

## Chapter X

### THE CONTENTS OF THE SEVEN-SEALED BOOK

The contents of the seven-sealed book begins to be revealed when the first of the seven angels sounds his trumpet. Each subsequent sounding by the other angels continues the revelation of the contents of the book. When the sixth angel sounds his trumpet, *seven thunder* judgments are revealed to John, but he is told not to write them down (Revelation 10:3-4). John then writes of the ministry of God's two witnesses and the judgments they will bring upon this earth during the last forty-two months of the great tribulation period (Revelation 11:1-12).

These witnesses will probably be Enoch and Elijah, because in the days of their ministries upon the earth they were translated into heaven without dying. They, like all of us, must keep their appointments with death when they have completed their ministries, because the Scriptures say, *it is appointed unto man once to die* (Hebrews 9:27). Even those who are alive at the time of the first resurrection will die, but their bodies will not sleep in the grave awaiting the resurrection but will instantly be made incorruptible (see I Corinthians 15:50-57).

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

Given the context in which we find the ministry of the two witnesses, and given the fact that the seventh trumpet judgment does not take place until after the revelation of the ministries of the two witnesses (Revelation 11:15-19), it would seem that the judgments which the two witnesses bring forth upon the earth are also a part of the judgments of the seven-sealed book.

And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail. (Revelation 11:7-19)

This brings us to the final judgments that are described in the Revelation. They are the seven last plagues. These are poured upon the earth by the seven angels who empty their vials in

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

seven distinct judgments, which will lead to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the last of the earthly judgments, the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 19:11-21).

Our Lord referred to all of the judgments contained in the seven-sealed book in His Olivet sermon when He said, *For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be* (Matthew 24:21). The prophet Jeremiah also referred to these judgments as *the time of Jacob's trouble*:

For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: but they shall serve the LORD their God, and David [i. e., Jesus Christ] their king, whom I will raise up unto them. (Jeremiah 30:5-9)

This prophecy goes far beyond anything that the Jews experienced in the Assyrian, Babylonian and Roman captivities, despite the terrible events that occurred during those judgments. This prophecy takes us through the many judgments of the great tribulation period to the Day of the Lord (i. e., the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when His *feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives*).

God is a loving, merciful and gracious God, but He is also a God of justice and holiness. As we have already seen, the love, mercy and grace of God provided for the judgment of the world's sins in Jesus Christ, to the satisfaction of God's holiness, righteousness and justice, but the world, as a whole, has rejected this expression of God's love. They have done this by believing in many gods or believing there are many ways into the presence of the true and living

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

God.

Many churches have done essentially the same thing, despite the fact that they claim to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. These churches openly denounce idolatry, but they practice idolatry by involving the works of their own hands as essential elements of salvation. This heresy began in the churches of Galatia when the Judaizers taught the Gentiles that they had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses or they could not be saved. This heresy has, over time, changed the ritual from circumcision to baptism; so that the majority of churches under the canopy of Christianity believe in baptismal regeneration for salvation, and in the performance of the laws of the church as well as the ten commandments to maintain salvation.

Therefore the world and these apostate churches find themselves in the same condition as Judah was, when Israel was carried into Assyrian captivity. They have witnessed the Assyrian, Babylonian and Roman captivities of Israel and Judah, but those judgments have not changed their minds about their own idolatrous conditions.

They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers [false gods]; yet return again to me, saith the LORD. Lift up thine eyes unto the high places [where the false gods were worshipped], and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness.

Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed. Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth? Will he reserve his anger for ever? will he keep it to the end? Behold, thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest.

The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot [i.e., in the worship of false gods in the name of Jehovah, Hosea 2:6]. And I said after she had done all these things, Turn thou

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it.

And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks. And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD. And the LORD said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. (Jeremiah 3:1-11)

The sin of both Israel and Judah which produced the judgments of God upon them was idolatry. Idolatry was likened to the fleshly sin of harlotry (i.e., fornication and adultery) throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. The Jews became steeped in idolatry because of the counsel of Balaam, who taught them to violate their separation from the people of the land. (Numbers 31:14-16) This led directly to their worship of foreign gods when they joined themselves to Baal-peor (Numbers 25:1-5), and this continued throughout their history.

This corruption was further magnified by the teaching of the Rabbis, who interpreted the law in such a fashion as to make Israel believe she could be justified by the works of her own hands. This was true whether it was in the worship of an idol that she had made with her hands or whether she worshipped according to *the commandments and doctrines of men* that magnified her petty attempts at law-keeping. This corrupted view of herself kept Israel ignorant of God's Righteousness (Jesus Christ) while she went about trying to establish her own righteousness (Romans 9:31-10:4).

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.

Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah [i.e., totally destroyed]. (Isaiah 1:2-9)

The conditions in Israel and Judah which produced the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities (Jeremiah 50:17) are found in the world today, particularly in many present-day churches. It can be said of these churches (after having observed the accounts of Israel and Judah in the Scriptures), *And yet for all this her treacherous sister* [the world in general and many churches in particular have] *not turned unto me with their whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.*

Now if the fall of them [the Jews] be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. (Romans 11:12-21)

The majority of today's churches have become so many voices, with the other religions of the world, espousing a pseudo-morality instead of preaching the gospel as they were commanded of the Lord. This has taken away the distinctive message of the Christian faith: *how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and he rose again the third*

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

*day according to the scriptures* (I Corinthians 15:3-4). This is a message for sinners. Therefore it is a message for the whole world, *For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not* (Ecclesiastes 7:20). Even so the message of the average church in these days of apostasy is a message of lip service to Christ, while depending upon its own righteousness for an enduring relationship with the Lord.

Consequently politicians and church leaders have tried to find something good in all of the religions of the world. Since they view Christianity as a system of morality and not as the custodian of the truth of salvation in Jesus Christ; and since the religions of the world all have some sort of ethical standards which they hold; there is a common ground between this pseudo-christianity and the religions of the world. Nevertheless this common ground fails to recognize that man's corrupted sense of morality (*which is a way that seemeth right unto a man*) cannot satisfy the absolute standards of God's holiness, righteousness and justice. These standards could only be met by God Himself, Who became a man through the virgin birth of Jesus Christ to do just that. Consequently our Lord said, *I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me* (John 14:6).

Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities [a way which seemeth right unto a man] have separated between you and your God, and your sins [of worshipping falsely] have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for [righteousness], nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity [the works of their own hands], and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth [evil]. They hatch [adders'] eggs, and weave the spider's web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is [cracked hatches out] a viper. Their webs shall not become garments [of righteousness], neither shall they cover themselves with their works: their works are works of iniquity [having their source in the lie of the devil], and the act of violence is in their hands.

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

Their feet run to evil [i.e., the evil one], and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity [according to what seems right to them]; wasting and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace [i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ] they know not; and there is no [justice] in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace [i.e., the peace of God and peace with God].

Therefore is [justice] far from us, neither doth [righteousness] overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. (Isaiah 59:1-9)

The rejection of the truth that Jesus Christ is the only way into the presence of the true and living God declares that Jesus Christ is a liar. Now the people and religions of this world may not openly declare Him to be a liar, but what they believe does. Despite their beliefs, the Scriptures declare that Jesus Christ is God. The Scriptures declare that God cannot lie. This means that the religions of the world have openly rejected the saving work of Jesus Christ for the works of their own hands. This places all who have not believed on the Lord Jesus Christ under the judgment that is to come:

He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that [the] light is come into the world, and men loved [the] darkness rather than [the] light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth [the] evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. (John 3:18-20)

Judgment is coming because many churches, and the world at large, have accepted the evolutionary hypothesis for the creation of the universe. Some of these churches have sanctified their belief in evolution by claiming that evolution was the means used of God to bring forth life upon this earth. This is convoluted reasoning at best and proves to be (by an extension of all of the Word of God) a denial of the existence of God, and it is a denial of the truth of the Word of God.

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

If God started the process of evolution, the question must be asked, when then was man created in the image of God? If man evolved, then there is no federal head of the human family and no basis for man's sin nature, which was derived from the fall of Adam. If there is no federal head to plunge the human family into sin, then there cannot be a Federal Head in Jesus Christ to provide for the redemption of man. If these things are not true, then what part, if any, of the Bible is true? Yet the Bible says, *No lie is of the truth* (I John 2:21). If the Bible is not true, why should man fear a judgment from God? The fact is, the world does not believe the Bible is the very Word of God nor does it believe in the judgment of God.

Man has arrogantly come to believe the only things he needs to fear are the things that he is capable of doing to his environment. This has led him to believe, with proper management, he can fix the world's environmental problems; which has led him to believe (if fixing the problems should fail) he may be able to migrate to other planets with the technology he has gained from the exploration of space; which has also led him to believe he can obtain longevity by scientific advancements; which has led him to attempt to solve the genetic code, so that he can clone body parts; which has led him to be willing to kill his unborn children (by using aborted fetuses for stem-cell research) to accomplish this attempt at immortality. The truth is: mankind has bought the lie of the devil completely. It is trying to make itself into God by its self-determinate use of its knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:5).

It should not seem strange, then, that judgment is coming; and it should not seem strange that the first three judgments from the seven-sealed book are directed at the environment which man has come to worship, calling it *mother-nature* and *mother-earth*.

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. (Revelation 8:6-11)

For the last thirty years or so man has panicked over the thought of destroying his environment. Common sense and faith in God have been cast aside. At first there was a paranoia about the earth cooling. An article that appeared in *Newsweek*, April 28, 1975, said, *The resulting famines could be catastrophic*. There was talk and some action to attempt to control world-wide birthrates to alleviate these famines. As I recall, condoms were shipped to third world countries in an attempt to control the world's population. There was even some talk of melting the polar icecaps to counteract the cooling trend. I do not recall reading how they proposed to do this, but they did propose it. (*Politically Incorrect Guide to Science*, Tom Bethell, Regenery Publishing, Inc., 2005, pg. 1)

Even so it wasn't long before the paranoia changed from global cooling to global warming; and by the late 1980s it was the pet cause of the environmentalists, and it has persisted in that role to this present day. The fears as well as the solutions have reversed themselves, so that the present-day fear is that the icecaps will melt because of global warming, causing world-wide flooding and drastic changes in the weather.

So-called scientific evidence is put forth by the media and certain politicians proclaiming

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

their fears over global warming and the so-called greenhouse effect. There are almost continuous public declarations on radio, television, and in the newspapers and news magazines of the bane of global warming due to the greenhouse effect, but at no time do these proclaimers consider what the Bible says about the last days. That would be *unscientific*, to say the least. Consequently God has been replaced by *mother-nature* and *mother-earth*, which, apparently, are far more *scientific* than any reference to the Scriptures or to the true and living God.

It does not occur to man that both of these terms (mother-nature and mother-earth) are blasphemous because they deny the existence of God. But how can one blaspheme God, if one does not believe in God? After all so-called science declares that the universe fell into perfect order by a cosmic accident, and that man evolved by a similar quirk of fate. As far as the world is concerned, our weather patterns are not in the hands of an Omnipotent, Omnipresent and Omniscient God Who created the heavens and the earth and everything that is in them: a God Who has prophesied the future and Who has provided for our salvation. Rather they are, in the world's view, in the hands of mother-nature: whoever or whatever that might be.

After the judgment of the earth in the first three trumpet judgments, the focus of the judgments changes from the earth to the heavens:

And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound! (Revelation 8:12-13)

This judgment is of such a nature that it will alter the orbit of the earth around the sun. This will be necessary because one revolution of the earth upon its axis (one day) will be lessened

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

by one third. This means that the day will change in duration from twenty-four hours to sixteen hours. Consequently for there to be a corresponding number of days in a year (365.25 days), the earth's orbital path around the sun will have to take less time than it presently takes to allow for the reduction of the number of hours in a day. This will make the orbit of the earth around the sun closer to the sun. This means that the temperature of the earth will rise dramatically, not due to so-called global warming, caused by the greenhouse effect, but because of a judgment that only the God Who created the heavens and the earth can impose.

And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of [demons], working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying,

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great. (Revelation 16:1-21)

The last three trumpet judgments are called the woe judgments. The first of these is associated with the antichrist, but it also has its source in heaven:

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.

And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon. One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter. (Revelation 9:1-12)

We have not looked at the seven trumpet judgments in a chronological sequence. We have viewed them as we have so that we would understand that the seven trumpet judgments, and the other judgments in the seven-sealed book, as well as judgments recorded throughout the Old

## The Contents of the Seven-sealed Book

Testament Scriptures, will come in God's order. Some of these, like the prophecy of Joel, can be compared to some of the judgments in the Revelation of John. This means that there are many more judgments described in the Scriptures (besides these which we have considered) that are associated with the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to this earth.

It would be difficult because of the expanse and number of these prophecies to consider them all, but we could look at each of them in detail and try to determine the exact sequence in which they will be unleashed upon this earth. If we were able to do that, what purpose would it serve, other than making this book much longer than it is? Mankind has never yet been swayed by the fear of judgment from God.

Therefore it suffices us to say, this present age is not an age of judgment. This age is an age in which God is still dispensing His grace to save those who will believe Him from the wrath that is to come. Nevertheless the age that is coming (with the removal of the redeemed from this earth) will be a time of *great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be* (Matthew 24:21). It is no wonder, then, that there will be silence in heaven *about the space of half an hour* before these judgments shall begin to be unleashed upon this earth.