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## Prophetic History of the Church - The Restoration of the Gospel by an Angel

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## CHAPTER X.

### PROPHETIC HISTORY OF THE CHURCH—THE RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL BY AN ANGEL.

And now as to the direct testimony for the restoration of the gospel by means of a new revelation. It is to be found in one of the revelations of St. John upon the Isle of Patmos. While there, either as an exile, or a prisoner in the mines during the persecution under the Emperor Domitian—and in either case suffering for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ—the apostle received many visions pertaining to the past, the present and the future of the Church of Christ. Especially are the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of his revelation instructive. There is a unity of design in them that cannot be mistaken. They contain a history of the church from the time it was presided over by the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb, unto the time when the judgments of God fall upon Babylon to her utter destruction. Without entering into minute detail let me point this out.

In the first two verses of the twelfth chapter, under the figure of a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and about her head a crown of twelve stars, and ready to be delivered of a child, John describes the church presided over by the apostles, and ready to bring forth the complete organization of the priesthood—the male child that is to rule the nations.

In the third and fourth verses, under the figure of a great red dragon, whose tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and who stood before the woman to devour her

child as soon as it was born—we have a description of Lucifer standing ready to destroy the priesthood so soon as it should be brought forth.

In verses five and six, under the figure of the woman bringing forth the male child, the child being caught up into heaven, and the flight of the woman into the wilderness, where God has a place prepared for her, where she is nourished for a thousand two hundred and three score days—we have a description of the coming forth of the priesthood as an organization, its being taken up into heaven out of reach of Lucifer, and also the flight of the church beyond his power into the wilderness, where it is nourished for a certain time.

In the verses from seven to twelve, inclusive, we have a deflection from the main line of history to explain who and what the great red dragon is. We are told of the war in heaven, where Michael and his angels fought and the dragon and his angels fought, but prevailed not; and how at last the dragon, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, was cast out of heaven into the earth and his angels with him. We are told of the joy there was in heaven when the accuser of the brethren was cast out; and how there had come salvation and strength and the kingdom of God and the power of his Christ. But those who thus rejoiced in heaven cry woe unto the inhabitants of the earth, because the devil had come down unto them having great wrath.

The thirteenth verse brings us back from the deflection to the line of history again; and from there to the close of the chapter under the figure of the woman flying into the wilderness, the dragon casting out of his mouth floods of water to carry her away if possible, and the return of the dragon full of wrath to make war on the seed of the woman,—“which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus”—we have repeated the story of the flight of



the church from the earth, and Lucifer, by his floods of slander, still seeking to destroy the church, now beyond the direct influence of his power, and his return to make war upon the few saints that remained after the church as an organization had been taken from among men.

In the first and second verses of the thirteenth chapter, under the figure of a monstrous, hydra-headed beast rising out of the sea, and the dragon giving unto him his power and his seat and great authority—we have a description of the rise and nature of pagan Rome, and Lucifer giving unto it his power and inspiring it with his spirit of hatred towards the saints.

In the third and fourth verses, under the figure of one of the heads of the beast being wounded and afterwards healed, all the world wondering after the beast, the dragon who gave him his power being worshiped, and the beast being worshiped—we have the transition from the pagan to the papal power of Rome described, and the worship of Lucifer in return for giving his power to the beast.

Then follows in verses from the fifth to the tenth, inclusive, the proclamation of this devil-inspired power to blaspheme against God, against his tabernacle and the saints in heaven; "*to make war upon the saints and to overcome them;*" his dominion over all kindreds and tongues and nations; the prophecy that all who dwell upon the earth shall worship him whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world; and also the prophecy of the captivity of this power which has led into captivity, and the killing of him by the sword who killed with the sword.

From the tenth verse to the close of the chapter we have the rise of other powers described which shall under new forms inaugurate the old worship, exercise the old tyranny,

practice the old deceptions, and confirm them by the performance of miracles.

The first five verses of the fourteenth chapter describe the blessedness of a special company of the servants of God who have been redeemed from the earth, an hundred and forty and four thousand of them, being the first fruits unto God and the Lamb, in whose mouth was found no guile, and who are without fault.

The sixth and seventh verses describe an angel flying *"in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and carth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."*

The eighth verse proclaims the fall of Babylon which has made all nations drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication. The rest of the chapter forbids the worship of the beast or his image, pronouncing the wrath of God against those who do so; and deals with the successive judgments which shall overtake the earth to cleanse it of its wickedness. Thus in prophecy was the history of the church written, its establishment; the war made upon its priesthood by Lucifer; the taking away of the priesthood and the church from within the circle of his power; Lucifer's league first with pagan and afterwards with papal Rome; the establishment of devil and man worship; the blaspheming of God, his tabernacle and the saints in heaven; the rise of other powers who under new forms establish old blasphemies and devil-worship; the restoration of the gospel in the hour of God's judgment; and the final fall of Babylon and the cleansing of the earth preparatory to the reign of peace and righteousness inaugurated by the restoration of the gospel.



There it is, a mighty compendium of history written in prophecy!

It is, however, with that part of it which relates to the restoration of the gospel that here I have most to do. This the passage:

“I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, 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.”<sup>a</sup>

However obscure some parts of the Book of Revelation may be considered, this prophecy is perfectly clear. Looked at from any standpoint, it means simply this: In the hour of God’s judgment an angel will come from heaven bringing with him the everlasting gospel, which is thence to be preached unto all nations and peoples of the earth. The fact that the gospel is to be restored in the hour of God’s judgment by the ministry of an angel, and thence is to be preached to every nation and kindred and tongue and people is proof positive that every nation and kindred and tongue and people in the hour of God’s judgment would be without the gospel, hence the necessity of restoring it in the manner described. For if the Lord had a church on the earth, possessing divine authority, there would be no necessity to bring in a new dispensation of the gospel as described in the prophecy under consideration.

In this passage several of the facts for which I have contended meet: First, that there has been a universal apostasy from the gospel, so complete in its departure from the doctrines and rites of the Christian religion, so universal, as

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<sup>a</sup> Rev. xiv: 6, 7.

to destroy the church of Christ; second, the necessity of restoring the gospel by a re-opening of the heavens; and third, the fact of the restoration of the gospel by the ministration of an angel who commits a new dispensation of it to man, to be preached throughout the world.