land, beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: (woe to him) who sendeth sureties by the sea, and letters of papyrus (upon the water; 2 for nimble messengers will go) to a nation anxious and expectant, and a people strange and bitter against them; a nation hopeless and trodden down (Isa. 18:1-2).

59. But we who hope for the Son of God are persecuted and trodden down by those unbelievers. For the *wings of the vessels* are the churches; and the sea is the world, in which the Church is set, like a ship tossed in the deep, but not destroyed; for she has with her the skilled Pilot, Christ. And she bears in her midst also the trophy (which is erected) over death; for she carries with her the cross of the Lord. For her prow is the east, and her stern is the west, and her hold is the south, and her tillers are the two Testaments; and the ropes that stretch around her are the love of Christ, which binds the Church; and the net which she bears with her is the laver of the regeneration which renews the believing, whence too are these glories. As the wind the Spirit from heaven is present, by whom those who believe are sealed: she has also anchors of iron accompanying her, viz., the holy commandments of Christ Himself, which are strong as iron. She has also mariners on the right and on the left, assessors like the holy angels, by whom the Church is always governed and defended. The ladder in her leading up to the sail-yard is an emblem of the passion of Christ, which brings the faithful to the ascent of heaven. And the top-sails aloft upon the yard are the company of prophets, martyrs, and apostles, who have entered into their rest in the kingdom of Christ.

60. Now, concerning the tribulation of the

persecution which is to fall upon the Church from the adversary, John also speaks thus:

12:1 And I saw a great and wondrous sign in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. 2 And she, being with child, cries, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. ... 4b And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. 5 And she brought forth a man-child, who is to rule all the nations: and the child was caught up unto God and to His throne. 6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath the place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days ... 13 And then when the dragon saw it, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child. 14 And to the woman were given two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. 15 And the serpent cast (out of his mouth) water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. 16 And the earth helped the woman, and opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the saints of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus (Rev. 12:1-17).

61. By the woman then clothed with the sun, he meant most manifestly the Church, endued with the Father's word,⁸ whose brightness is above the sun. And by the *moon under her feet* he referred to her being adorned, like the moon, with heavenly glory. And the words, *upon her head a crown of twelve stars*, refer to the twelve apostles by whom the Church was founded. And those, *she, being with child, cries, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered*, mean that the Church will not cease to bear from her heart the Word that is persecuted by the unbelieving in the world. *And she brought forth*, he says, *a man-child, who is to rule all the nations*; by which is meant that the Church, always bringing forth Christ, the perfect man-child of God, who is declared to be God and man, becomes the instructor of all the nations. And the words, *her child was caught up unto God and to His throne*, signify that He who is always born of her is a Heavenly King, and not an earthly; even as David also declared of old when he said, *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool (Ps. 109:1 LXX, 110:1 MT).*

And the dragon ..., he says, *saw and persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child. 14 And to the woman were given two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from*

8. {τὸν Λόγον τὸν Πατρῶν. Lit: the Logos (Word) of the Father}



the face of the serpent (Rev. 12:13-14).

That refers to the one thousand two hundred and threescore days (the half of the week) during which the tyrant is to reign and persecute the Church, which flees from city to city, and seeks concealment in the wilderness among the mountains, possessed of no other defense than the two wings of the great eagle, that is to say, the faith of Jesus Christ, who, in stretching forth His holy hands on the holy tree, unfolded two wings, the right and the left, and called to Him all who believed upon Him, and covered them as a hen her chickens. For by the mouth of Malachi also He speaks thus:

And unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings (Mal. 4:2).

62. The Lord also says,

When ye shall see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand), then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains, and let him which is on the housetop not come down to take his clothes; neither let him which is in the field return back to take anything out of his house. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved (Matt. 24:15-22, Mark 13:14-20, Luke 21:20-23).

And Daniel says,

12:11 And they shall place the abomination of desolation a thousand two hundred and ninety days. 12 Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand two hundred and ninety-five days⁹ (Daniel 12:11-12).

63. And the blessed Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, says:

2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together at it, 2 that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letters as from us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means; for (that day shall not come) except there come the falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped: so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth (will let) {Gr. = ὁ κατέχων, the restraining one}, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that wicked [one] be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: 9 (even him) whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, 10 and with all deceivableness of

9. The Hebrew reads 1335 days {the Old Greek and Theodotion also}

unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thess. 2:1-12).

And Esaias says,

Let the wicked [one] be cut off, that he behold not the glory of the Lord (Isa. 26:10).

64. These things, then, being to come to pass, beloved, and the one week being divided into two parts, and the abomination of desolation being manifested then, and the two prophets and forerunners of the Lord having finished their course, and the whole world finally approaching the consummation, what remains but the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ from heaven, for whom we have looked in hope? who shall bring the conflagration and just judgment upon all who have refused to believe on Him. For the Lord says,

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh (Luke 21:28)

And there shall not a hair of your head perish (Luke 21:18).

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together (Matt 24:27-28).

Now the fall took place in paradise; for Adam fell there. And He says again,

Then shall the Son of Man send His angels, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds of heaven (Matt 24:31).

And David also, in announcing prophetically the judgment and coming of the Lord, says,

His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and His circuit unto the end of the heaven: and there is no one hid from the heat thereof (Ps. 18:6 LXX, 19:6 MT).

By the heat he means the conflagration.

And Esaias speaks thus:

“Come, my people, enter thou into thy chamber, (and) shut thy door: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation of the Lord be overpast (Isa. 26:20).

And Paul in like manner:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth of God in unrighteousness (Rom. 1:17).

65. Moreover, concerning the resurrection and the kingdom of the saints,

Daniel says,

And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall arise, some to everlasting life, (and some to shame and



Dr. Seraphim Steger, Editor, THE GOOD WORD

c/o St. Seraphim of Sarov & St. John of Kronstadt Orthodox Church
6063 Lake Murray Blvd.
La Mesa, CA 91942-2506,
U.S.A.

everlasting contempt (Dan. 12:2).

Esaias says, *The dead men shall arise, and they that are in their tombs shall awake; for the dew from thee is healing to them (Isa.26:19).*

The Lord says, *Many in that day shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live (John 5:25).*

And the prophet says,

Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light (Eph. 5:14¹⁰).

And John says,

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power (Rev. 20:6). For the second death is the lake of fire that burneth.

And again the Lord says,

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun shineth in his glory (Matt. 13:43).

And to the saints He will say,

Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34).

But what saith He to the wicked?

Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, which my Father hath prepared (Matt. 25:41).

And John says,

10. "Epiphanius and others suppose that the words thus cited by Paul are taken from the apocryphal writings of Jeremiah: others that they are a free version of Isaiah 60:1. But their metrical form justifies the criticism that they are a quotation from a hymn of the Church, based, very likely, on the passage from Isaiah." Reference: A. Cleveland Coxe, D.D., *Footnote 4: St. Hippolytus, Treatise on Christ and Antichrist, Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 5*, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody MA, 1994, p. 219.

Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever maketh and loveth a lie; for your part is in the hell of fire (Rev. 22:15).

And in like manner also Esaias:

And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me. And their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be for a spectacle to all flesh (Isa. 66:24).

66. Concerning the resurrection of the righteous, Paul also speaks thus in writing to the Thessalonians:

We would not have you to be ignorant concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive (and) remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent [go before] them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice and trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. 17 Then we which are alive (and) remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:13-17).

67. These things, then, I have set shortly before thee, O Theophilus, drawing them from *Scripture* itself, in order that, maintaining in faith what is written, and anticipating the things that are to be, thou mayest keep thyself void of offense both toward God and toward men, "looking for that blessed hope and appearing of our God and Savior (Tit. 2:13). when, having raised the saints among us, He will rejoice with them, glorifying the Father. To Him be the glory unto the endless ages of the ages. Amen. ❖ ❖ ❖

**NEXT ISSUE: THE PROPHECIES OF ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT
INCLUDING HIS VISION FROM 1901, PART I**