

## Revelation 1:1

### The Preface To The Annotations Upon The Revelation

Although some particular heretics, such as Cerdon and Marcyon, have doubted the Divine authority of this mysterious piece of holy writ, and some better men in the primitive times doubted of it, the manuscript copy of it having been at first reserved in few hands, and (as some think) in the fewer because of the affairs and fate of the Roman empire revealed in it; yet, besides its general reception as such by the church in all late ages, there is in it such a harmony, both with Daniel's prophecy in the Old Testament, and with the types made use of by the holy prophets; such manifest allusions to the whole order and economy of the Jewish church; such an agreement of the doctrine contained in it with the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, concerning God and Christ, the resurrection from the dead, and the day of judgment; and of the promises and threatenings contained in it, with the promises and threatenings in other parts of holy writ; that none who hath not a vanity to question the whole canon of Scripture, can reasonably dispute the Divine authority of this part of it.

It appeareth from Re 1:1, that John was the penman of it; and that this John was the beloved disciple, he that was the penman of one of the Gospels, hath been doubted by very few, and with very little reason, as will appear to him that will but wisely consider the terms and phrases used in it almost peculiar to this apostle, and hardly to be found in Scripture any where but in this book and the Gospel of John, such as calling Christ *the Word*, of which he *bare record*, &c. Nor is their objection of any validity, who object, that in the Gospel he ordinarily concealeth his name, which this author doth not; considering that in that he wrote a relation or history of things past, to be proved by many eye and ear witnesses; but here a Revelation or prophecy of things to come, to which his name was necessary, that men might judge by what authority he thus wrote.

For the time of his writing it, himself tells us, Re 1:9, that he received this Revelation from God, while he was in *Patmos*, *for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ*; this was (if we may believe history, and we have nothing else to inform us) in the time of Domitian the Roman emperor, about the 94th or 95th year after the nativity of Christ; so as this

book pleads a prescription of near sixteen hundred years, in which very few ever questioned its Divine authority.

For the scope of it, it is plainly told us, Re 1:1, *δειξαι τοις δουλοις αυτου α δει γενεσθαι εν ταχει*, *to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass*. The like we have repeated, Re 22:6: upon which account it is called a *Revelation* and a *prophecy*, neither of which terms agree to a narration or history, the object of which is some thing or things that are already past.

I will not undertake to give the certain and infallible sense of the several passages of this mysterious prophecy: *In magnis voluisse sat est*. But I have proceeded upon these few *postulata*:

1. That the whole of this book is no historical relation of things that were past before the year 95 or 96, or at least not long before, but of things to come; which hath made me wholly reject the notions of Grotius and Dr. Hammond, so far as they concerned the siege or destruction of Jerusalem, which was past twenty-six or twenty-seven years before John heard of this Revelation. I cannot understand how this can agree with Re 1:1, or Re 22:6.

2. That it contains a prophecy of the most remarkable things that happened either to the Roman empire, or to the church (all which was within the latitude of that in St. John's time) during the whole time of that; or which should happen after the decay of that, throughout the church, to the end of the world.

3. That this time is reasonably divided into three periods; the first determining with the Roman empire's, continuing pagan, 310 or 325 years after Christ: the second with the total ruin of antichrist; when that shall be I cannot tell: the third with Christ's coming to the last judgment. The first is by some called *Regnum draconis ethnicum*; the second, *Vicariatus draconis antichristianus*; the third, *Regnum Christi*, or, *Status ecclesiae tranquillus*.

4. I see no reason to dissent from those eminent men, who think that part of the Revelation which relates to the first period, and is predictive of what happened to the church of God until the time of Constantine the Great, 310 or 325 years after Christ, beginneth with Re 4:1-11 and endeth with Re

7:1-17; and that the *silence in heaven for half an hour*, mentioned Re 8:1, relateth to the rest which the church had from Constantine's time till the end of Theodosius's reign, about seventy or seventy-five years.

5. Where to fix the epocha, or beginning, of the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, or forty-two months, I cannot tell. That *the mystery of iniquity* begun to work in the apostles' time, is evident from 1Th 2:7; and reason will tell us, that Rome, as it now stands, or as it was in the year 1606, was not built up in a day, the great corruptions then in it came in and grew up by degrees; but I cannot tell how to count antichrist's reign, but from the time Phocas humoured the pope with the title and style of "supreme" or "universal bishop"; from which time I should rather reckon the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, than from any time before.

6. I do agree with those who think the first eleven chapters contain the sum of whatsoever is prophesied concerning the two first periods, though many things falling within them are more particularly and fully opened, Re 12:1-19:21. Re 12:1-17 gives us a particular account of the church during the first two periods. Re 13:1-18 gives us a more particular account of antichrist, both in the secular power and in his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Re 15:1-8 and Re 16:1-21 more fully open to us what should be done under the sixth trumpet. In Re 17:1-18 we have a more full description of the beast with two horns, mentioned Re 13:11, which signified antichrist as sitting in the temple of God. Re 18:1-24 more fully describes his fall, summarily before mentioned, Re 14:1-20. Re 19:1-21, so far as it concerneth the praise given to God for this, relates to that great dispensation of providence.

7. I take the third state of the church (to which I cannot conceive we are yet come, which I called its serene and quiet state) to be foretold and described, Re 20:1-15; after which shall be the battle with all the wicked of the earth, which shall end in Christ's coming to judge the world, and the general resurrection in order to it.

8. I take the last two chapters to describe a state of the church agreeing to none but the church triumphant, and have accordingly interpreted them.

If any differ from me in any of these things, it will be no wonder if he

disagreeth with me in the explication of the chapters and verses relating to them.

I dare not be positive as to the sense I have given, but shall only say it is what appeareth to me most probable. There have been found some in the tents of protestants, that have taken much pains to free the papacy from the imputation of antichrist. This I conceive was Grotius's design, in his interpretation of this book, as if it had been a history rather than a prophecy, and if a prophecy, fulfilled in less than two hundred and fifty years after it was published. As to the papacy being antichrist, I think that great person spake well, who would not be peremptory in the case, but said, it had so many of his marks, that upon a hue and cry for antichrist, he should apprehend him. I shall add, that if he were so apprehended and tried, he could never acquit himself either at the bar of Scripture or reason.

### Chapter Summary

Re 1:1-3 The preface.

Re 1:4-6 John's salutation to the seven churches of Asia.

Re 1:7 The coming of Christ,

Re 1:8 his eternal majesty.

Re 1:9-20 John relateth his vision of the Son of man with the seven stars and the seven golden candlesticks.

*The Revelation of Jesus Christ;* the Apocalypse, (as this book is sometimes called), that is, the discovering or unveiling of some hidden things; so the word *revelation* signifieth. The Greek word is often used in the New Testament, and is ordinarily translated so. It is called *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* because Christ received it from his Father, as the next words show.

*Which God gave unto him,* as he was Mediator: by *God*, here, is to be understood the Father, not exclusively to the Son, as if he were not God, but to show the order of working in the Holy Trinity, Joh 7:16 Joh 14:10. Christ in his state of humiliation is said to learn of the Father; in his state of exaltation, to receive from the Father.

*To show unto his servants;* to John, and by him to all saints that will be

studious of things revealed.

*Things which must shortly come to pass; α δεi γενεσθαι εν ταχει.* This phrase puts us out of doubt, that this book is not a relation or narrative of things past, but a revelation or prediction of things to come: see also Re 22:6,16. Which makes me wonder at the confidence of a learned annotator of our that all things here relate, either to the siege of Jerusalem (which was past more than twenty years before this Revelation to St. John), or to pagan Rome, which, indeed, continued two hundred and odd years after this. But his notion is contrary to the general sense of all interpreters, whether the ancient fathers or modern writers. The phrase, indeed, signifies *shortly*, but never what was past, nor always what shall in a few days come to pass; see Lu 18:8 Ro 16:20; though indeed sometimes it signifies the time immediately following a command, as Ac 12:7 Ac 22:18: and considering it is God's phrase, to whom *a thousand years are but as yesterday*, Ps 90:4, and who calls the things that are not as if they were, and who manifestly calls all those years between Christ's coming and the end of the world (almost one thousand seven hundred of which are past already) the *last days*, we may allow him to say, those things should be *shortly*, which soon after should begin to be effected, though not finished till Christ's second coming. Though therefore we may allow this verse the key to open the whole Apocalypse, yet we must judge the learned author hath turned it the wrong way. Christ had foretold the ruin of Jerusalem, Mt 24:1-51, nor was it now the matter of a prophecy, but history. The first six seals plainly show the state of the Christian church under Rome pagan; what shall we say to all things represented under the seventh seal, &c.?

*And he sent and signified it by his angel;* first by one angel, and then by another, or (possibly) constantly by the same.

*Unto his servant John:* who this John was, we shall declare further, Re 1:2,4.

## Revelation 1:2

Ver. 2. *Who bare record of the word of God:* this phrase determines the controversy about the penman of this part of holy writ, and puts it out of doubt that it was John the apostle and evangelist; the phrase so agrees to

Joh 1:19,32,34 19:35. The word in the Greek signifies, bare testimony to, or of, the word of God. Some understand Christ, so called, 1Jo 1:2. Some would have the gospel meant by it; and if any think this the more probable sense, because, though Christ be elsewhere called *the Word*, yet he is not called *the word of God*; and it is not here in the dative, but the accusative case; I see no reason to contradict them.

*And of the testimony of Jesus Christ*: by the testimony of Christ is to be understood the doctrine of Christ, called so, because it is a testimony concerning him; or rather, that which he testified, who is elsewhere called *the true and faithful witness*.

*And of all things that he saw*: this may be understood with reference to what went before; so it agreeth with 1Jo 1:1-10; or to what followeth in this Revelation, made to him in visions in a great measure.

### Revelation 1:3

Ver. 3. *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy*: from hence is well concluded, that this is a portion of holy writ to be read publicly and privately, otherwise no blessing would have been pronounced to the readers or the hearers of it. It is also well from hence concluded, that this book is no history of things done, but a prediction of things to come to pass; for though *prophecy* in some scriptures signifieth more largely the revelation of the Divine will, yet here it must signify strictly.

*And keep those things which are written therein*; that keep it in memory, and live in view of it, and as persons that believe it; they are *blessed*, as they will from it be comforted, concerning all the sufferings of the church, and people of God.

*For the time is at hand*; the season for the accomplishment of these things is nigh, not past, but the time when they shall begin to happen is not very far off.

## Revelation 1:4

Ver. 4. *John to the seven churches which are in Asia:* John, the apostle and evangelist, writes either to all the churches of Asia under the notion of seven, (which is the number of perfection), or to those seven churches mentioned Re 1:11, *Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea*, seven famous places in Asia the Less, where the gospel was planted; which being the most famous churches in that part of the world, John is commanded to deposit this prophecy in their hands, by them to be communicated unto other churches. These churches were in the most famous cities of the Lesser Asia: some think John was the apostle that preached most in Asia, and founded these churches; others, that though they were founded by Peter and Paul, yet after their death John took upon him the charge of them. It is the opinion of some learned men, that the apostle did not, in the epistles to the churches in Asia, design only to tell them of their error, and prescribe to their cure; but that in writing to them, he assigns both a prophetic instruction of us all concerning the state of the church in all periods from that time to the day of judgment, and also to reprove and counsel all present and succeeding churches; but of this we may possibly speak more afterward.

*Grace be unto you, and peace:* grace and peace is the common apostolical salutation, as to the sense of which we have often spoken: the apostle wisheth them the free love of God, that is, *grace*, and the seal of it, Ro 5:1, *peace* with God and their own consciences, and each with other.

*From him which is, and which was, and which is to come:* these words are a description of God, particularly of Jesus Christ in his eternity and immutability: he was from eternity; he is now; and he shall be for ever. Or, (as some), he was in his promises before his incarnation; he is now God manifested in the flesh; and he is to come as a Judge, to judge the quick and the dead. This was an ancient name of God, Ex 3:14, *I am that I am*. —*I AM hath sent me unto you*. These words interpret the name *Jehovah*.

*And from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;* it is very difficult to determine what is meant by *the seven Spirits* here *before the throne*: we read of them also, Re 3:1 4:5 5:6. Christ is described, Re 3:1, as having *the seven Spirits of God*. It is said, Re 4:5, that *the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, are the seven Spirits of God*; and Re 5:6, that the

Lamb's *seven eyes* were *the seven Spirits of God*. This is all the light we have from Scripture. Some think they are seven angels that are here meant. We read, Re 8:2, of *seven angels that stood before God*; and in Re 15:6-8, there is a like mention of *seven angels*; and Zec 4:2,10, Zechariah had a vision of *seven lamps*, and *seven pipes*, which, Re 1:10, are said to be *the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth*. But John saluting the churches with grace and peace from these seven Spirits, and joining them with Christ, they do not seem to be creatures, angels, that are here meant, but such a Being from whom grace and peace cometh. Others therefore understand by them, the seven workings of Divine Providence in his management of the affairs of the world, with relation to the church, of which we shall read after; but this also seems hard. The sense seems to be, and from the Holy Ghost, who, though but one spiritual Being, yet exerteth his influence many ways, and by various manifestations, called here *seven Spirits*, because all flow from the same Spirit. They are therefore called, Re 4:5, *burning lamps*; the Holy Ghost descending in the appearance of fire, Ac 2:3,4, and being compared to fire, Mt 3:11. They are called the Lamb's *seven eyes* and *seven horns*, Re 5:6. Christ had the Spirit without measure; and the Holy Spirit is oft called the Spirit of Christ. This seemeth the best sense; the reader may find the objections to it answered in Mr. Pool's Synopsis Criticorum upon this verse.

### Revelation 1:5

Ver. 5. *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness*: here is an express mention of Jesus Christ, because he was the procurer of our redemption, and our Mediator, to whom the Father committed all power as to the church. He is called *the faithful* and *true witness*; 1Ti 6:13, he *witnessed a good confession before Pontius Plate*; he bare record of himself, Joh 8:13,14: see also Isa 43:10 55:4 Joh 18:37.

*And the first begotten of the dead*; that is, who first rose from the dead, viz. by his own power, Joh 10:18, and to die no more: see Ac 13:34 1Co 15:20.

*And the prince of the kings of the earth*: the *King of kings*, Re 17:14 19:16 1Ti 6:15. The first name here given to Christ speaketh his prophetic office, the second his priestly office, this last his kingly office.



*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood:* here begins a doxology, or giving glory to Christ, (such forms are frequent in the Epistles), first, as he that *washed us from our sins*, both from the guilt and from the power and dominion of our sins, with *his blood*, paying a price, and satisfying God's justice for, and meriting our sanctification: see Heb 9:14 1Jo 1:7.

### Revelation 1:6

Ver. 6. *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: kings*, to rule over our own appetite, and govern ourselves by the law of his word, to fight and conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil. Kings in a spiritual sense, for our kingdom is like his from whom we derive it, *not of this world*; therefore he adds, *unto God*, to the honour and glory of God, for his service, who is the Father of Christ.

*Priests, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God* through the Beloved, 1Pe 2:5; our *bodies as a living sacrifice*, Ro 12:1; part of our estates, Php 4:18; *the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of our lips*, Heb 13:15. So as all the privileges of the Jews, Ex 19:6, belong to us, and that in a more eminent manner. Through Christ we also are *a royal priesthood, a peculiar people*.

*To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen:* let all praise, and honour, and acknowledgments be paid, and all power ascribed, to him for ever.

### Revelation 1:7

Ver. 7. St. John being to speak of the various afflictions of the church of God, which should immediately begin, and hold on during the whole time that Rome should continue heathen, and one thousand two hundred and sixty years after, during the whole reign of the beasts, prepareth Christians for it, by calling them by the eye of faith to see (though at a great distance) Christ coming to judgment, whom he speaks of as already coming, according to the usual style of prophets, who use to speak of those things

that shall shortly be done, or certainly, as if they were already done. He describes the manner of Christ's coming to judgment, and saith, *he cometh with clouds*, that is, in a glorious manner; *in the clouds with power and great glory*, Mt 24:30; *in his glory, and all the holy angels with him*, Mt 25:31; *with ten thousand of his saints*, Jude 1:14; *with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God*, 1Th 4:16; here, *with clouds*, bright and glorious clouds, not obscuring him, but making his appearance more glorious and terrible.

*And every eye shall see him*; he shall come visibly, for, Ac 1:11, he shall so come, as he was seen going up to heaven: see Isa 40:5.

*And they also which pierced him*; they also which pierced him shall look on him, Zec 12:10; yea, not those only which pierced him with their spears, but every sinner who hath pierced him with his sins, Heb 6:6. From whence we may observe, that the resurrection will be general; and those in the Great Mogul's country are like to awake out of their sleep in the grave, as well as others.

*And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him*; all the nations of the earth, (Greek, the tribes of the earth), shall wail, not with a mourning of repentance, the time for that will be past, but with a wailing of despair and horror.

*Even so, Amen*: these words are either a prophetic assertion, confirming the truth of what he had said, or a pious prayer or desire, or rather both together.

### Revelation 1:8

Ver. 8. *Alpha* and *Omega* are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet, as *Aleph* and *Tau* are in the Hebrew alphabet: the meaning of these is expounded, *the beginning and the ending*; he who was before all, and shall continue to exist when all creatures shall cease to be; the first and the last, as the same terms are expounded, Re 22:13: so Isa 41:4 43:13.

*Which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*: see Re 1:4: He addeth *the Almighty*, to show that he was able to make his words good.

Thus in this verse, omnipotency, eternity, and immutability, are all applied to God, and particularly predicated of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

### Revelation 1:9

Ver. 9. *I John, who also am your brother;* the same mentioned Re 1:4, the apostle of Jesus Christ, yet he disdaineth not to call those his brethren whom his Lord so called.

*And companion in tribulation:* the pagan persecutions were now begun. Nero first began them about twenty-three years after Christ was ascended into heaven, but he died within three years' time after he had began that course. Then the Christians had some rest for twelve years, by reason of the short reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and the kindness of Flavius and Titus Vespasianus; but about eighty-two years after Christ began Domitian to reign, and to persecute the Christians about the year 90. He lived not long, for he was slain Anno 97, but in those seven years he put to death, imprisoned, and banished many. John is said to have been banished by him, Anno 91, and to have had this revelation, 94 and 95. Domitian lived but four or five years after this. After his death John is said to have come back to Ephesus, and to have died there three years after, about the year 98. But for five years John was the Christians' *companion in tribulation*.

*And in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ;* either the kingdom of grace, a member of the Christian church; or the kingdom of glory, which is to be arrived at both by patient waiting and by patient suffering for Jesus Christ, or waiting for the second appearance of Christ, in order to his glorious kingdom.

*Was in the isle that is called Patmos:* this island, geographers tell us, was an island in the Icarian or AEGean Sea, about thirty-five miles in compass, one of those fifty-three islands called the Cyclades.

*For the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ:* he tells us how he came to be in Patmos, viz. for preaching the word of God, and those truths to which Christ had given testimony: he did not voluntarily go thither to preach the gospel, (for those isles have in them few inhabitants),

but he was banished thither by the emperor Domitian's officers. Banishment was a very ordinary punishment amongst the Romans, in case of what they would call sedition. Eusebius tells us, that one Flavia Dometilla, though she was niece to the consul, was banished upon the same account at this time.

### Revelation 1:10

Ver. 10. *I was in the Spirit;* not only in spiritual employment, suppose meditation and prayer, but in an ecstasy; my soul was (as it were) separated from my body, and under the more than ordinary influence and communications of the Spirit, as Ac 10:10 11:5 16:9 18:9.

*On the Lord's day;* upon the Christian sabbath, called *the Lord's day*, (as the eucharist, or breaking of bread, is called *the Lord's supper*, 1Co 11:20), because Christ instituted it; or, because the end of its institution was the remembrance of Christ's resurrection, (as the end of the Lord's supper was the commemoration of Christ's death), or because it was instituted for the honour of Christ.

*And heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet:* John in the isle of Patmos was keeping the Christian sabbath in spiritual services, meditation and prayer, and fell into a trance, wherein he had a more immediate communion with the Holy Spirit, which begun with his hearing a loud voice, as it were, behind him, as loud as the sound of a trumpet.

### Revelation 1:11

Ver. 11. *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last;* I, who speak unto thee, am the eternal, immutable God.

*What thou seest, write in a book;* what thou shalt presently see, write in a book, not in loose papers. Whence we may observe, that this book is not only the revelation of the will of Christ, but written by his direction.

*And send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia;* not to all that lived within the jurisdiction or compass of these cities, but only to those

Christians who lived in or near these places, which are all cities in the Lesser Asia.

*Ephesus* was the most famous, where Paul preached, Ac 19:10, &c., and stayed three years, Ac 20:31. It was a noble city in that part of Greece which was called Ionia.

*Smyrna* was a sea-port city in the same country.

*Pergamos* was a city of Troas, or Phrygia.

*Thyatira* was a city in Lydia, or Mysia.

*Sardis* also was a city in Lydia, near the mountain Tmolus.

*Philadelphia* was a city in Lydia, next Mysia.

*Laodicea* was a city in Asia, near the river Lycus. In all these cities there were congregations of Christians formed into churches, to whom God here ordereth St. John to send these visions, when he had written them in a book. Our countryman, Mr. Brightman, asks: Where Rome was all this while? And how it came to pass God directed not these mysteries to be sent, and kept in their archives, especially if (as the papists say) the bishop there be Christ's successive vicar? And considering, too, how great friends Peter and John were wont to be? But the forementioned author tartly replies to his own question: That that church, it seems, could never err, and therefore needed not any correptory or monitory epistle.

### Revelation 1:12

Ver. 12. *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me;* that is, to see the person whose voice I heard speaking to me: or else, by seeing is meant understanding; but that he might have done without turning; he therefore turned, hoping to see the person that spake.

*And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks:* by these seven candlesticks which he saw, are meant the seven churches; so we find it infallibly expounded, Re 1:20. We shall find in this book frequent

allusions to the Jewish temple: here they begin. In the Jewish tabernacle there was one golden candlestick, and seven lamps, to give light against it; so Nu 8:2 Zec 4:2. John here seeth seven. God had but one church of the Jews, but many amongst the Gentiles. This notion, or comparison of churches to golden candlesticks, both showeth us the nature and office of the churches of Christ, they do not give light of themselves, only hold lights, and it is their duty to keep in them the pure word of God, which is a light to our feet, and a godly ministry; and it also lets us know, that they ought to keep themselves pure (as beaten gold) from all corruption as to doctrine, and their members from all scandalous conversation.

### Revelation 1:13

Ver. 13. *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks;* that is, of the churches, resembled by the golden candlesticks.

*One like unto the Son of man:* we say, no like is the same; but Christ, who was the Son of man, and who ordinarily calls himself so throughout the gospel, is undoubtedly here meant, as appeareth by Re 1:17,18, which description can agree to him alone. He is said to have come in the *likeness of sinful flesh*, though he came in true human flesh; and Php 2:7, he *was made in the likeness of men*. John saw one who appeared to him as a man in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, which was Christ in the midst of his churches; placed in the midst, partly to let us know his observation of them all, and partly to let us know his being at hand to them all, to help, protect, and defend them.

*Clothed with a garment down to the foot;* ποδηρη the word signifieth a long garment reaching to the feet, whether of linen or woollen, or what other material, is not expressed; so as it seemeth to me hard to determine, whether it was to signify his priestly or kingly office, or neither. It is a habit of gravity. *And girt about the paps with a golden girdle;* nor dare I determine the significancy of the golden girdle about his loins. It was a habit like that in Daniel's vision, Da 10:5. They were both symbols of majesty, authority, and dignity, and the appearance agreed very well to him, who was both a High Priest and a King.

### Revelation 1:14

Ver. 14. *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow:* whiteness signifies purity; whiteness of hair signifies old age ordinarily, which commonly is attended with more prudence, as having most experience: hence this appearance of Christ may denote both his purity and wisdom, and that he is *the Ancient of days*; see Da 7:9,13,22; though there the term of *Ancient of days* belongs to God the Father, yet it also agreeth to Christ, who is equal with the Father, as to his Divine nature.

*And his eyes were as a flame of fire;* such an appearance is applied to God, Eze 1:27 Da 10:6; and to Christ, Re 19:12, to denote either Christ's knowledge, wisdom, and omniscience; or his grace in purifying souls, as fire doth metals; or his wrath and anger against his enemies.

### Revelation 1:15

Ver. 15. *And his feet like unto fine brass:* there are nice disquisitions what this chalcobalanum (which we translate, *fine brass*) was: vid. Poli Synopsin. I understand not of what profit the determination will be to us. By the feet of Christ (probably) are signified his ways, counsels, and methods, in ordering and governing his church, which are compared to fine brass, for the beauty and glory of them, and for their firmness, strength, and steadiness.

*As if they burned in a furnace;* they appeared like brass filled with fire, as if it were burning, and red-hot in furnace.

*And his voice as the sound of many waters;* loud and terrible, like the noise of the sea dashing upon a rock, or the shore.

### Revelation 1:16

Ver. 16. *And he had in his right hand seven stars:* the right hand is the hand of power, Ps 21:8; and of favour, Ps 44:3; and of honour and dignity, Ps 110:1. The *seven stars* are expounded, Re 1:20, to be the ministers of the gospel, his messengers to his churches, who having in all times been

most exposed to the malice and rage of enemies, Christ is said to hold them in his right hand, as to signify the dignity he hath put upon them and the favour he hath showed them, so also to show his resolution to protect them, according to his promise, Mt 28:20.

*And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword;* either his gospel and word, compared to a two-edged sword, Heb 4:12; or a sword of justice, which he will use till he hath perfectly overcome and vanquished his enemies.

*And his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength;* that is, was very glorious, so as the apostle was not able to behold him.

### Revelation 1:17

Ver. 17. *I fell at his feet as dead;* astonished at the majesty and glory of the appearance: see Jos 5:14 Da 8:17,18 Mt 17:6 Ac 9:4.

*And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not;* to comfort me, and let me know, that I had no reason to be afraid, he would do me no harm.

*I am the first and the last:* see Re 1:8,11.

### Revelation 1:18

Ver. 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore;* the living God, who had life in myself, and gave life to the world, but assumed the human nature, and was made man, and in that nature died; but I rose again from the dead, and shall die no more, but ever live to make intercession for my people.

*Amen;* this is a great truth.

*And have the keys of hell and of death;* and have a power to kill, and cast into hell; or, I have the power over death, and the state of the dead, so as I can raise those that are dead to life again: I have the command of death,



whether temporal or eternal; as he who hath the keys of a house can let in and shut out of it whom he pleaseth, so I bring to heaven and throw to hell whom I please.

### Revelation 1:19

Ver. 19. *Write the things which thou hast seen;* either the things which thou hast seen from the beginning of the gospel; for John, Mt 4:21, was a companion of Christ from the time presently following his baptism and temptations: or, the vision of me which thou hast now had; which I judge most probably the sense, not understanding why our Lord should set John to write what (though they were not yet written, yet) Christ knew should be written in another book by John himself, viz. in his Gospel, and by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in their histories of the Gospel, and in the Acts of the Apostles; especially considering they were to be written plainly, so as he who runs may read them; and what John was to write here, was to be written enigmatically, and darkly represented in visions: and it is against reason to think the same things should be first revealed plainly, and then more darkly, and both by direction from God.

*And the things which are;* the present affairs of the church; we have the history till Paul was carried prisoner to Rome, (which was about the 60th year after Christ), in the Acts of the apostles; so that I conceive the farthest that John looked back was but thirty-five years; for he was in Patmos about the year 93, and is conceived to have written this book, 96. Hence the matter of the Revelation is easily concluded:

1. The things which were the present affairs of the church, Anno 96, or looking back only to 60, which things are supposed to be written by John, in Re 2:3.

*And the things which shall be hereafter;* to the end of the world, under the reign of the dragon, (the pagan Roman empire), and the reign of antichrist, or the beast, for one thousand two hundred and sixty years, and from thence until Christ shall come to judgment.

## Revelation 1:20

Ver. 20. *The mystery of the seven stars, and the seven golden candlesticks:* see Re 1:12,16.

*The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches;* that is, they signify the angels of the seven churches. By *angels* he means God's messengers and ambassadors to the seven churches, called *angels*, both in respect of their office, being the ambassadors of Christ, 2Co 5:20, and of that holiness which they should show forth in their doctrine and life. To interpret the term of *angels* by nature, seems not agreeable to what we shall hereafter meet with said to some of them; Christ would never have ordered John to have charged them with a loss of their first love, or to admonish them to be faithful unto death, or to repent. Whether the term *angel* denoteth any particular superior minister or bishop in those churches, or is to be taken collectively for all the ministers in those churches, I shall not dispute. Certain it is, *αγγελος* signifieth no more than is common to all ministers, viz. to be God's messengers, and move upon his errand.

*And the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches;* the seven churches mentioned Re 1:11: or else, seven being the number of perfection, all the churches, which are fitly represented by *candlesticks*, in the same sense as they are called *pillars of truth* in Paul's Epistle to Timothy, because they have not the light they show from themselves, only hold it forth from Christ. But it is the opinion of very learned writers upon this book, that our Lord, by these *seven churches*, signifies all the churches of Christ to the end of the world; and by what he saith to them, designs to show what shall be the state of the churches in all ages, and what their duty is. That by the church of Ephesus, was represented the purest state of all the Christian churches, which determined thirty years before this book was written. By the church of Smyrna, the state of all Christian churches till the year 300. By the church of Pergamos, all the Christian churches till antichrist got up into the saddle, and the Albigenses and Waldenses were so persecuted. By the church of Thyatira, the state of the churches from that time till our Reformation. By the other three, the state of all churches for one hundred and fifty years last past, and which shall be to the end of the world. See Dr. More, Mr. Mede, Cocceius, and Forbes, as learned and diligent inquirers into the sense of this book as any

have been, who give many reasons for this:

1. Because no reason else can be given, why epistles should not be written to other churches as well as these.
2. He doth not call them the seven churches of Asia, but seven churches.
3. The number seven is a number used to signify perfection.
4. What is said of Christ's walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks, having the stars in his right hand, &c., agreeth to him with reference to all churches, not to these seven only.
5. His calling ministers *angels*, speaks this a prophecy, for that is a prophetic style.
6. The mentioning the same number of churches and ministers, as of the seals, speaks this part of the Revelation as comprehensive, with respect to time, as the other.
7. It is not probable that these epistles would have been ushered in with such a vision, if they had been merely historical and didactic, not prophetic also.
8. They argue from Re 1:19, where John is bid to write not only what is, but what shall come to pass.
9. They argue from the matter of the epistles. —Let the curious reader see more of this in the authors themselves, as also in Mr. Brightman.

## Revelation 2:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 2:1-7           What John was commanded to write in  
commendation or reproof to the angels of the churches  
of Ephesus,  
Re 2:8-11       Smyrna,  
Re 2:12-17     Pergamos,

Re 2:18-29 Thyatira.

### Chapter Introduction

Some things are to be observed of all the epistles, before we come to the particular epistles.

1. God's writing in this form, (as a man to his friend), speaks Christ's love to the church, his spouse.
2. There were not seven books written, but one book in which these seven epistles were, out of which each church, or the church in its several periods, might learn what concerned it.
3. These epistles concerning matters of faith and manners, are written plainly, not in mysterious expressions.
4. The scope of them all is to instruct, reprove, commend, and comfort.
5. They are all directed to the ministers of the churches, as their heads, but the matter concerns the whole church.
6. It is also observed, that Christ, in the beginning of every epistle, notifieth himself by some one of those things mentioned in the vision in the former chapter.

Re 2:1, *These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars,* Re 1:16. Re 2:8, *The first and the last, which was dead and is alive,* Re 1:17,18. Re 2:12. *These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges,* Re 1:16. Re 2:18, *The Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass,* Re 1:14,15. Re 3:1. *He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars,* Re 1:4,16. Re 2:7, *He that hath the key of David, that is holy and true, that openeth, &c.,* Re 1:5,18. Re 2:14, *The faithful and true witness,* Re 1:5.

Ver. 1. *Ephesus* was the principal city of Asia the Less, it lay in the western parts of it, upon the Ionian Sea; a city of great riches and trade, but much given to idolatry and superstition, famous for the temple of Diana.

Paul was there twice; at his second coming he stayed thereabouts three years, Ac 18:1-20:38. He was by a tumult driven thence into Macedonia, and left Timothy there, 1Ti 1:3. It appears from Ac 20:17, that there were more ministers there than one; but they were all angels, and from the oneness of their business are all called an *angel*.

*These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand;* that is, Christ, Re 1:16,20, who hath put an honour on his ministers, showeth special favour to them, and will protect them.

*Who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;* who hath a special eye to his church, being not an idle spectator, but present with his church, to observe how all in it walk and perform their several parts, and is at hand, either to reward or punish them.

### Revelation 2:2

Ver. 2. *I know thy works:* these words being in the front of all the seven epistles, cannot be interpreted as signifying a knowledge of approbation, as Ps 1:6, but of a comprehension in the understanding, and as signifying Christ's omniscieny; though it be true, that the Lord both understood and approved of some of the works of this church particularly.

*And thy labour, and thy patience;* their labour in propagating the knowledge of Christ and doctrine of the gospel, and their patient taking up and bearing the cross.

*And how thou canst not bear them which are evil;* and their zeal and warmth, that they would not endure either persons erroneous in judgment, or lewd in their lives, in their communion.

*And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not:* in the primitive church there were some that falsely pretended an immediate call or mission from Christ, to preach what they did, but this church would not endure them. It appears from Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy, that there were then false teachers very busy in that church; possibly Ebion and Cerinthus, (who both lived in this time, and Cerinthus preached in Asia), or their disciples, might be some of them. They tried them, possibly, by the

word of God, according to the rules given in it to try the spirits.

*And hast found them liars;* and found that they had no such immediate mission, no authority from Christ.

### Revelation 2:3

Ver. 3. *And hast borne* the contradiction of false teachers, and the persecutions of Jews and pagans; for at this time the second persecution was began by Domitian.

*And hast patience;* grace (with quietness and submission) to bear the will of God in any sort of evils.

*And for my name's sake hast laboured;* and for me hast laboured actively in propagating the truths of my gospel, as well as passively in the furnace of trials and persecutions.

*And hast not fainted;* and hast persevered so as thou hast neither been seduced to other doctrine by false teachers, nor lost thy integrity and holiness of conversation.

### Revelation 2:4

Ver. 4. *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee;* something to accuse thee of, and blame thee for.

*Because thou hast left thy first love;* of late thou hast not been so warm in the propagation of my gospel, and maintaining my truth. The love of many in this church, both toward God and their brethren, probably was cooled, though not wholly extinguished.

### Revelation 2:5

Ver. 5. *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen;* that is, in what degree thy love was formerly, and compare it with what it is now.

*And repent;* repentance in man, signifieth both the change of the heart and of the actions.

*And do the first works;* recover thy former warmth of love, and zeal for good works.

*Or else I will come unto thee quickly;* if thou do not, I that know thee, and walk in the midst of thee, will show myself an enemy to thee.

*And will remove thy candlestick out of his place;* and unchurch thee, and say unto thee, Lo-ammi, You are not my people. Which threatening is long since made good; for where is now the famous church of Ephesus?

#### Revelation 2:6

Ver. 6. *But this thou hast;* thou hast yet thus much to commend thee.

*That thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes;* thou hatest the deeds of those who teach the lawfulness of a common use of wives, and eat things offered to idols; for these, they say, were the tenets of the Nicolaitanes, so called from one Nicholas; but whether he were one of the first deacons, named Ac 6:5, (who, they say, to avoid the imputation of jealousy, brought forth his wife, being a beautiful woman, and prostituted her), or from some other of that name, I cannot determine.

*Which I also hate:* God, as a lover of his own order, and of human society, hateth such doctrines and practices as are contrary to the rule of his word, and tend to the confusion of human societies.

#### Revelation 2:7

Ver. 7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear;* to whom God hath given an ability and power to understand what I say. It is a form of speech which Christ often used, when he would quicken up people's attention, Mt 11:15 13:9,43 Mr 4:9,23 7:16: we shall find it again in these two chapters six times; from which some would conclude, that in these epistles there is

something mysterious, parabolical, and prophetic, it being a form of speech prefixed to many parables.

*What the Spirit saith;* the Holy Spirit of God, from whose inspiration all Scripture is.

*Unto the churches;* not only at Ephesus, but elsewhere in Asia, or any other part of the world.

*To him that overcometh;* that is, a conqueror in fighting the good fight of faith, against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

*Will I give to eat of the tree of life;* I will give him a share in my merits, and eternal life; which blessed enjoyments are set out unto us under the notion of eating, Lu 12:37 22:28, &c.; Joh 10:28.

*This is the promise that he hath promised us,* 1Jo 2:25. Heaven is expressed to us under this notion, with reference to the tree of life, mentioned Ge 2:9, which was in the old Paradise; for it is added, *which is in the midst of the paradise of God;* or, which is the same, Christ himself is here intended, who is the free of life, mentioned Re 22:2; and the happiness of heaven is thus expressed, 1Th 4:17, *We shall be ever with the Lord*. This is the sum of the epistle to the first mentioned church, by which those that judge these epistles prophetic, understand all the primitive churches during the apostles' age, or the most of their ages, for John himself lived under the second persecution.

### Revelation 2:8

Ver. 8. *Smyrna* was a city in Ionia; we read not when, or by whom, the gospel was first planted and a church gathered there; nor can we tell who are meant by *the angel* of this church: see Re 1:20. That it was no single person is probable, for he speaks plurally, Re 2:10, *the devil shall cast some of you, εἰς ὑμῶν, into prison*.

*These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive:* for the meaning of this phrase, see annotations on Re 1:8,17,18; only it is observable how Christ, speaking to this church under great tribulation and



persecution, fits a name proper to comfort them; for he himself *was dead*, and yet now *alive*, and he living, those that believe in him, because he lives, shall live also, Joh 14:19; and as he was *the first*, so he will be *the last*, surviving all his enemies, and be at last a conqueror over them.

### Revelation 2:9

Ver. 9. *I know thy works, and tribulation:* though the term *know* doth not necessarily signify approbation, yet, both as to the church of Ephesus and Smyrna, the particular works mentioned assure us, that God approved their patient suffering affliction for his name.

*And poverty;* and the poor condition (as to outward things) into which they had brought themselves, for their owning and profession of the gospel of Christ, having their estates rent from them, &c.

*But thou art rich;* but yet they were rich, both really in the love and favour of God, and also in the esteem of God, who accounteth them rich who abound in spiritual habits, and good works, the exercise of those habits.

*And I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not:* God also knows the evil speeches of his church's enemies, whether native Jews, glorying in circumcision and the law, and that they were descended from Abraham; or false Christians, who may be here meant (called Jews by a figure; the Jews being once the only church of God).

*But are the synagogue of Satan;* but are indeed a collection of devils, or the children of the devil, whose works they do, continually reviling true Christians, and murdering the saints, after the manner of their father, who *was a murderer from the beginning*.

### Revelation 2:10

Ver. 10. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer;* thou art like to suffer yet sharper things than thou hast suffered, the persecutions are but begun; but pluck up a good courage, fear not your enemies, Mt 10:28.

*Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison; you shall be cast into prison, by Jews and pagans, who are the devil's instruments, and execute his malice against you; which should both encourage you, that your fight is with the common enemy of mankind, and teach you to pity and pray for your persecutors, who are but the devil's instruments, whose hearts he hath filled with malice against you.*

*That ye may be tried; that your faith, love, patience, obedience, may be tried.*

*And ye shall have tribulation ten days:* interpreters are divided about these *ten days*, what space of time is meant by them; some think the whole time of the ten persecutions, but they lasted above two hundred years; others will have them the ten years of Trajan's persecution, from the year 99 to 109. Others observe, that in ten days are two hundred and forty hours, which make up the number of years from 85, when the second persecution began, (under which John at this time was), to 325, when all the persecutions ceased. But to let these fancies go: it is either a certain number put for an uncertain; or, it signifies many days; as in Ge 31:42, *Thou hast changed my wages ten times*, that is, many times; so 2Sa 19:43 Job 19:3. Or else it signifies a little time, as in Ge 24:55 Am 5:3 6:9. If we understand this epistle as only concerning the church of Smyrna at that time, it may signify a small time. If we understand it prophetically, describing the state of all churches, till the pagan persecution ceased, (which was more than two hundred and forty years), ten days signifies a long time.

*Be thou faithful unto death, hold fast to thy profession of faith and holiness to the end of thy life here, and I will give thee a crown of life, and I will give thee eternal life and salvation, which shall be a great reward. It is called a crown of righteousness, 2Ti 4:8.*

## Revelation 2:11

Ver. 11. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh:* for the opening of these passages: See Poole on "Re 2:7".

*Shall not be hurt of the second death;* we read of *the second death*, Re 20:6,14: the meaning is, that he shall escape the eternal damnation of soul and body in the day of judgment.

Those that make these epistles prophetic say, that the church of Smyrna was a type of all the churches of Christ to the year 325, (when Constantine overcame Lycinius, and gave rest and peace to the churches of Christ), which was all a time of severe persecution under the Roman emperors, who to that time were all heathens. It is very observable, that Christ blameth nothing in this church; the church of God keeps always its purity best in the fire; but doubtless there were in this time many apostacies, and other errors, but God allows much to his people's temptations; hence, though Job showed much impatience, yet we are called to behold him as a pattern of patience.

### Revelation 2:12

Ver. 12. *Pergamos* was a famous city of Troas; we read of Pergamos nowhere else in Scripture, but of Troas we read of Paul's being there, Ac 16:8,11 20:5,6, and preaching Christ there, 2Co 2:12.

*These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges:* see the notes on Re 1:16.

### Revelation 2:13

Ver. 13. *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest;* God knows all his people's circumstances, where they dwell, as well as what they do, and how they behave themselves in their habitations.

*Even where Satan's seat is;* where the devil rules by his pagan deputies and antichrist's officers.

*And thou holdest fast my name;* the word of my truth, by which I am known, as a man by his name.

*And hast not denied my faith;* neither by the words of thy mouth, nor by

any apostacy from this profession, notwithstanding the temptations thou hast had from suducers and from persecutors, and the sight of those who have been put to death for their profession.

*Even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr:* it is much no ecclesiastical history makes mention of this martyr Antipas, which argueth him to have been a person but of an obscure note in the world; but Christ seeth and taketh notice of those little ones who belong to him, though the world overlooks them. Our being able from no history to give an account of this martyr, hath inclined some to think this epistle wholly prophetical, and that Antipas signifieth not any particular person, but all those that have opposed the pope, as if it were *Antipapa*. But certainly there was such a martyr as Antipas belonging to the church at Smyrna at that time, who suffered for the truth, though we do not allow this church to have been typical of all the gospel churches for many years.

#### Revelation 2:14

Ver. 14. *But I have a few things against thee;* though I have much to commend thee for, yet I have some things to accuse thee of, and to complain of thee for.

*Because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam:* by the doctrine of Balaam, he means the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, (as he expounds himself, Re 2:15), which was like the doctrine of Balaam.

*Who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel;* that Balaam of whom we read, Nu 24:1-25:18, who being sent for by Balak the king of Moab to come and curse Israel, and finding that God restrained him, and turned his tongue from cursing them to pronounce blessings to them, instructed Balak at last how to lay a stumblingblock before them, to make them to fall, viz. to set the Moabitish women to tempt them to commit uncleanness with them, and so to feast with them in their idols' temples, and eat of their meat first offered unto their idols.

#### Revelation 2:15

Ver. 15. *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes;* so, saith he, thou sufferest in thy communion filthy persons, who maintain fornication lawful, and the lawfulness of eating meat offered to idols, which exactly corresponds with Balaam's doctrine or counsel given to Balak, in order to his weakening the Israelites by separating them from God. His counsel took place, to the destruction of twenty-four thousand Israelites.

*Which thing I hate;* I am the same God still, and hate such doctrines, as much as ever I did in the time of Balak.

### Revelation 2:16

Ver. 16. *Repent;* thou that art guilty of conniving at such things, change thy mind and practice, and let those who have entertained these opinions, and run into those filthy practices, change their hearts and practices; *or else I will come unto thee quickly;* I will quickly come against thee, and punish thee: See Poole "Re 2:5".

*And will fight against them with the sword of my mouth;* and fight against them by my word; either convincing them, or pronouncing sentence against them; or, by raising up other teachers, who shall preach my word more faithfully, and whose doctrine shall be like a sword to devour and to destroy them.

### Revelation 2:17

Ver. 17. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh:* see the annotations on Re 2:7.

*Will I give to eat of the hidden manna;* here is a manifest allusion to that *bread from heaven*, with which God fed his people in the wilderness, called *angels' food*, Ps 78:25. The story of it we have, Ex 16:31,32; a pot of which God ordained to be kept in the ark, for a memorial of God's mercy, Heb 9:4. It was a type of Christ, who was the *true bread* that came down *from heaven*, Joh 6:32,33. It here signifies Christ himself, with all the influences of his grace, whether for strength or comfort. As a feast was

wont to follow a victory; so Christ promiseth to those that fought, and overcame in the spiritual fight, to feast them with himself and the influences of his Spirit.

*And will give him a white stone:* the use of stones anciently was so various, that it hath given a great liberty to interpreters to vary in their senses of the *white stone* here mentioned. They made use of them (as we since of counters) to count; they used them also in judgments, acquitting persons by white stones, on which their names were written, as they condemned others by black stones; they also used them in giving suffrages in elections, &c.; they also used them to mark happy or lucky days, and they used other stones to mark such days as they counted unlucky; and finally, they used them as rewards to those who conquered in their games. Hence interpreters vary in their opinions, whether this be a general promise of a reward, or a more particular promise of pardon and absolution; or, of the assurance of their election to life. It seems most properly to be interpreted of pardon, or the notification of pardon of sins, or more generally of a reward. By the *new name, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it*, the same thing seemeth to be signified, the Spirit witnessing with their spirits that they are the children of God. They say, that in those white stones (used in absolutions of persons, or in giving suffrages) the name of the person absolved or chosen was wont to be written, and none knew it but those that had it, unless they imparted it, to which custom this allusion is.

Those that make this church typical, say it typified the churches of the gospel during the times of popery, to the end of the persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenses, when about one hundred thousand of them were destroyed by eight thousand papists; or, the time when antichrist first sat in the temple of God, as Re 13:1-18, and the woman fled into the wilderness, Re 12:1-17.

### Revelation 2:18

Ver. 18. *Thyatira* was a city of Mysia or Lydia, not far from Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia; for Lydia, who traded in purple, and was of this city, went to Philippi to trade, as we read, Ac 16:12,14.

*Eyes like unto a flame of fire:* see Re 1:14,15: it signifies either angry eyes, or quick and piercing eyes. The comparing of *his feet* to *fine brass*, seemeth to signify both the purity and holiness of his ways and methods of providence, and also his firmness and steadiness in them.

### Revelation 2:19

Ver. 19. *I know thy works;* the works of the ministry of this church were such as Christ knew, not only with a knowledge of comprehension, but approbation also.

*And charity;* such were his charity to Christians that were in distress.

*And service;* his diligence in his ministration.

*And faith;* his faith, and adherence to Christ, and the doctrine of the gospel.

*And thy patience;* his meek bearing of his crosses and trials.

*And thy works;* his other works, the fruit of faith and love.

*And the last to be more than the first;* and his proficiency both in spiritual habits, and good works, the fruits of them.

### Revelation 2:20

Ver. 20. *Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee:* See Poole on "Re 2:4", See Poole on "Re 2:14".

*Because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel:* the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, mentioned Re 2:6,15, is so plainly expressed in the latter part of the verse, viz. maintaining the lawfulness of eating things offered to idols, and of fornication; that whosoever this woman was, it is plain she was one of that filthy sect. It is also plain, that she is called *Jezebel* with allusion to that wicked woman of that name who was the wife of Ahab, of whom we read, 1Ki 16:31. She was an instrument to bring Ahab her

husband to serve and worship Baal. It is also plain, that she was one that pretended to Divine revelations; she *called herself a prophetess*; and that taught in public, which no women but prophetesses might do, 1Co 14:34 1Ti 2:11,12: and that she taught a community of women, and the lawfulness as of *fornication*, so of eating *things sacrificed to idols*, directly contrary to the apostle's doctrine, 1Co 9:10. But what she was cannot be determined; for though we allow this church to be typical of the church in the times of popery, and the popish synagogue, which maintaineth both these things to be the antitype; yet certainly there was some famous heretical strumpet in this church, which the governors did not restrain and cast out of their communion; which is the thing Christ had against this church, and the officers in it, who ought to have restrained her extravagancies both in teaching such doctrines, (being contrary to the apostle's doctrine in the places before mentioned), and from teaching at all, being no prophetess though she pretended to it.

#### Revelation 2:21

Ver. 21. I was not quick with her, but gave her a time of patience, and did not cut her off at first; but she was incorrigible, and went on in her sinful courses.

#### Revelation 2:22

Ver. 22. *I will cast her into a bed*; another kind of bed than she hath sinned in and by, not a bed of ease and pleasure, but of pain and torment. Nor shall the seduced escape, they shall also be cast into *great tribulation*, pains and torments of conscience, or afflictions more corporal, either from the more immediate hand of God, or the hands of men.

*Except they repent of their deeds*; this is to be supposed to all God's threatenings of judgments, the execution of them ordinarily may be prevented by repentance, and such is the patience of God, that he gives the vilest sinners a space to repent.



### Revelation 2:23

Ver. 23. *And I will kill her children,* those who are seduced by her, *with death;* I will destroy them; unless some special death, such as the plague, be here threatened. So shall all the churches near Thyatira know, that I am a God who do not only take notice of overt, scandalous acts, but of the secret thoughts, motions, counsels, and designs of men's hearts, Ps 7:10 Jer 11:20 17:10; and that I am a just God, who will deal with all according to their works.

### Revelation 2:24

Ver. 24. *But unto you I say;* you that are the ministers, for they are distinguished from the rest in Thyatira. The word again is plural, which lets us know these epistles were directed to no single persons.

*And unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine;* the rest of the members of the church in Thyatira, who have not embraced this doctrine of the Nicolaitanes published by Jezebel, &c.

*As they speak;* those seducers call their doctrine deep things, great mysteries revealed to them; as there are *the deep things of God,* 1Co 2:10, so these seducers would pretend their doctrines also were deep things: Christ calls them the devil's mysteries, deep things of Satan.

*I will put upon you none other burden;* I will lay no other burden of trials and afflictions.

### Revelation 2:25

Ver. 25. *But that which ye have already;* than you already groan under. Or, no other precepts than what you have had from the apostles: the precepts of God are called burdens, Mt 11:30 Ac 15:28.

*Hold fast till I come;* hold fast your profession, your faith and holiness, till I come to judgment.

### Revelation 2:26

Ver. 26. *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end:* See Poole on "Re 2:7", See Poole on "Re 2:11", See Poole on "Re 2:17". Overcoming is here expounded by keeping Christ's works; that is, either the works by him commanded, or walking as he walked, and persevering therein to the end of his or their lives.

*To him will I give power over the nations;* either to judge those who live heathenish lives; or to convert nations to the faith; or, which is most probable, he shall sit with me upon a throne in the day of judgment, Mt 19:28, and *judge the world*, 1Co 6:2.

### Revelation 2:27

Ver. 27. *And he shall rule them with a rod of iron:* an iron rod either signifies a right rod, that will not be easily bent and made crooked; or a severe rod, which is most probably the sense: see Ps 2:9 Ps 12:5. The words by the psalmist are applied to Christ, and to the church, Re 12:5: to particular saints here, who rule the nations either in Christ their Head, or with Christ as their Chieftain, with the word of God powerfully convincing the world of sin and righteousness.

*As the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers;* and all paganism and heathen idolatries shall be broken in pieces. Or, in the day of judgment, the saints that persevere shall sit with Christ, and judge and condemn the world severely; and then they shall be broken in pieces, never again to be soldered or cemented.

*Even as I received of my Father;* for such a power and authority my Father hath given me, and I will give it to all them.

### Revelation 2:28

Ver. 28. Either the light of glory, the blessed vision of God, or a certain hope of eternal life; or the Holy Spirit, called so, 2Pe 1:19; or rather, of

myself. Christ himself is not called the *Sun of righteousness*, Mal 4:2, but *the Morning star*, Re 22:16, because he excelleth all other stars in glory, and scattereth the darkness of ignorance and error by the light of his gospel: I will make him partaker of myself.

### Revelation 2:29

Ver. 29. Here the same conclusion of this epistle as of all the rest, Re 2:7,11,17: See Poole on "Re 2:7".

Those who make this epistle typical and prophetical, make it a type of all the churches of Christ, from about the year 1260, or the end of the persecution of the Waldenses, until the protestant religion so far obtained, that whole nations owned it, which was about 1560, by which time England and Scotland had made it the religion of those nations: it had before this prevailed in Germany, Helvetia, France, and many other places, where it was the religion of whole cities and particular jurisdictions, &c.

### Revelation 3:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 2:1-6 What John was commanded to write in commendation or reproof to the angels of the churches of Sardis,  
Re 2:7-13 Philadelphia,  
Re 2:14-22 and Laodicea.

Ver. 1. *The angel of the church:* See Poole on "Re 2:12". *Write:* See Poole on "Re 1:11".

*The seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars:* See Poole on "Re 1:3", See Poole on "Re 1:20".

*I know thy works:* this phrase here (as appears from what follows) can signify nothing but Christ's comprehension of the works of this church in his understanding, not his approbation of them.

*That thou hast a name that thou livest;* the ministry of this church had a name, that is, were reported as famous for their faith, diligence, and holiness; but their faith, without suitable works, was dead, and they were no better than hypocrites.

*And art dead;* spiritually dead.

### Revelation 3:2

Ver. 3. *Be watchful,* against sin, and unto thy duty, to perform it in a better manner than formerly.

*And strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die;* improve those gifts and good habits which are left thee as yet, but are faint and ready to die, if thou dost not look after the improvement and strengthening of them.

*For I have not found thy works perfect before God;* for I have not found thy works before God (whether thy works in thy ministry, or in thy conversation) such as they ought to be; thou mightest have done me more service, and thou mightest have done what thou hast done with more uprightness and sincerity.

### Revelation 3:3

Ver. 3. *Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard;* to wit, from the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. All true reformation, either of doctrine or manners, lies in the reduction of it to the doctrine delivered, and the rules of life given by them.

*And hold fast, and repent:* wherein our judgment or practice is conformable to theirs, it is to be held fast; wherein it hath varied, it is to be repented of.

*If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief;* if thou shalt not keep thyself free from gross sins or errors, and give diligence to

do it, I will come to thee, not as a friend to comfort and refresh thee, but as a thief to rob and destroy thee, and that suddenly.

*And thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee; I will surprise thee with my judgments, and thou shalt not know when my judgments shall overtake thee.*

### Revelation 3:4

Ver. 4. *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, a few persons even in that polluted place, which have not defiled their garments; who have kept their integrity and innocency. There is a garment of Christ's righteousness, which, once put on, is never lost, nor can be defiled; but there are garments of holiness also: hence the apostle calls to Christians to be clothed with humility. As sin is expressed under the notion of nakedness, so holiness is expressed under the notion of a garment, Eze 16:10 1Pe 5:5. Those who have not defiled their garments, are those that have kept a pure conscience.*

*And they shall walk with me in white: the Romans used to clothe their nobles, and such as were competitors for honours, in white garments; the priests and Levites also amongst the Jews, when they ministered, were clothed in white, 2Ch 5:12. God and his holy angels are in Scripture set out to us as clothed in white, Da 7:9 Mt 17:2 28:3. Those that triumphed upon victories obtained, were clothed in white amongst the Romans. To these usages, or some of them, the allusion is, and the meaning is, they shall be to me as kings, and priests, and nobles, they shall be made partakers of my glory: for they are worthy; though they have not merited it, yet I have judged them worthy; they are worthy, though not with respect to their merit, yet with respect to my promise.*

### Revelation 3:5

Ver. 5. *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; he that overcometh in the spiritual fight, shall be honoured as a triumpher.*

*And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life; that is, I will give him everlasting life: the phrase is an allusion to men who use to keep*

books, and in them the names of persons to whom they will show kindness. The *book of life*; applied to God, signifieth his eternal predestination, or purpose to bring some to heaven; out of which book, though none can be blotted out whose name is once wrote in, yet those whose names are in this book may be under some fears and apprehensions to the contrary. Christ assures them to the contrary, that they shall certainly be saved, but lets them know that this assurance depends upon their perseverance; of which also some make this phrase a promise.

*But I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels;* in the day of judgment I will own them, and acknowledge them as mine before my Father and all the angels, Mt 10:32 Lu 12:8.

### Revelation 3:6

Ver. 6. The common conclusion of all the epistles: See Poole on "Re 2:7", See Poole on "Re 2:11", See Poole on "Re 2:17", See Poole on "Re 2:29".

Those who make these churches typical, and the epistles prophetic of the complexion of all the churches of Christ which shall be to the end of the world, say the church of Sardis typifieth those reformed churches after the year 1560, that should cast off antichrist, but continue in a more imperfect state, contenting themselves with a bare disclaiming antichrist, but not rising up to a perfect reformation.

### Revelation 3:7

Ver. 7. *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:*

See Poole on "Re 1:20", See Poole on "Re 2:1". Of this Philadelphia we read no more in holy writ. We are told there were three cities of that name, one in Egypt, one in Syria, another in Phrygia, or in Mysia or Lydia, which is that here intended.

*These things saith he that is holy;* that is, the Holy One, Ac 3:14.

*He that is true;* true to his word of promise or threatening.

*He that hath the key of David;* that is, the key of the house of David, mentioned [Isa 22:22](#); the key of the church, which answered the temple, the house David designed for God: the use of the key is to open and shut, or make fast.

*He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;* who admits into the kingdom of heaven whom he pleaseth, and none can hinder him, and shutteth out of heaven whom he pleaseth. The house of David typified the church, the church containeth the number of those that shall be saved; Christ is here described as he who hath the sole and absolute power of saving and condemning whom he pleaseth.

### Revelation 3:8

Ver. 8. *I know thy works:* it is very probable, that our Lord, by these ministers' works, understands the works proper to them in their function, their labour in preaching and propagating the gospel, which Christ did not only know and observe, but also approve of, and promiseth them a liberty to go on, and success in their labours, under the notion of *an open door*: see [1Co 16:9](#) [2Co 2:12](#) [Col 4:3](#).

*And no man can shut it;* so as it should not be in the power of adversaries to hinder his success.

*For thou hast a little strength;* both inward strength, and outward helps and advantages.

*And hast kept my word;* the doctrine of faith is by thee kept pure, as also my precepts for a holy life.

*And hast not denied my name;* and thou hast not been by any temptation prevailed upon to apostatize from the profession of the gospel.

### Revelation 3:9

Ver. 9. *Them of the synagogue of Satan;* so he calleth all Jews that

opposed Christianity, or all pretended but not real professors.

*Which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie: For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is of the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, &c., Ro 2:28,29.* By this term also he may mean all false and hypocritical professors, who would make themselves the church, the only church of God, but are far enough from it, hating, maligning, and opposing those who would keep stricter to the rule of the gospel.

*Behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet; I will by my providence so order it, that these men shall come and honour thee, paying a civil respect and homage to thee.*

*And to know that I have loved thee; and to know that I have a greater kindness for thee than for them.*

### Revelation 3:10

Ver. 10. *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience:* the doctrine of the gospel is, unquestionably, the word here called the word of the Lord's patience, because it was that word, that doctrine, which (as those times went) could not be adhered to and observed without much patience in those that adhered to it; both actively, waiting for the promises revealed in it, and passively, enduring all manner of trials and crosses. To keep this word, was to keep close not only to the matters of faith revealed in it, but to the duty imposed by it upon ministers and others in the preaching and propagating of the gospel, and all the duties of a holy life.

*I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world;* for this faithfulness God promises to keep the ministers of this church from those persecutions which raged elsewhere, and were further, in Trajan's time, to come upon all Christians living under the Roman empire.

*To try them that dwell upon the earth;* to try those Christians that lived within that empire, how well they would adhere to Christ, and the profession of the gospel. This I take to be a more proper sense, than theirs



who would interpret this *hour of temptation* of the day of judgment, which is never so called.

### Revelation 3:11

Ver. 11. *Behold, I come quickly;* ταχυ, which certainly is the same with εν ταχει; and it might be as well concluded, that the day of judgment should come by that time Rome pagan should cease, as that all things written in this book had their accomplishment in that time, because Christ told John they should come to pass εν ταχει, Re 1:1 22:6. No other coming of Christ, but his coming to the last judgment, can be here meant.

*Hold that fast which thou hast;* κρατει, hold with a strong hand the doctrine of faith, which thou yet hast, pure, and thy pure worship, and discipline, and a pure conscience.

*That no man take thy crown;* that thou mayest not lose that reward which shall be the portion of those that persevere to the end, and of those only.

### Revelation 3:12

Ver. 21. *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God:* though by *the temple of God* in this place some understand the church of Christ on earth, where those always were, and are, and always shall be, most famous, who have overcome temptations best, from the world, the flesh, and the devil; yet, considering that all the promises before made to those who overcome are of another life, it seems best rather to interpret this so, that God would make such a one of fame and renown in heaven, *great in the kingdom of heaven*, Mt 5:19, to sit upon a throne there, Mt 19:28. He shall have a higher degree in glory, (for stars differ from one another in glory, 1Co 15:41), pillars being not only for support, but ornament, and principal parts in buildings.

*And he shall go no more out;* he shall have an eternal inheritance, of which he shall not be dispossessed.

*And I will write upon him the name of my God;* as men use, upon pillars

and monuments erected for their own use and honour, to write their names; so I will peculiarly own, and challenge such a one for myself.

*And the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem;* and I will write upon him: This man is an inhabitant of the new Jerusalem.

*And I will write upon him my new name;* I will glorify him with that glory of which myself was made partaker, upon my ascension after my resurrection, Joh 17:22,24.

### Revelation 3:13

Ver. 13. This we have met with at the close of every epistle: See Poole on "Re 3:7".

Those who think these churches were typical, and the matter of the epistles not only didactic and corrective, but prophetic, say, this church of Philadelphia was a type of all gospel churches which were to be in the world upon the Reformation; which more perfectly cast off antichrist, and would allow no key but that of the house of David, reforming themselves strictly according to the rule of the word, not according to state policy, and prudence.

### Revelation 3:14

Ver. 14. We read of this church, Col 4:16.

*Laodicea* was a city in Lydia, by the river Lycus: see Re 1:11.

*These things saith the Amen:* Amen, as we have oft noted, is a particle used in asserting, and in wishing, or praying; here it hath the use of a noun, and is assertive, he that is true, as it followeth. He may be conceived thus to preface his epistle, to ascertain to the ministers of this church the truth of what he blames in them; or of the threatenings or promises contained in it; to which purpose he also calls himself *the faithful and true witness*: see the notes on Re 1:5.

*The beginning of the creation of God:* those that deny the Divinity of Christ, are deceived in their thoughts that this text will afford them any defence for their error; for αρχη, the word here used, doth not only signify the cause, but principality, or the chief, or prince, Eph 3:10 Col 1:16. Hence Christ is said to be αρχη, which we translate the beginning, because he was the Creator, the efficient cause of the creation, or hath a lordship over the whole creation; all power both in heaven and earth being committed to him, and all knees both in heaven and earth bowing down to him, Php 2:10. Unless we had rather interpret it of the new creation, either in the world, so he was the beginning of the gospel; or in particular souls, so he is the beginning of regeneration and sanctification. But though this be a truth, and consistent enough with the Greek phrase, Ga 6:15, yet I see no reason why we should fly to it against the Arians, or their spurious offspring; for taking the creation, as ordinarily it signifies, the giving all creatures their first being, Christ was the efficient cause of it, and so the beginning of it, *without him was nothing made*; and he hath a lordship and dominion over it.

### Revelation 3:15

Ver. 15. *I know thy works;* I know and observe thy behaviour, thy ministerial function.

*That thou art neither cold nor hot;* thou art neither openly profane and grossly scandalous, like heathens, or such as make no profession; nor yet hast thou any true zeal or warmth, either for the faith once delivered to the saints, or in love to God, seen in keeping his commandments, having the power and efficacy of godliness, teaching thee to deny *all ungodliness and worldly lusts*, Tit 2:12. Thou hast a form of godliness, but deniest the life and power thereof.

*I would thou wert cold or hot:* we must not think Christ wisheth any persons cold absolutely, but comparatively, intimating to us, that the condition of a downright atheist, or profane person, is more hopeful than that of a close, formal hypocrite: the latter is in the road to hell as well as the other, and no more pleaseth God than the other. It is better not to have known the truth, than knowing it, to live contrary to it, Lu 12:48 2Pe 2:21. Commonly such men also are proud, and self-conceited, having something

to stop the mouth of their natural conscience, harder to be convinced of their evil state, Mt 21:32,33.

### Revelation 3:16

Ver. 16. *Neither cold nor hot;* partly good, partly bad, having something of profession, nothing of the life and power of religion; contenting thyself that thou art not a Jew, nor a pagan; not a superstitious, idolatrous person; but a Christian, a protestant, a minister, or member of the Reformed church; yet neglecting thy duty both as a minister, and as a Christian, living in a sensual satisfaction of thy lusts.

*I will spue thee out of my mouth;* I will cast thee off, as men vomit up lukewarm things.

### Revelation 3:17

Ver. 17. *Because thou sayest, I am rich:* it was said before, that one reason why the condition of a formalist is worse than that of an atheist, or more openly profane person, is, because the former is ordinarily proud and self-conceited, and hath something to stop the mouth of his natural conscience with, which the other wanteth. This is made good in the instance of this lukewarm angel; he said he was rich in a spiritual sense, in his state as a Christian, in spiritual gifts and endowments.

*And increased with goods;* and every day increasing and growing richer.

*And have need of nothing;* and needed nothing to make him happy and blessed.

*And knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked;* in the mean time he was as miserable as one could be. These words used, are several words signifying persons under various bodily afflictions, and applied to signify this angel's forlorn spiritual state, which, in the general, was wretched and miserable, and such as had need of mercy, wanting the true righteousness, wherein any could appear before God not naked, and wanting all true riches; and to complete his misery, he

was spiritually blind, and knew not the sad circumstances he was under.

### Revelation 3:18

Ver. 18. Buying being the usual way amongst men to procure what they want, it is not to be wondered at, that the procuring of that spiritual blessing here mentioned is expressed under this notion; though our buying of God spiritual good things be (as the prophet expresseth it, Isa 55:1) *without money and without price*. It is not to be doubted, but that which is here propounded to be bought (that is, obtained, and procured by such ways and means as God hath directed) is Christ himself, with all his benefits, in whom there is a sufficient spiritual supply for all our spiritual wants; that which to the soul will answer whatever gold serveth the body for; and which to the soul answereth what clothing is to the body, viz. righteousness, wherein a soul may stand before God; and that which will answer what salves are to the body for the cure of its wounds, viz. consolation, and healing of all spiritual wounds and infirmities; in short, whatever thou hast need of, considered either as poor, wretched, and miserable, or as blind and naked.

### Revelation 3:19

Ver. 19. *I rebuke and chasten*; *ελεγχω και παιδευω* the words may be translated, I convince and instruct, or deal with them as children; but it also signifies to *chasten*, and is so translated, 1Co 11:32 Heb 12:7; we translate it *learn*, 1Ti 1:20. By these words Christ lets this angel know, that although he had in this epistle dealt smartly with him, yet he had done it from a principle of love, as a father to a child, Heb 12:7.

*Be zealous therefore, and repent*; he adviseth him therefore to quit himself of his luke warmness, and to recover a warmth and zeal for God, repenting of his former coldness and negligence in his duty.

### Revelation 3:20

Ver. 20. There is a double interpretation of this text, each of them claiming

under very valuable interpreters; some making it a declaration of Christ's readiness to come in to souls, and to give them a spiritual fellowship and communion with himself; others interpreting it of Christ's readiness to come to the last judgment, and to take his saints into an eternal joyful fellowship and communion with himself: hence there is a different interpretation of every sentence in the text.

*I stand at the door;* either, in my gospel dispensations, I stand at the door of sinners' hearts; or, I am ready to come to judge the world.

*And knock,* by the inward monitions and impressions of my Spirit, or my ministers more externally; or, I am about to knock, that is, I am ready to have the last trump sounded.

*If any man hear my voice, and open the door;* that is, if any man will hearken to the counsels and exhortations of my ministers, and to the monitions of my Spirit, and not resist my Holy Spirit; or, if any man hath heard my voice, and opened his heart to me.

*I will come in to him;* I will come in by my Spirit, and all the saving influences of my grace; or, I will come to him as a Judge to acquit him.

*And will sup with him, and he with me;* and I will have a communion with him in this life, he shall eat my flesh, and drink my blood; or, I will have an eternal fellowship and communion with him in my glory. The phrase seems rather to favour the first sense; the so frequent mention before of Christ's coming to judgment, and the reward of another life, as arguments to persuade the angels of the churches to their duty, favours the latter sense.

### Revelation 3:21

Ver. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne;* I will give him great honour, dignity, and power; he shall judge the world in the day of judgment, 1Co 6:3, the twelve, tribes of Israel, Mt 19:28; he shall be made partaker of my glory, Joh 17:22,24.

*Even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne;*

but they must come to my throne as I came to it. I overcame the world, sin, death, the devil, and then ascended, and sat down with my Father in his throne: so they that will sit down with me in my throne of glory, must fight the same fight, and overcome, and then be crowned, sitting with me in my throne.

### Revelation 3:22

Ver. 22. We have had this in the conclusion of every epistle before: see Re 2:7,11,17,29, and in Re 3:6,13.

Those who make these churches typical of all Christian churches, from the time John had this Revelation, and prophetic of the complexion of the Christian churches in all ages, say, that the church of Laodicea typifieth the churches towards the end of the world till Christ cometh; but this necessitateth them to think there shall be no such pure and glorious state of the church just before the end of the world, as many believe there shall be, but that the state thereof shall grow yet worse and worse, of a Laodicean temper, so as when Christ cometh he shall hardly *find faith on the earth*.

For my part, I could allow the seven epistles to be typical and prophetic, but can by no means judge them to be purely prophetic; believing there were such churches when John wrote, and that their complexion is in the first place described in these epistles; though possibly, as face answers face in a glass, so succeeding churches have answered, and shall answer, the face of these churches, even to the last day.

This chapter concludes John's first vision. In the following chapters we have a representation in visions of what was to happen in the world more remarkably, with reference to the church of God, from the year 95, to the end of the world.

There are very different opinions about the epocha, or the time, when the visions began to be fulfilled. My opinion is, it began soon after John had the vision; for it is twice said, Re 1:1 22:6, that the visions were to be about things that shall come to pass, (not that were come to pass), and that

shortly; but we cannot fix the certain year, which maketh the interpretation difficult.

There are also divers opinions how far in this book the revelations go that concern the state of the church under Rome pagan, and where they begin that foretell the state of the church under antichrist. But of these we shall speak more particularly as we go along with the several chapters.

## Revelation 4:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 4:1-3 John seeth the throne of God in heaven,  
Re 4:4, 5 encompassed with four and twenty elders,  
Re 4:6, 7 and four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

Re 4:8-11 The continual adoration and worship offered by the beasts and elders before him that sat on the throne.

Ver. 1. *After this;* after I had the first vision, mentioned Re 1:1-20, and had written what it was the pleasure of God I should write to the churches, in a book, perceiving the way God designed to reveal himself to me was by vision.

*I looked;* I looked again, hoping and being desirous to see something further as to the mind of God.

*And, behold, a door was opened;* I saw the heavens opened, as Mt 3:16 Ac 7:56.

*In heaven;* he, doubtless, meaneth the third heavens. Such a vision, as to this particular, John had at Christ's baptism, Mt 3:1-17, and Stephen when he was stoned. He also heard the voice of one speaking aloud to him, like the voice he heard, Re 1:10; *which said, Come up hither,* into heaven, the new Jerusalem which is above; as the old Jerusalem stood upon a hill, or rising ground, so as they who went thither are constantly said to *go up*, Isa 2:3 Ac 11:2 Ga 1:17, 18 2:1.



*And I will show thee things which must be hereafter;* not which have been, (for to what purpose had that been)? But which shall happen hereafter both to my church and to her enemies: from which it appears, that God did not here show his prophet the destruction of Jerusalem, for that was already past, in the time of Titus Vespasian the Roman emperor, about the year 69, or 70, after the incarnation; this (as all confess) was in Domitian's time, about the 11th or 12th year of his reign, about twenty-six or twenty-seven years after that was past, which makes the notion of two late annotators very strange.

#### Revelation 4:2

Ver. 2. *In the Spirit;* in an ecstasy, as Paul, 2Co 12:2, and Peter, Ac 10:10, and Ezekiel, Eze 3:12, and himself was both before and after this, Re 1:10 17:3 21:10.

*A throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne:* God is constantly described, in the prophetic visions, as sitting upon a throne, to denote his power and dominion, that he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords. See Da 7:9, &c.

#### Revelation 4:3

Ver. 3. This is all but a description of the glory of God, as he appeared to John in this vision. The *jasper stone* is famous for its transparency, and variety of colours it offereth to the eye, and may signify the various and infinite perfections of God. The *sardine stone* is red, and of a bloody colour, which may signify the power, justice, and terror of God. The *rainbow* was the sign of God's covenant with Noah, signifying his being so far reconciled to the world, as that he would not again destroy it by water, Ge 9:13. The *emerald* is green, and pleasant to the eye. So as this vision of God represents God powerful, just, and good, and of various and infinite perfections.

#### Revelation 4:4

Ver. 4. Some think (and not improbably) that here is an allusion to the twenty-four courses of the priests and Levites, established by God for his service in the sanctuary and temple of old, 1Ch 24:18 25:31; and that these twenty-four elders either typified the whole church under the New Testament, the number of the tribes of Israel (which made up the church under the Old Testament) being doubled to show the increase of the church's territories under the gospel, or the heads of the church, either under the Old Testament or New, there being twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles. They are represented *sitting*, to denote their state of rest and ease; and *clothed in white raiment*, to denote their purity and holiness, or being clothed with Christ's righteousness; and having *crowns of gold on their heads*, to denote that state of dignity and glory to which God had advanced them.

#### Revelation 4:5

Ver. 5. *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices:* these words denote a very glorious and terrible appearance of God, denoting his majesty, and power over his enemies. There is, possibly, an allusion to God's appearance at the giving of the law, Ex 19:16; only we read there but of one voice, and that of a trumpet, inarticulate. The *lamps of fire before the throne*, have a correspondence with the seven lamps of the tabernacle, which gave light to the whole house of God, Ex 27:20; and are here expounded to be *the seven Spirits of God*, that is, the Holy Spirit in his seven-fold (that is, manifold) dispensations of grace, 1Co 12:4,5, by which he enlighteneth, quickeneth, healeth, and comforteth the several souls that are the true members of his church. See Poole on "Re 1:4".

#### Revelation 4:6

Ver. 6. *And before the throne;* the throne mentioned before, Re 4:2,3, upon which *one sat*, &c.

*A sea of glass like unto crystal;* another allusion to the tabernacle or temple, in which was a sea, that is, a large vessel full of water; it was for

Aaron and his sons to wash their hands, and feet, and sacrifices in, Ex 30:19 1Ki 7:23; it was ten cubits broad, five cubits high, and thirty cubits about. Here it is said to have been *of glass*; this, probably, signified the blood of Christ, in which all those souls and services must be washed which are accepted of and acceptable unto God. Its being represented here as of glass, may signify the purity and spotlessness of him whose blood it was. Other guesses there are many at the significancy of this *sea of glass*, but this seems to me most probable, because the use of the sea in the temple is made good in Christ. John in this vision also saw *four beasts*, which beasts are said:

1. To be *in the midst of, and round about the throne*.
2. To be *full of eyes before and behind*.
3. They are, Re 4:7, said to have resembled *a lion, a calf, a man in the face, and a flying eagle*; Re 4:8, *each of them had six wings, and they were full of eyes within, and incessantly glorified God*.

*Question.* Whom did these beasts signify?

*Solution.* There are various notions about them. Some judge them the four evangelists; but John himself was one of these, and yet alive. Some will have them four apostles that were mostly at Jerusalem; but I see no ground for that. Some will have them angels; others, glorified saints; but we shall afterwards find them distinguished from both these. Others will have them the whole church. But the most probable sense is, that they represented the ministers of the church, who are living creatures, whose place is between God and his church, as those beasts are placed between the throne and the elders; and who are but four to the twenty-four elders, being but few in comparison with the multitude of believers; and yet have eyes on all sides, being enough to see to the affairs of the whole church of Christ on the earth. In this sense I rest; only here remains a question, how these are said to be *in the midst of the throne, and yet round about the throne*? To which various answers are given; that which pleaseth me best is, *εν μεσω*, in the middle, is not to be strained to signify a place at equal distance from two extremes, but more largely and proverbially for near the throne, or near him who sat upon the throne. See the several notions about this phrase in Mr. Pool's Latin Synopsis.

### Revelation 4:7

Ver. 7. It is observed concerning these four living creatures, (for so they were, not beasts in a strict sense, as it is opposed to flying things, for the fourth was a fowl):

1. That they were the same mentioned in Ezekiel's vision, Eze 1:10; only each one there is said to have had the four faces of these creatures, here each one had a single face proper to it.
2. That these were the four creatures whose portraitures were in the four ensigns of the Israelites as they were marshalled into four companies, allotting the men of three tribes to each company.

Judah's standard had a lion in its colours, according to Jacob's prophecy of that tribe, Ge 49:9, Ephraim had an ox, Reuben had a man, Dan an eagle. This the learned Mede proves from the Rabbins, who, though fabulous enough, yet in such a thing may be credited. It is also thought they answered the four cherubims in the temple.

*Question.* But what is signified by these four living creatures?

*Solution.* Some say the four evangelists; others, four apostles, &c. But certainly they judge best who say, that by them is signified the various gifts with which God blesseth his ministers, giving to some more courage and fortitude, that they are like lions; to others more mildness and meekness, that they are like oxen or calves; others have more wisdom and prudence, which most adorn a man; others a more piercing insight into the mysteries of God's kingdom, rendering them like eagles.

### Revelation 4:8

Ver. 8. *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him: the seraphims in Isaiah's vision, Re 6:2, had so; there their use is declared, — with twain he covered his face, with twain his feet, and with twain he did fly.* If we understand all the wings here for flight, they signify the readiness

of God's ministers to move every way that God will send them: if we understand them as interpreted by Isa 6:2, they signify their various graces, their fear, dread, and reverence of God; their humility and modesty; their agility, or readiness to obey all the commands of God.

*And they were full of eyes within:* this denotes that large measure of knowledge, and diligence, and watchfulness, which should be in a minister of Christ.

*And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty:* this was the song of the seraphims, Isa 6:3, and shows how much it should be the care of ministers to make God known in all his attributes, his holiness especially, and his power.

*Which was, and is, and is to come;* and his eternity and simplicity, as he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, without variableness or shadow of change.

#### Revelation 4:9

Ver. 9. *And when those beasts,* the living creatures before expressed, signifying the ministers of the gospel, *give glory, &c.;* when they praise God who is eternal.

#### Revelation 4:10

Ver. 10. The whole church also paid an homage of reverence and adoration to the same God; acknowledging all the good done to them, or wrought in them, to proceed from God, and the glory of it to be due unto God alone. The ministers of the gospel are, by their preaching unto people their duty, an occasion, or instruments, of that homage and adoration which he hath from all his people.

#### Revelation 4:11

Ver. 11. All the praises, homages, and acknowledgments of all the

creatures is thy due; as then art he who gavest the first being to all creatures, and therefore gavest it them, that they might praise, honour, serve, and obey thee.

## Revelation 5:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 5:1-3 The book sealed with seven seals, which no man is worthy to open.

Re 5:4,5 John weeping thereat is comforted.

Re 5:6,7 The Lamb that was slain taketh the book to open it.

Re 5:8-10 The beasts and the elders praise him that had redeemed them with his blood.

Re 5:11-14 The angels join with them in ascribing glory to God and to the Lamb.

### Chapter Introduction

The same vision yet proceedeth. Hitherto John had only seen a throne, with a person sitting upon it in a very glorious habit and appearance, twenty-four grave persons, and four living creatures, in the shape of a lion, a calf, a man, and an eagle, each of them with six wings, and full of eyes, about the throne; and heard the twenty-four living creatures constantly giving glory to God, and the twenty-four elders harmonizing with them, and joining likewise in the high praises of God. Now the vision proceedeth.

Ver. 1. The disputes what this *book* was are very idle; for it was certainly the book of which we read hereafter, that it was opened, and to which the seven seals mentioned in the following chapters were annexed, of the opening of all which we read; and this could be no other than *codex fatidicus*, ( as Mr. Mede calls it), the book of the counsels, decrees, and purposes of God relating to his church, as to what more remarkable things should happen to it to the end of the world; which book was in the hand of the Father.

*Written within, and on the back-side;* very full of matter, so as it was written on all sides.

*Sealed with seven seals;* hitherto concealed from the world, and to be revealed by parts, as to the bringing to pass of those things decreed in it; though all at once by God here revealed, in a degree, by visions unto John.

### Revelation 5:2

Ver. 2. There were no weak angels, but possibly this angel might, in appearance to John, look as if he were stronger than others; or rather, so judged from the great and *loud voice* he used.

*Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?* Not that he thought any was able, or worthy. We can only conclude from hence the impotency of men to search, and find out, and expound the deep things of God, and consequently the unlawfulness of too narrow a prying into his secret mysteries.

### Revelation 5:3

Ver. 3. None of the angels *in heaven*, nor any man upon the *earth*, nor any of them whose bodies are *under the earth* and their souls in heaven, nor any infernal spirits; none was found sufficient *to open the book*, and *to look on it*. There was none who replied to the angel's question, Re 5:2.

### Revelation 5:4

Ver. 4. As it is the nature of man to desire to know secret and hidden things, especially such as we apprehend of concernment to ourselves, or those whom we love, or are interested in it; and to be troubled, if we know they may be known, and are at a loss for due means whereby to come to the knowledge of them.

## Revelation 5:5

Ver. 5. We must remember that John is here describing a vision, and that part of it which is but introductory to the material parts of it. He had in his vision seen a book in the right hand of God the Father, sitting upon his throne of glory; he had heard an angel proclaiming: If any were worthy, he should open the book, and loose the seals. None appeared to answer that voice; he was troubled; he thought he heard one saying to him: Be not troubled, the book shall be opened. Christ shall open the book, and loose the seals of it, who is here expressed under a double character:

1. *The Lion of the tribe of Judah*; he is so called, undoubtedly, with allusion to Jacob's prophecy, Ge 49:9,10, wherein Judah was compared to a *lion's whelp*, because he should be victorious. Christ was to be born of this tribe, and was to be a great Conqueror.
2. He is called *the Root of David*; he was a *Branch of David*, as he was man, but *the Root of David*, as he was God; therefore David, Ps 110:1, called him *Lord*, though he was his Son.

*Hath prevailed* with his Father to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof; for leave to open the book, and loose the seals thereof; i.e. to reveal those things that are the counsels and purposes of God relating to his church, and the affairs thereof, to the world's end. I do not think we are at all concerned to inquire who is here meant by *one of the twenty-four elders*. As in parables there are some things put in merely to complete the feigned history, so in the relation of visions some things of that nature are put in, which need not a particular explication. The sum is: That while John was troubled for fear he should not know what was in the book, he was told by one of those who attended the throne, that he need not be troubled, for Christ had obtained a liberty from his Father (in whose power only times and seasons for future things were) to reveal these counsels of God as to things to come.

## Revelation 5:6

Ver. 6. *And I beheld*; hearing the mention of a Lion of the tribe of Judah, he looks about wistly to see if he could see any justifying that



representation.

*And, lo, in the midst the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb:* instead of a Lion he seeth a Lamb; Christ Jesus, called a *Lamb* by this apostle, Joh 1:29,36, and very often in this book; a Lamb, for whiteness and innocency, 1Pe 1:19, for meekness and patience, Ac 8:32, but here with reference to the paschal lamb.

*As it had been slain;* for he appears wounded and pierced, as if he had been slain; and to show that he was equal with the Father, he appears in the midst of the throne; and in the midst of the elders, and of the four living creatures, to show his presence with his church and ministers, Mt 28:20, and his walking (as was said, Re 2:1) in the midst of his churches, which were the golden candlesticks there mentioned.

*Having seven horns;* he appeareth now with seven horns, which are members in which the beasts' strength, power, and beauty is much seen, to denote his glory and beauty, and the power he had now received to offend and conquer all his enemies.

*And seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God;* and with seven eyes, which were the seven Spirits of God, mentioned Re 1:4 4:5; endued with the Spirit of God, (which is also called his Spirit), not given to him by measure.

*Sent forth into all the earth;* which spiritual gifts and perfections he exerciseth over all the earth, both with relation to his church, and to his church's enemies.

### Revelation 5:7

Ver. 7. This Lamb with seven horns and seven eyes, having been slain, and having prevailed with his Father to open this book, mentioned Re 5:1, of all the secrets, counsels, and purposes of God relating to his church, he came and took it of his Father, in whose right hand it was, as Re 5:1.

From hence to the end of this chapter, are nothing but songs sang by the living creatures which John saw, and the twenty-four elders which he saw,

and an innumerable company of angels, to the honour and glory of Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer of man, and the Head of the church, upon this taking of the book from the right hand of his Father.

### Revelation 5:8

Ver. 8. When the Lamb that had been slain had obtained of him that sat on the throne to open the book of God's secret counsels relating to his church, mentioned Re 5:1, and had taken it out of his right hand, John saw *the four beasts*, the four living creatures, mentioned Re 4:6-8, by which seemed to be represented the ministers of the gospel, or the whole church of Christ; *and the four and twenty elders*, that had on their heads crowns of gold, mentioned Re 4:4, by which, we said, were represented either the ministers of the church, or the whole church.

*Fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours:* he alludeth to the worship of God under the Old Testament, where in the temple they were wont to praise God with instruments of music, and offering up of frankincense: see 1Ch 13:8 15:16 2Ch 5:12 Neh 12:27 Ps 33:2 141:2 150:3. These *vials of odours*, he tells us, signified *the prayers of the saints*. The whole verse signifies the prayers and praises, even all that adoration which God, under the gospel, should have from his ministers and people, for constituting his Son the Head of his church, and making him their Prophet, Priest, and King.

### Revelation 5:9

Ver. 9. *And they sung a new song:* by a *new song* is either to be understood an excellent song, (for new songs are usually most valued), or (which pleaseth me best) *new* as to the matter of it; for the servants of God under the Old Testament could not bless God for the actual redemption of man by the blood of Christ, but only rejoice in hope, embracing the promises seen afar off by the eye of faith.

*Saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof;* they acknowledge Christ worthy to be intrusted with his church, and the revelations of the counsels of God, with relation to it, to open them.

*For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us, &c.;* because he had redeemed his church, scattered over all the world, from sin, death, and hell, unto God, to serve him, and to live for ever with him, and that with no less price than his own blood; *Wherefore* (as the apostle tells us, Php 2:9) *God hath exalted him.*

### Revelation 5:10

Ver. 10. The four living creatures and four and twenty elders (by which are represented the ministers and members of the church of Christ) go on in showing why they had reason to proclaim Christ worthy to be the Prophet to his church, to open the counsels of God to them, viz. because of the great love he had showed to them, not only in redeeming them with his blood from the guilt and power of sin, but in making them kings and priests; giving them the same privileges that the Jewish church had, who were called a royal priesthood, Ex 19:6; giving them a power (as priests) to offer up not such bloody fleshly sacrifices as they offered, but) *spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God* through the Beloved, 1Pe 2:5: and also (as kings) to rule over their lusts and sensitive appetite; and to *reign* hereafter *on the earth*, judging the world (1Co 6:3) at the great day, with the great Judge of the quick and the dead.

### Revelation 5:11

Ver. 11. *And I beheld*, I still attended diligently, *and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders*; and I heard many angels, with the living creatures and the elders; (from whence we gather, that we must not, by the living creatures, or elders, understand angels, for they are mentioned apart by themselves, neither could they say, as Re 5:9,10, that Christ had redeemed them with his blood); these angels joined in this harmony with the church to give glory to Christ.

*And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands*; their number was infinite, not to be numbered. See the like, Da 7:10.

### Revelation 5:12

Ver. 12. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;* the Lamb mentioned Re 5:6, with *seven horns and seven eyes*, viz. Jesus Christ.

*To receive power, and riches;* he is worthy of those horns he weareth, emblems of power and strength given unto him; for all power was given him in heaven and earth.

*And wisdom;* and of those seven eyes he hath, i.e. of the spirit of wisdom, Isa 11:2, the riches of grace and wisdom.

*And strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;* and of all the homage, glory, praise, blessing, and obedience, which people can give him. I know not whether there be any thing in the observation made by some, that the number of things here mentioned, of which the Lamb is worthy, answereth the number of the seven Spirits of God, before mentioned.

### Revelation 5:13

Ver. 13,14. The meaning of the several phrases here used, is not to be strictly and particularly examined; the sense of them all in general is, to show the consent of all the angels and glorified saints, and of the whole church, in giving praise unto God, and particularly to the Lord Jesus Christ, (the Lamb), for the work of man's redemption; and their particular consent, that Christ is to be worshipped as the Father; and the consent and acquiescence of the whole creation in the counsel and purpose of God, and in the work of his providence, constituting Christ as the King, Priest, and Prophet of his church. And though inanimate creatures, or sensitive creatures, cannot speak, yet they are also said to join in these praises, as the glory of God shineth in them, and they, by him, shall be freed from that vanity under which they groan, Ro 8:19-21, and enjoy something of the liberty of the sons of God; and shall all be subject and obedient unto Christ in their respective stations and orders, Php 2:9,10, and fulfil his will in the execution of his counsels and purposes in the government of the world, in order to the preservation of his church.

## Revelation 6:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 6:1-17 The opening of six of the seals in order, and what followed thereupon.

### Chapter Introduction

We are now come to the prophetic, and therefore the most difficult, part of this mysterious book; as to which I judge it reasonable, before we come to open the mysterious text, (after Mr. Pool's method in his Latin Synopsis), to premise some things which may instruct the reader of these notes, both of the things wherein the difficulties lie, and of the fairest way to find out the sense of them. Hitherto we have met with no great difficulties; what have been, have been chiefly:

1. Concerning the seven Spirits of God.
2. Concerning the seven churches, and epistles to them; whether the churches be to be considered typically, and what was written to them be to be understood in a prophetic, as well as a didactic, or a corrective sense?

But in what follows we shall find great (if not some inextricable) difficulties. To prepare a way for the explication of which:

1. I shall first take it for granted, that from this chapter to the end of the book, is revealed the most remarkable things which have happened, or shall happen, to the church of God over all the earth, from the time of this Revelation first made to John, to the end of the world.

2. Hence it followeth, that many of the things prophesied are fulfilled; but how many is hard to determine, because the time is not set when these revelations should take place; whether (as some would have it) from the beginning of Christianity, which, to me, seemeth not probable; because at this time ninety-five years were elapsed since that time, and this prophecy

was concerning the things that were to be after the time of John's being in Patmos, Re 1:1 22:6; or from the beginning of the time when the Jewish church and state ceased, which was twenty-six or twenty-seven years before this; or from the time when this Revelation was, which was Anno 95, or thereabouts, in the time when Domitian was the Roman emperor, and had began his persecution of the Christians, which (as historians tell us) was but five years before he was slain, for he was slain in September, 97. And for those that are fulfilled, the things spoken are so applicable to various accidents happening in that period of time, that it is very difficult oftentimes to assert the sense of the prophecy.

3. I take it for granted also, that things happened in the same order as is here described; so as the things under the second seal came not to pass till those prophesied of under the first seal were, in a great measure, accomplished, &c.

4. I agree with those who think, that what we have, Re 12:1-13:18, Re 17:1-18:24, are but a prophecy of other things that happened to the church at the same times spoken of, Re 6:1-10:11.

5. I do believe the visions of the seals, trumpets, and vials, Re 6:1-17, 8:1-13, 15:1-8, 16:1-21, the principal prophecies, and contain the revelation of things in order as they were to happen; and of these, that of the seals is the principal.

6. I agree with those who think, that God, by the first six seals, intends the whole space from the time when the things written in this book began to be fulfilled, unto the time when paganism was rooted out of the Roman empire, which some make the year 310, some, 325. In which time (counting the beginning from the time when John was in Patmos, which was in Domitian's time) the emperors of Rome were Nerva, Trajan, Adrianus, Antoninus Pius, Antoninus Philosophus, Antoninus Verus, Commodus, Severus, Caracalla, Macrinus, Heliogabalus, Alexander Severus, Maximinus, Gordianus, Philippus, Decius, Valerianus, Gallienus, Claudius, Aurelianus, Tacitus, Probus, Carus, Numerianus, Dioclesianus with Maximinianus, Constantius Chlorus with Galerius, Constantius with Galerius, Constantinus; in all, twenty-seven, in about two hundred years: they were all persecutors, and God allowed them short reigns. So as what we have revealed in and under the first six seals, happened within the

Short space of the three hundred or three hundred and twenty-five first years after Christ; I am apt to think, after ninety-eight or one hundred of them were elapsed. These things being premised, let us now come to consider the text.

Ver. 1. John's vision continueth still: by *the Lamb* he means Christ, the Lamb oft mentioned Re 5:1-14; and by *one of the seals*, one of the seven seals mentioned Re 5:1, that were set upon the book which John saw in the right hand of God the Father, given to Christ, Re 5:7. Christ began to discover the counsels of God relating to that first period of his church. And John heard one of the four living creatures speaking to him with a great and terrible voice, like *the noise of thunder*. Inviting him to come near, or to attend and see.

### Revelation 6:2

Ver. 2. Some, by this *white horse*, understand the gospel; others, the Roman empire. And by him that sat thereon with a bow, some understand Christ going forth with power to convert the nations; others (and in my opinion more probably) the Roman emperors, armed with power, and having the imperial crown, carrying all before them. So as that which God intended by this to reveal to St. John, was, that the Roman emperors should yet continue, and use their power against his church. Those that understand by the *white horse*, the gospel, or God's dispensations to his church under the first period, and by the rider, Christ, (amongst whom is our famous Mede), think, that hereby all the time is signified from Christ's ascension, which was in the thirty-fourth year after his incarnation, till the time that all the apostles were dead, that is, the first hundred years after Christ (for so long histories tell us John lived). It was the age then current, and so may take up part of the vision of things that were to come. The history of all but forty of those years we have in the Acts, till Paul was carried prisoner to Rome. In this period ruled Augustus Caesar, (in whose time Christ was born, Lu 2:1), Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero, Galba, Otho, F. Vespasianus, Titus, and Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan, ten or eleven in all. They went on *conquering, and to conquer* the world. But till Nero's time, about the year 66, they did not begin to persecute the Christians; nor did Vespasian and Titus much rage, nor Domitian, till he had reigned eight years: so as I leave it indifferent to the reader, whether to understand by

the *white horse* and his rider, God's dispensations of providence to his church these first years, causing his gospel to prevail much, and conquering many to the profession of it, or the Roman empire, with those that ruled it: what is said is true of both.

### Revelation 6:3

Ver. 3. *The second seal;* the second of those seven seals with which the book, mentioned Re 5:1, was sealed.

*The second beast;* the *beast like a calf*, Re 4:7.

*Come and see;* inviting John to attend.

### Revelation 6:4

Ver. 4. *And there went out another horse that was red;* signifying blood and slaughter.

*And power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth;* either to Christ, (as some say), or to those that ruled the affairs of the Roman empire at that time, to disturb the peace of the church.

*And that they should kill one another:* this was a time of much blood.

*And there was given unto him a great sword;* and therefore a sword is given to him that rode upon the this horse. Some think that this period began with Nero, thirty-four years before the other ended (according to what was said before); others make it to begin with Trajan, and to comprehend eighty years, until the time of Commodus; in which time Trajan, and Hadrian, and the three Antoninuses successively ruled the Roman empire: the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian took up near half the time, in which time this prophecy was most eminently fulfilled; for in Trajan's time the Jews rebelling, and killing many subjects of the Roman empire, to the number of twenty-two thousand in one place, and two hundred and forty thousand in another place, themselves were as miserably handled by the Roman forces sent by Trajan and Hadrian, who slew of



them (as histories tell us) five hundred and fourscore thousand: nay, the Jews themselves say, they lost double the number of those who came out of Egypt, and more than they lost by Nebuchadnezzar, or by Titus when their city was taken: on the other side the Romans lost very many. Many Christians also were put to death during this period, during which was the third and fourth persecution.

### Revelation 6:5

Ver. 5. *The third beast* was he who had *the face of a man*, who also inviteth John to *come and see* what came forth upon his opening *the third seal*. He seeth *a black horse*, and a rider upon him, with *a pair of balances*. There is a difference amongst interpreters what should be signified by this *black horse*; some by it understand famine, because a scarcity of victuals bringeth men to a black and swarthy colour; some understand by it justice, because the rider is said to have *a pair of balances in his hand*; others understand by it heresies, and great sufferings of the church by heretics and others.

*He that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand*; either to give men their bread by weight, (as is usual in times of great scarcity), or to measure out every one their due.

### Revelation 6:6

Ver. 6. *A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny*: interpreters are at so great a loss here to fix the sense, that some think this phrase signifies famine and scarcity; others think it signifies great plenty. The Greek word here used, signifieth, say some, half a bushel; others say it signifieth so much bread corn as is sufficient for four loaves; others say, something more than a quart; others, so much as was allowed servants for maintenance for a day: let it be which it will, it signifies no great scarcity; for the word signifying *a penny*, signified but as much in our money as came to seven pence halfpenny. I think therefore Mr. Mede judgeth well, that by the *black horse* was signified not a time of famine and scarcity, but of plenty; and the rather, because it is added, *hurt not the oil and the wine*: and that the *balances* in the rider's hands

signified not scales to give men their bread by weight, (as in a time of scarcity), but the balance of justice; nor will the colour of the horse conclude the contrary. The whole therefore of this prophecy seemeth to foretell that this period, from the time of Commodus the Roman emperor, who ruled the empire from the year 180 to 197, and was followed by Severus, Macrinus, Caracalla, Hellogabalus, and Alexander Severus, the son of Mammeas, who came to the empire Anno 222, and reigned to 237, should be a time of great plenty and civil justice. Histories tell us of no famine in that time, but large stories of the great care of two of those emperors especially, for supplying their countries with corn, and for the administering of civil justice. The things foretold by the opening of this seal, our famous Mede makes to have had their accomplishment with the determination of the reign of Alexander Severus.

#### Revelation 6:7

Ver. 7. The beast mentioned Re 4:7, that had the face of a *flying eagle*, inviteth John to attend to the opening of *the fourth seal*, that is, the revelation of the counsels of God, as to what should happen to the church (within the Roman empire) in the fourth period, which is conceived to have begun with Maximinus, about the year 237, and to have ended with the reign of Dioclesian, 294.

#### Revelation 6:8

Ver. 8. *A pale horse*; a horse of the colour of his rider, *Death*, which makes men look pale, and bringeth them into the state of the dead, (here translated *hell*), whether heaven or hell, as they have lived.

*And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth;* over a great part of the earth.

*To kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth;* to kill men all manner of ways, with the sword, famine, pestilence, and by throwing them to wild beasts. Interpreters judge that here was prophesied what should happen to the Roman empire, and the church within it, from the time when Maximinus was made emperor,

which was about the year 237, to the time of Aurelianus, which was about 271. Some extend it to Dioclesian's time, which ended about 294; but Mr. Mede rather reserveth that for the fifth seal. If the former time only be taken in, there was within it the seventh, eighth, and ninth persecutions; Dioclesian began the tenth and greatest of all. Within this time this prophecy was eminently fulfilled: Maximinus destroyed all the towns in Germany, for three or four hundred miles. There was a plague lasted fifteen years together in the time of Gallus, who had the empire Anno 255. Three hundred and twenty thousand Goths were slain by Flavius Claudius. Maximinus and Gallienus were both great butchers, both to their own subjects that were heathens, and to Christians. Gallienus is said to have killed three or four thousand every day. Such wars and devastations could not but be followed with famine; besides that we are confirmed in it, both by the testimony of Eusebius and Cyprian, the latter of whom lived within this period.

#### Revelation 6:9

*Ver. 9. And when he had opened the fifth seal:* this and the next seal's opening, is not prefaced with any living creature calling to John to *come and see*. We must consider:

1. The number of the beasts was but four, who all had had their courses.
2. Some have thought that it is, because here is no mention of any new persecution, but a consequent of the former.
3. But this vision was so plain, it needed no expositor.

*I saw under the altar;* still he speaks in the dialect of the Old Testament, where in the temple was the altar of burnt-offering and the altar of incense; the allusion here is judged to be to the latter.

*The souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held;* from whence we may not conclude, that the souls of men and women when they die do sleep, as some dreamers have thought. These are said to be the souls of them that were slain *for the word of God*, &c., for preaching the word, and their profession of the gospel,

bearing a testimony to Christ and his truths. Mr. Mede thinks that under this seal is comprehended the ten bloody years of Dioclesian's persecution, which of all others was most severe; paganism at that time (as dying things are wont) most struggling to keep itself alive. This tyrant is said, in the beginning of his reign, within thirty days to have slain seventeen thousand, and in Egypt alone, during his ten years, one hundred and forty-four thousand. He thinks that the souls of those which this wretch had slain throughout all his dominions, within his short period of ten years, were those principally which were showed John upon the opening of this seal.

### Revelation 6:10

Ver. 10. *And they cried with a loud voice; their blood cried, or their souls cried to God, saying, How long, O Lord, holy; and therefore thou canst not abide iniquity, and of all iniquity canst least abide innocent blood, which is the blood of thy saints, whose blood is precious in thy sight.*

*And true; and who art true to thy word of threatenings against blood thirsty men, and to thy promises for the deliverance of thy people.*

*Dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? Dost thou not judge our cause, and avenge us, who have committed vengeance to thee, not daring to avenge ourselves upon wicked men, who dwelling upon the earth are seen, and their practices known to and by thee, and are under thy power, so as thou canst at pleasure do it.*

### Revelation 6:11

Ver. 11. *And white robes were given unto every one of them; white robes of glory; for the white robes of Christ's righteousness, and of a holy life, were by them put on before they were slain.*

*That they should rest yet for a little season; that they should be satisfied, and acquiesce in God's dispensations.*

*Until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were; for God had yet more faithful witnesses to be martyred,*

(though not in such flocks as before), who should die for the same faith and profession.

*Should be fulfilled;* when the number of those his martyrs should be completed, he would avenge their blood upon their enemies.

### Revelation 6:12

Ver. 12. *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal;* the sixth of those seals with which the book was sealed, mentioned Re 5:1: this signifieth the revelation of some things which should happen in some certain period of time, but what period is the question, as to which interpreters differ. Some think, the time when Jerusalem was taken; but this was a time past twenty-six or twenty-seven years before John was in Patmos, where he had this vision about things that shall be, Re 1:1 22:6. Some think, that period of time which shall be immediately before the day of judgment; but that guess seemeth worse, for after this there was a seventh seal to be opened. Some think, the period of the church's conflict with antichrist. But Mr. Mede's judgment (followed by many other famous men) seems best, that it denotes that period when Constantine, the first Christian emperor, restored peace to the church, by overturning the whole pagan state, and making Christianity the religion of the greatest part of the world. This was about the year 311, and perfected upon his victory over Licinius, 325. In this I acquiesce. Let us now see how what is said in this and the following verses about this period will agree to that time.

*And, lo, there was a great earthquake:* the great question is here, what is meant by this great earthquake, the darkening of the sun, the moon becoming as blood, &c. No history recording any such prodigies, hath made many (taking these things in the natural, literal sense) to say the period under the first seal signifies either the time when Jerusalem was taken, or the day of judgment; but there is a metaphorical sense of these expressions, very usual in the prophetic writings, to show great changes in states; and in this sense it is to be taken here. Thus the prophet describeth the great change God would make in Jerusalem, Isa 29:6, *Thou shalt be visited of the Lord of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire:* and Jer 15:9, *Her sun is gone down whlie it was yet day.* And, Eze 32:7,

the change God would work in the ruin of Egypt, is thus expressed: *When I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee.* So Joe 2:10,31, and Joe 3:15. What is an earthquake, but the shaking of the earth? And under this notion God expresseth the changes he makes in states and kingdoms, Isa 2:19,21 24:18 Hag 2:6,7. Thus by *earthquake* here is to be understood a great change in the Roman empire.

*And the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood:* the *sun* signifies those that are in the highest power; the *moon*, those that are next to them in place and dignity.

#### Revelation 6:13

Ver. 13. This is but another phrase signifying a great change: the whole verse is much the same with Isa 34:4. Literally these things were never yet fulfilled. It is a phrase signifying the fall of great and mighty men.

#### Revelation 6:14

Ver. 14. Two expressions more signifying the same thing. The first is used by the prophet, to signify the change God would make in the state of the Edomites, Isa 34:4, as will appear by comparing what that prophet saith, with what Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Obadiah say, upon the same argument, Jer 49:7-22 Eze 35:1-15.

*And every mountain and island were moved out of their places;* all sorts of people shall be destroyed, or all the paganish religion shall be rooted out.

#### Revelation 6:15

Ver. 15. A terror shall fall upon all sorts of men, high and low; and, like men affrighted, they shall seek for themselves hiding places, where they can think themselves most secure: see Isa 2:19.

### Revelation 6:16

Ver. 16. *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us:* see Hos 10:8 Lu 23:30. They shall be in a great consternation, and be ready to take any course for security.

*From the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;* from the wrath of God, and of Jesus Christ.

### Revelation 6:17

Ver. 17. For this judgment that is upon us, is the effect of his wrath for our abusing and persecuting his members; and we, with all our courage, might, and power, are not able to abide his wrath. These words import, that in this great change, as the greatest persons should be at a loss what to do, so they should perish under a conviction that the great vengeance of God was come upon them for their opposing the gospel, and provoking Christ by persecuting of his members.

There are other more particular explications of the *sun, moon, stars, heavens, &c.*, but they all centre in this general, that here is prophesied a great and universal change of the religion of the world, which should strike a great terror into the pagan rulers, and issue in the overturning of all their altars and temples, and the ruin of the great men, relating either to their civil or ecclesiastical state; and that they at last should know that, God was God, and that these judgments came upon them for their opposition to Christ. And (which addeth strength to this interpretation) Mr. Durham hath observed, that no so short period of time hath produced so many remarkable judgments, and extorted so many ingenuous confessions from enemies, that what came upon them was for their persecutions; and a catalogue of which may be found in Mr. Mede, and in Mr. Durham. Mr. Mede reckoneth Galerius, Maximinus, and Licinius. Galerius was eaten up of worms, being before he died sensible of his guilt, ceasing from his persecution, and begging the Christians' prayers. Maximinus, another Roman emperor, (or partner in the empire with the former), being beaten by Licinius, fled to Tarsus, and there fell upon his pagan priests, who had deceived him by their lying oracles, and made a decree for the Christians'

liberty; but God would not suffer so bloody a wretch to die after the ordinary death of man; he died miserably through intolerable pain, his eyes dropping out of his head. Licinius was a Christian, and joined a while with Constantine, but apostatized, was overcome in two battles, taken, and by him put to death. All these three were within the space of eighteen years. Mr. Durham to these adds the instances of Dioclesian and Maximian, little above twenty years before, in the heat of their persecution making a stop, and through a horror of conscience laying down their imperial dignity; and Maxentius, drowned in the river Tiber; and he says Licinius, before mentioned, before he died, revenged himself upon his idolatrous priests that had persuaded him to forsake Constantine's God. The change was so great in the empire, upon Constantine the Great's coming to the throne, by the death of some great persons, turning others out of place, destroying the whole frame and practice of the pagans' religion, that it might well be expressed by earthquakes, the sun turning black, the moon as blood, the stars falling from heaven to earth, the heavens departing like a scroll, and the removal of islands and mountains, and by the consternation it would bring all the pagan great men into, &c. And this time, which was a period of about twenty-five or twenty-seven years, is thought to be understood to be the time predicted upon the opening of the sixth seal. Thus we see the dragon's reign at an end in about three hundred and eleven or three hundred and twenty-five years after Christ; the empire, as pagan, persecuting the church of Christ, and following it with ten successive persecutions, quite overturned, and a Christian emperor, Constantine the Great, ruling it. But we must understand these great things were not perfected in a few months; some relics of paganism remained; for though Constantine shut up the pagan temples, yet all the idols in them were not destroyed until the time of Theodosius, who began to rule in the empire Anno 379, and reigned sixteen years. Between Constantine and him were Constantius and Constans, Julian the Apostate, and Jovianus, Valentinianus, Valens, and Gratian; during some of whose reigns (Julian's especially) the Christians suffered much both from pagans and Arians, so that the Christians had not a full and perfect quiet till after the year 390.

## Revelation 7:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 7:1

John seeth four angels holding the four



winds,

Re 7:2,3 and another angel coming to seal the servants of God in their foreheads.

Re 7:4-8 The number of them that were sealed out of each of the tribes of Israel.

Re 7:9,10 An innumerable multitude out of all other nations stand before the throne in white robes, with palms in their hands, praising God and the Lamb.

Re 7:11,12 The angels, elders, and beasts, worship and glorify God.

Re 7:13-17 One of the elders showeth John who they are that are clad in white robes, and what is their blessedness for ever.

Ver. 1. The first sufferings of the church under the Roman emperors that were pagans, was foretold under the first six seals, as hath been showed; but they had yet more, if not greater, things to suffer, which are discovered to John, as we shall see when we come to the opening of the seventh and last seal in the next chapter; only it pleaseth God by a vision, in this chapter, to comfort his church: so as though this vision relateth to the sixth seal, and was before the opening of the seventh, yet it hath a relation to that, to show the care that God would take of his church under those great evils that should happen upon the opening of the seventh seal, or when the things foretold upon the opening of it should come to be accomplished.

*I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth; four good angels; God is called their God, Re 7:3.*

*Holding the four winds of the earth; that is, to whom God had given it in charge that they should inflict his judgments upon all the parts of the earth; for God often useth, by his prophets, the metaphor of winds, to express stormy, troublesome dispensations, as Jer 18:17 49:36 51:1.*

*That the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree: this phrase is interpreted variously, God making use of the winds:*

1. In a way of judgment, to throw down buildings and trees.
2. In a way of mercy, to purify the air, and by their gentle breathings to cherish things. Some interpret this command to the angels, into a

command to these angels to forbear awhile those storms of judgment which were coming, till the servants of God should be sealed.

Others interpret them into a command to bring judgments, either corporal or spiritual, which they think is signified by the winds not blowing. The last seemeth to be favoured by the next verse, *to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea*; which seemeth to me to interpret the blowing mentioned in this verse of a hurtful blowing.

*The earth, the sea, and the trees,* seem to signify all the sublunary world, especially the church.

### Revelation 7:2

Ver. 2. By this other *angel*, some understand an angel by nature; some, a man, Elijah, or Constantine; others, Christ himself, called *an Angel*, Ex 23:20. It is not much material whether we by this angel understand Christ, or some angel which he made his instrument. He gives a command to those *four angels*, whom God had made the ministers or executioners of his wrath and justice in the world.

### Revelation 7:3

Ver. 3. A manifest allusion to Eze 9:4, and, as some think, to the usage of some eastern countries, for masters to set their names upon the forehead of their slaves, by which they were known to be theirs, as we mark our sheep or other beasts. Men as vainly dispute what this seal should be, as what the  $\aleph$  meant in Eze 9:1-11, the mark set upon those that mourned for the abominations of Jerusalem. The place where they were to be sealed signified the end of their sealing to be not so much for confirmation, for which seals are used, as notification, to signify to others they belong to God; so as it was of the same use as the blood upon the two side-posts and the upper door-posts of the Israelites in Egypt, Ex 12:13.

### Revelation 7:4

Ver. 4-8. For the understanding of these five verses several things are to be noted.

1. That the whole number is one hundred and forty-four thousand, which is the product of twelve, as the original number, (setting aside the ciphers), for twelve times twelve make one hundred and forty-four. The number of one hundred and forty-four, Re 21:17, was the measure of the wall of the new Jerusalem. Twelve, which is the root of this number one hundred and forty-four, seemeth to be God's number, and used in Scripture about one hundred and forty-four times, and almost generally in things belonging to the church; which had twelve patriarchs, twelve tribes under the Old Testament, twelve apostles (as its head) under the New Testament: and the new Jerusalem from heaven, Re 21:12, is said to have *twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; Re 7:14, the wall had twelve foundations; the length of it, Re 7:16, twelve thousand furlongs.*

2. That we must not by one hundred and forty-four thousand understand a certain, but an uncertain number, which yet was very great.

3. That by the tribes of Israel mentioned here, are to be understood the several gospel churches of the Gentiles, who are now God's Israel ingrafted into the true olive.

4. That the tribe of Dan is here left out, and Ephraim is not named, though included in Joseph. Of the tribe of Dan there were none sealed. Dan was a great ringleader to idolatry, so was Ephraim; see Jud 17:1-18:31; and at Dan it was that Jeroboam set up his calves. Levi is put in instead of Dan, and Joseph instead of Ephraim, by which means here are yet twelve tribes; which teacheth us this: That Christians, if idolaters, must not look for any special protection or favour from God in a day of evil.

5. These tribes are not set in order, according to their birthright.

*Juda* was Leah's fourth son, Ge 29:35, put first, because Christ descended from him.

*Reuben*, her eldest son, is put next, giving place only to the Messiah's tribe.

*Gad*, Jacob's son by Zilpah, Ge 30:11, is put next.

*Aser*, Jacob's son by Zilpah, in the fourth place, Ge 30:13.

*Nephtalim* is put next, who was Jacob's son by Bilhah, Rachel's maid, Ge 30:8.

*Manasses* is put next, who was Joseph's son.

*Simeon*, Jacob's second son by Leah, Ge 29:33, is put in the seventh place. *Levi*, Leah's third son, Ge 29:34, in the eighth place.

*Issachar*, Leah's fifth son, Ge 30:18, is put in the ninth place.

*Zabulon*, Leah's sixth son, is put in the tenth place, Ge 30:20.

*Joseph* is put in the eleventh place, for Ephraim his son.

*Benjamin*, Rachel's second son, is put in the last place.

If there be any mystery in this order, differing from all other scriptures where there is a mention made of the twelve patriarchs, it is probable that Mr. Mede hath hit upon it, in regard of the, good or ill deserts of these tribes, some of which are mentioned by him; all may be learned from the history of the Jews recorded in holy writ. Hence we may learn, that the summary sense of all these verses is this: That although within that period of time which is signified under the seventh seal, there should be great persecutions of the church, yet God would preserve unto himself a great number in all his churches, which should not apostatize, and who in the persecutions should not be hurt; so as his church should not fail, though the archers should shoot sore at it; for though men raged, yet it was by God's permission; and his angels overruled it, who should take notice of those numbers that he had sealed, and marked in their foreheads.

### Revelation 7:9

Ver. 9. If we inquire who these were, we are told, Re 7:14, by the best Interpreter: *These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, &c.* So that they do not seem to be the one hundred and forty-four thousand mentioned for preservation in and from the evil, Re 7:4, but such as had escaped, or were not in or going into tribulation, but come out. The number of the former was determined; it is said of these, it could not be numbered. These were glorified ones, not militant; they *stood before the throne, and the Lamb, clothed with white robes; clothed in the habits of such as amongst the Romans had fought, and conquered, and triumphed; and to this end they are said to have carried palms, the ensigns of victory, in their hands.*

### Revelation 7:10

Ver. 10. They acknowledge their temporal, spiritual, and eternal salvation to the gift and free mercy of God, in whom they had trusted, and to the Lord Jesus Christ, by whose merits and Spirit they had got the victory.

### Revelation 7:11

Ver. 11. *And all the angels stood round about the throne;* the good angels, who always in heaven behold the face of their and our heavenly Father.

*And about the elders;* and about the twenty-four elders, mentioned Re 4:4.

*And the four beasts;* and the living creatures, mentioned Re 4:6.

*And fell before the throne on their faces;* the angels, elders, and living creatures, all fall down on their faces, in a reverential sense of the infinite distance between them and their Creator.

*And worshipped God;* thus paying an homage to God fitted to their glorified state, in consideration of his excellency.

### Revelation 7:12

Ver. 12. These words only signify the union and harmony of the angels and saints in praising God: See Poole on "Re 5:12".

### Revelation 7:13

Ver. 13. Not that he did not know, but to try whether John knew, or rather to set John upon inquiring.

### Revelation 7:14

Ver. 14 John confessing his own ignorance, applies himself to this elder for instruction, who tells him: These were the souls of them that came out of great sufferings and persecution; but he addeth, that they were such as were washed in the blood of Christ. Suffering will not bring us to heaven without having our souls washed with the blood of Christ.

### Revelation 7:15

Ver. 15. *Therefore are they before the throne of God;* not that they by their sufferings have merited heaven, but because it pleaseth God of his free grace so to reward them; therefore it was said, not only that they were such as came out of tribulation, but that they had washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb, whose blood had paid the price of their salvation.

*And serve him day and night in his temple:* by the *temple*, some understand the church in this life, but it is foreign to the true sense of the text; for John saw only their souls before the throne, their bodies were in their graves. By the *temple* is meant heaven, where God dwelleth, and is worshipped more gloriously and constantly than he was in the Jewish temple, or in any part of the militant church.

*And he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them;* as God by his gracious presence dwelt in the Jewish temple, so God by his glorious presence shall dwell amongst his glorified saints.

### Revelation 7:16

Ver. 16. This is taken out of Isa 49:10. They are all metaphorical expressions, all signifying the perfect state of glorified saints; they shall have no wants, nor be exposed to any afflictive providences.

### Revelation 7:17

Ver. 17. *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne;* Christ, the Lamb mentioned Re 5:6.

*Shall feed them, &c.;* shall take care of them, to satisfy and to protect them, and give them the best supplies, and both make them to forget their former sorrows, and prevent any timher cause of sorrow and affliction to them. A perfect description of the glorious and happy state of saints in heaven. For wherein lieth the happiness of heaven, but in a freedom from all the evils that encumber us in this life, and the enjoyment of all the happiness we are capable of, and being ever with the Lord Jesus Christ, under his influence and conduct? So as I cannot agree with Mr. Mede, or any of those who think this vision and these phrases describe any happy, peaceable state of the church in this life, after the throwing down of antichrist; but do think that John was showed this great reward of martyrs, to encourage the church of God under all those evils they were to suffer under antichrist and the beast, in that period of time which is described mystically upon the opening of the seventh seal, which we now come to in the next chapter.

### Revelation 8:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 8:1 The seventh seal opened.

Re 8:2 Seven angels receive seven trumpets.

Re 8:3-5 An angel presenteth the prayers of the saints with incense on the golden altar before the throne.

Re 8:6-13 Four of the angels sound their trumpets, and

great plagues severally follow.

Ver. 1. *And when he;* that is, the Lamb, mentioned Re 5:7, who *took the book out of the hand of him that sat upon the throne*, the book of God's counsels, and had now revealed mysteriously to John what should come to pass (under all the pagan emperors) to the church of Christ, until the time of Constantine the Great, who, (as was said), about the year 325, had settled the Christian religion, and shut up all the idols' temples, having conquered the apostate Licinius.

*Had opened the seventh seal;* he cometh now to open the seventh seal, that is, to reveal to John what should be in the succeeding time of the church to the end of the world.

*There was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour:* but before the great evils should break out, which were to come to pass in this time, there was in the church a rest for a small time; for from the year 317, when Constantine bare the greatest sway in the empire, or 325, when he had got a full victory over Licinius, the church had a great peace for a little time, till 339, when the empire being divided, and Constantius having the eastern part, and Constans the western, (both sons of Constantine), Constans, being an Arian, (who denied the Godhead of Christ), began again to persecute the Christians; and after him Julian, who apostatized to paganism. But after him they had a little further respite to the year 395, when Theodosius died, and the Christians' quiet died with him. I rather choose to interpret this thus, than with those who understand the *silence in heaven*, of a silence in the third heavens, in allusion to the Jewish order; who, though they sung during the time of the sacrifice, and played upon instruments of music all that time, yet kept silence while the incense was offering. For (as divers have noted) it seemeth hard to judge, that in this Revelation there should be no mention of that short truce which the church had during the reign of Constantine, and for a small time after.

## Revelation 8:2

Ver. 2. *The seven angels which stood before God;* the seven mentioned hereafter, which blew with the trumpets; for we presently read, that *seven*



*trumpets* were given to them. Trumpets were used to call the people together, to proclaim festivals, and in war. The use of these trumpets we shall hereafter read, which was to proclaim the will and counsels of God, as to things to come.

### Revelation 8:3

Ver. 3. *And another angel came;* by this angel I understand Christ, as do many very valuable authors; nor, indeed, can what is said of this angel agree to any other but him, who is called an *Angel*, Ge 48:16, and the *Angel of the covenant*, Mal 3:1. Here is a manifest allusion to the order of the Jewish worship; they had an altar of incense, Ex 30:1, upon which the high priest was to burn incense every morning and evening, Re 8:7,8. Whilst the priest was burning incense, as appears, Lu 1:10, the people, were without, praying. Christ is here represented as *having a golden censer*. The high priest's censer amongst the Jews was of brass; but he was a more excellent High Priest.

*And there was given unto him much incense;* by which is meant the infinite merit of his death, to be offered up by himself (who is *the golden altar*) *with the prayers of all his saints*. By all this Christ is represented to us, as interceding for his saints that were to live after this time, during all troubles that were immediately to begin, and to follow on, during the reign of antichrist.

### Revelation 8:4

Ver. 4. This only denotes the acceptableness of Christ's intercession, and God's people's prayers, through the virtue of that intercession, unto God.

### Revelation 8:5

Ver. 5. I doubt not but by *fire* here, is to be understood the wrath of God, often in holy writ compared to fire, poured out upon the Roman empire, or the visible church. Upon which followed great judgments, and confusions, and tumults, expressed here, or ushered in, as before, Re 6:1, with

*thunderings*; which being here more generally mentioned, are by and by more particularly expressed.

#### Revelation 8:6

Ver. 6. The angels are God's ministers, by which he bringeth his counsels to pass in the world: they hearing the *thunderings* and *voices*, knew the time was come when they were to begin the execution of God's judgments upon the earth; the execution of which was intrusted to them, and they are therefore set out (though they be always ready) after the manner of men, preparing themselves to execute what God had intrusted them with the execution of.

#### Revelation 8:7

Ver. 7. *The first angel sounded*; the first of the seven angels to whom the seven trumpets were given, Re 8:2, began to execute his commission; the consequents of which were *hail and fire mingled with blood, cast upon the earth*: by which some understand the primitive church's persecutions by the Jews and the heathen emperors; but these were over. Some understand God's revenge upon the Jews; but this also was taken some hundreds of years since. Some understand unseasonable weather in many parts of the world; but we read nothing like this in history. Some understand contests happening in the church; others understand heresies. But I cannot but rather agree with the reverend Mr. Mede, who expounds it of great troubles, and blood, and slaughter which should happen; and thinks that this prophecy began to be fulfilled about the death of Theodosius, Anno 395. For in this very year (saith he) Alaricus the king of the Goths brake into Macedonia, with a great army went into Thessalia, and so into Achaia, Peloponnesus, Corinth, Argos, Sparta, burning, wasting, and ruining all places; and so went on till the year 400; then fell upon the eastern empire, and committed the same outrages in Dalmatia and Hungary; then went into Stiria and Bavaria, thence into Italy and to Venice. After this, in the year 404, these barbarous nations invaded Italy, and took divers places. In the year 406 the Vandals and Alans, with many others, invaded France, Spain, and Africa: all which he proveth from the testimony of Jerome, Ep. 3. 11. This he judgeth the effect of the first angel's sounding, and to have been

signified by the *hail and fire mingled with blood*, consonant to other scriptures. Isaiah, Isa 28:2, compareth Shalmaneser to a storm of hail; and, Isa 30:30, he so likeneth the ruin to come upon the Assyrians. By the *trees burnt up*, are (saith he) the great and rich men to be understood, ordinarily in Scripture compared to trees, Isa 2:13 14:8 Zec 11:2; and by the *green grass*, the ordinary common people. Thus he judgeth the effects of this first trumpet's sounding to have been determined in fifteen years, viz. from the year 395 to 410.

### Revelation 8:8

Ver. 8. There is a great variety of senses also about this *mountain of fire cast into the sea*. Some by it understand things happening in Judea; but this had been not to have showed John the things which should be, but which had been. Others will have the devil understood; others, the power of the Roman empire; others, some great war stirred up amongst people; others, some notable heresy or heretic; others, some famous persons in the church: but I most like Mr. Mede's notion again here, who understands by this mountain, Rome, the seat of the western empire; great cities being called *mountains* in Scripture phrase, Isa 37:24 Jer 51:25.

*And the third part of the sea became blood:* this phrase speaks only the great effusion of blood upon the taking of Rome by its enemies.

### Revelation 8:9

Ver. 9. Phrases all signifying the miserable catastrophe that should follow the destruction of this city, by the slaughter of men, the ruin of houses and towns in Italy, &c. History (as Mr. Mede showeth) excellently agreeth with this. In the year 410, Rome was taken by Alaricus; this was followed with great devastations both in France and Spain. Honorius, to recover the empire, was glad to give the Goths a seat and government in France, and the Burgundians and Vandals a place near unto the river Rhone; and, Anno 415, to the Vandals a place in Spain; and, Anno 455, Rome was again taken by Gensericus the Vandal, who divided the whole empire into ten kingdoms:

1. That of the Britons, ruled by Vortimer.
2. The Saxons, ruled by Hengist.
3. The Franks, ruled by Childeric.
4. The Burgundians, ruled by Gundericus.
5. The Visigoths, ruled by Theodoricus II.
6. The Alans and Suevi, ruled by Riciarius.
7. The Vandals, ruled by Gensericus.
8. The Germans, ruled by Sumanus.
9. The Ostrogoths, ruled by Theodemirus.
10. The Grecians, ruled by Marcianus.

This is the sum of what Mr. Mede saith, and to this tract of time, between the years 410 and 455, the second trumpet seemeth to relate.

#### Revelation 8:10

Ver. 10. *There fell a great star from heaven:* stars, in their metaphorical notion, signify some eminent persons in the state, or in the church; accordingly interpreters are divided in their senses; some thinking that it is meant of a political star, some eminent civil governor, and apply it to Caesar Augustulus, who, about the year 480, was forced to give over the empire, by Odoacer; of him Mr. Mede understands this prophecy. Others understand it of some ecclesiastical star, who apostatized, and apply it to Pelagius. I do rather incline to those who apply it to some ecclesiastical star; and Pelagius might be pointed at, as probably as any other in these times, for he was a great professor, and so burned *as a lamp*. *And it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;* and did corrupt a great part of the church.

#### Revelation 8:11

Ver. 11. His doctrine was as bitter as wormwood; and he was the ruin of many souls. But if any do rather choose to understand it of a political star, Mr. Mede's notion bids as fair for the sense as any, because the western empire determined in Augustulus, and he reigned but a very short time; and he was a prince of many sorrows and afflictions, and many perished with him in those sorrows and afflictions which he underwent. Whether we

understand it of some eminent political magistrate, (such was Augustulus), or some eminent light in the church, (such was Pelagius), they both fell about this time, the one from his terrene dignity, the other spiritually from the honour he had in the church; and many fell with them, either in a civil or in a spiritual sense.

### Revelation 8:12

Ver. 12. Interpreters (setting aside one or two, who conceit the Revelation is nothing but a repetition of things that happened in Judea before John's time) generally agree, that the period of time to which this prophecy relates, is from the year 480, when the western empire ceased. The history of the age next following, both relating to civil and ecclesiastical things, doth so fit this prophecy, that interpreters are much divided about the sense of it, whether it be to be understood of the miseries befalling the Roman empire or the church in that time; for, as great princes in the former, so great lights in the latter, are metaphorically expressed in Scripture under the notions of *the sun, moon, and stars*, in regard of the great influence they have upon men, as those luminaries of heaven have upon the earth. Mr. Mede understands it of political magistrates, here expressed (as in Joseph's dream) by *the sun, moon, and stars*: and to show us how the event fitted the prophecy, he tells us out of the best authors, that when Odoacer had routed Augustulus, and turned him out of the empire, himself ruled Rome under the title of a king sixteen years, and destroyed all their old magistracy, but after two years restored it. That Theodoricus, following him in the government of Italy, restored all their rights again, which so continued under three kings (all Goths) for near fifty years. But after the year 546, Rome was taken and burnt once and again, and a third part of it demolished by Totilas. Others understand it of Pelagius, or some famous heretic in that time. But to speak freely, the words of the prophecy, and the histories we have, rather agree to Mr. Mede's sense; for (except Pelagius, who began about the year 406) we read of none in this age to whom the words of this prophecy will agree in any good sense.

### Revelation 8:13

Ver. 13. This verse is but an introduction to the other three angels

sounding, declaring that the times which were to follow would be much more full of miseries and woes *to the inhabitants of the earth*; by which I understand all those countries which lately were subject to the Roman empire. Others understand the more earthy, unsound, hypocritical part of the church. The *woe* is thrice repeated, either to show the greatness of the calamities, or rather correspondently to the number of the angels yet to sound.

## Revelation 9:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 9:1 At the sounding of the fifth angel a star falleth from heaven, to whom is given the key of the bottomless pit,

Re 9:2-11 he opens the pit, and there come forth locusts like scorpions, who have power to hurt men for a time.

Re 9:12 The first woe past.

Re 9:13-21 At the sounding of the sixth angel four angels which were bound are loosed, and bring great plagues on the earth for a limited time.

Ver. 1. *And the fifth angel sounded;* the fifth of the seven angels mentioned Re 8:2, to whom were given seven trumpets. It denoteth the beginning of a new period of calamities and miseries to the earth, or to the church.

*And I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth:* what this star falling from heaven means, is not easy to resolve. Those who think it the devil, once a star, but fallen, forget that John is not here told a story of what was in the beginning of the world, but what should be, and that five hundred years after Christ's coming. And the same reason holds against those who think those seditious persons are meant, who did so much mischief in and about Jerusalem during the siege; this had been to have revealed to John those things which he knew were done many years before. Amongst those who think some particular eminent minister of the church, who apostatized, is meant, those seem to me to judge better, who think that Boniface the Third is meant, who, in the year 606, obtained the privilege

of the pope's supremacy, than those who understand it of Arius or Pelagius, who both of them fell two hundred years before this. It seems very harsh to interpret it of Christ, or any good angel's descending from heaven, because the word *πεπτωκοτα* is rightly by us translated falling, and not to be interpreted so softly as descending. In all probability, therefore, the first apostacy of the bishop of Rome was here prophesied. But how *to him was given the key of the bottomless pit*, ( by which hell is meant here, as often in Scripture), is hard to say; unless we understand it of his instrumentality, to send many thousands to hell by that corrupt doctrine and worship, which by him then began to obtain. But his key was borrowed, (if God had not permitted him he could not have done it), and it turned but one way; he had only a power to open it, not (as Christ) both to open and shut it.

### Revelation 9:2

Ver. 2. *And he opened the bottomless pit; he was a means of hell's breaking loose, by loosing Satan.*

*And there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace:* I had rather interpret this generally of the great influence upon the world, that the devil, being loosed, had, in filling the world with ignorance, error, and wickedness, (for which this and the following age are infamous in all histories), and then particularly of the errors this time abounded with.

*And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit;* this influence of the devil darkened the sun of the gospel, and the whole church of that age, with ignorance, error, and abominable superstition in the worship of God, attended with the lewdness and debauchery of men in their lives, which usually go together.

### Revelation 9:3

Ver. 3. *And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth;* from the influence which the devil thus let loose had upon the world, came forth a generation of men, that in their practices resembled locusts. Who are to be understood by these *locusts*, is not easy to resolve. The locusts were an

insect with which God sometimes plagued the Egyptians; they are much in the Eastern countries. It was an east wind which brought them upon Egypt, Ex 10:12,13. God often hath punished people with them, they are therefore threatened, or mentioned as a judgment in case of disobedience, De 28:38,42 1Ki 8:37 Joe 1:4 Joe 2:25. Two things are to be remarked of them:

1. They were wont to go in infinite numbers: Pr 30:27: *They go forth by bands: Na 3:15, Make thyself many as the locusts: without number, Ps 105:34.*
2. The mischief they do is expressed there, Ps 105:35, *to eat up the herbs of the land, and to devour the fruit of the ground:* so they did in Egypt.

We have a little specimen of them in our caterpillars in times of drought, usually caused from the wind hanging long in the east. The psalmist, Ps 105:34, joineth the locusts and the caterpillars together. By the following description of these locusts, and the mischief which they did, Re 9:4,7-10, it appeareth plainly that these were no natural, but metaphorical locusts, men that, for their numbers and the mischief they did in the world, did resemble locusts; but who these were is the question. I find but two opinions that have any probability: the one is of a late learned writer, who judgeth them the popish clergy, to whom, indeed, many things agree.

1. They come *out of the smoke*, that is, the great influence which the devil hath upon the world.
2. They are numerous.
3. Their king is Abaddon; they destroy every green herb, nipping religion, in all places, in the bud.

But I cannot see how two or three things can agree to them:

1. That they do no hurt to the Lord's sealed ones, whenas their particular malice is against the purest and strictest profession.
2. That they do not kill, but only torment men, Re 9:5.



3. And (which is the greatest) I cannot see how the period of time agreeth to them.

For this prophecy seemeth to respect the sixth and seventh age; and though all these things agree to the Romish clergy in later ages, especially since the Jesuits grew numerous, which is not much above one hundred and twenty years since, yet these three did not so agree to the Romish clergy in the sixth and seventh age. Their Benedictine orders began but in the year 530, and their orders of Dominicans, much more mischievous, not till upwards of the year 1200; the Jesuits, after the year 1500. I therefore rather agree with the learned and judicious Mr. Mede, with whom I also find John Napier and others agreeing, that by these locusts are meant the Turks and Saracens.

1. Their time agreeth; for they first appeared formidably to the world about the year 620.
2. They were always very numerous.
3. They came the locusts' road, from Arabia, and the eastern parts.

The Arabians (which the Saracens are) are called *the children of the east*, and said to be like *grasshoppers for multitude*. Two things are objected:

1. That these locusts are commanded not to hurt the Lord's sealed ones.
2. That their commission is but for five months.

As to the latter, we shall speak to it when we come to that clause. As to the former, why may it not denote the liberty that in their conquests they generally give to all religions, so as they put none to death upon that account? How far other things will agree to them, I leave to be further considered in the next verses.

*And unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power; that is, such a power as scorpions have. We shall have a more particular account of this, Re 9:10.*

### Revelation 9:4

Ver. 4. *And it was commanded them;* that is, these locusts; God so ordered it by his providence.

*That they should not hurt, &c.:* this makes it appear, that these locusts were no insects so called, but typical; for natural locusts live upon green things; they were only to hurt profane men, and hypocrites. It is a sure rule, that when things are attributed: to living creatures which do not agree to their natures, the terms are to be understood typically, not literally. Locusts use not to kill men; we may therefore be assured, that the locusts here intended, were men, not insects.

### Revelation 9:5

Ver. 5. Supposing the Saracens and Turks here meant by the locusts, here arise two difficulties:

1. How it can be said of them, that they had no power to *kill*, but only *torment* men.
2. How their time is set for *five months*, whereas they have already tormented the world more than a thousand years; and how long they shall yet continue to do so, God only knows: they are both great difficulties.

Alsted tells us: That Mahomet began in the year 622, and the Saracens entered Spain 714, where they were called Moors, and kept possession of that kingdom eight hundred years, and that in the year 719, they besieged Constantinople with a navy of three thousand ships and three hundred thousand land soldiers; that before this time they had made themselves masters of Arabia, Palestina, Syria, Persia, Egypt, Africa, and Spain; and in the year 726, carried into France an army consisting of three hundred and seventy-five thousand, where they were beaten by Charles Martell, father to King Pepin. Mr. Mede telleth us, that the Saracens grievously vexed the countries subject to the Roman emperor, but could not take either Rome or Constantinople. The latter was taken by the Turks, in the year 1457, commanded by Sultan Mahomet. This is but a hard

interpretation of those words, *that they should not kill them*; which, it may be, hath made some other interpreters choose to interpret these locusts to signify the Roman clergy, who indeed did not kill men for religion, of many years. But both the one and the other tormented the world enough, and that like a scorpion, which pierceth a man with a venomous sting, and puts him to great pain. For the *five months*, we shall again meet with them, Re 9:10.

#### Revelation 9:6

Ver. 6. The calamities of those days shall be so great, that men shall be weary of their lives.

#### Revelation 9:7

Ver. 7. This whole description of these locusts speaks them no insects, but to be mischievous men; they were very terrible to look upon, like horses harnessed ready to fight; so Joe 2:4.

*And upon their heads were as it were crowns like gold*; this signified they should be great and rich conquerors.

*And their faces were as the faces of men*; yet these were men.

#### Revelation 9:8

Ver. 8. *And they had hair as the hair of women*; dishevelled, or hanging loose; the Arabians were wont to go so; or this may signify, that they were beautiful as well as terrible to look upon.

*And their teeth were as the teeth of lions*; sharp and strong: see Joe 1:6.

#### Revelation 9:9

Ver. 9. *And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron*; armed

with the best armour of defence.

*And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle; like locusts, they moved very swiftly. This agreeth to the Saracens, who made such haste in their conquests, that (saith Mr. Mede) in little more than eighty years they had subdued Palestina, Syria, both the Armenias, almost all the Lesser Asia, Persia, India, Egypt, Numidia, all Barbary, Portugal, Spain; and within a few more, Sicily, Candia, Cyprus, and were come to the very gates of Rome; so as they had many crowns on their heads, and moved as with wings.*

### Revelation 9:10

Ver. 10. *And they had tails like unto scorpions; a kind of venomous serpents that have their stings in their tails, with which they presently kill both men and beasts.*

*And their power was to hurt men five months; what these five months mean is very hard to say; certainly it is a certain number for an uncertain, and mentioned rather than any other time, because it is (as they say) the usual time of the life of locusts; though some observe, that five months have in them (counting as the Hebrews, thirty days to the month) one hundred and fifty days, and a day standing for a year, as in prophetic writings, it denoteth the just time the Saracens raged in Italy, from the year 830 to the year 980; as to which I refer my reader to search histories.*

### Revelation 9:11

Ver. 11. Solomon saith, Pr 30:27, *The locusts have no king, yet go they forth by bands;* according to which these locusts cannot be understood of insects so called; or, if they have a king, yet it is certain the devil is not their king, who is here called *the angel of the bottomless pit.*

*Abaddon;* from אבדן he hath destroyed.

*Apollyon;* that is, a destroyer; intimating that the whole business of this barbarous enemy should be to ruin and destroy nations.

### Revelation 9:12

Ver. 12. One period of time is over, in which God hath plagued the world with a very great judgment; but there are two more to come, which will be equally, if not more, calamitous.

### Revelation 9:13

Ver. 13. That is, from God, I heard him give a command, which *voice* is said to have proceeded *from the golden altar*, ( in allusion to Ex 30:3), because there God received the prayers of his people; and this voice proceeding from that place, might signify the following judgment to come, in answer to the prayer's of his servants' souls from thence crying to him for vengeance. See Re 6:9,10.

### Revelation 9:14

Ver. 14. By these *four angels*, or instruments of God to execute his vengeance, I find the most valuable interpreters understanding the Turks, considered as distinct from the Saracens, and succeeding of them, whose empire began in Ottoman, Anno 1296, or thereabouts. Mr. Mede saith these four angels denote so many sultanies or kingdoms, into which the Turks were dispersed, having passed the river Euphrates, which river is famous for four things:

1. It was the boundary of David and Solomon's kingdom, De 11:24 Jos 1:4.
2. It was that river by which Babylon stood, Jer 13:4-6.
3. It was the boundary of the Roman empire, beyond which it could never extend itself.
4. And it also was the seat of the Turks, who having some years before come over the Euphrates, first divided themselves into a tetrarchy; of which one in Asia, another at Aleppo, another at Damascus, a fourth at

Antioch.

Mr. Mede gives us a table or diagram of it, Clav. Apoc. 40. p. 102. Here they were bounded for a while, but about the year 1300 they were loosed, and began further to invade Europe; which is the severe providence of God, conceived to be here foretold as the consequent of this sixth angel's sounding. The Turks who, though come over the river Euphrates, had hitherto by the providence of God been bounded near unto it, not much contending to enlarge their territories, now joined together with the Saracens under Ottoman, and went further into Europe, and could by no means be stopped till they had got the empire of Constantinople.

#### Revelation 9:15

Ver. 15. *For an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year;* that is, say some, for any time whatsoever God would have them move; or for that certain time which God had determined; but Mr. Mede hath here a peculiar notion; he observeth that an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, make just three hundred and ninety-six years. In a year are three hundred and sixty-five days in a month thirty, which make three hundred and ninety-five, to which add the odd day, they make three hundred and ninety-six. The Turks began their empire under Ottoman, who began his reign Anno 1296: but their leader, Tangrolipix, upon the taking of Bagdad was inaugurated, and put on the imperial robe, Anno 1057. Constantinople was taken by them Anno 1453, between which are just three hundred and ninety-six years. In which time they slew a numberless number of men, called here *the third part*.

#### Revelation 9:16

Ver. 16. He saith nothing of the infantry, but leaves us to conjecture how great that must be, from the number of the horse; we must not think there was precisely this number, but the meaning is, that the armies should be vastly great, as we know all the Turkish armies are. Magog's army is described from the cavalry, Eze 38:4,15.

### Revelation 9:17

Ver. 17. We have no such description or representation as this in any other place of holy writ. Some understand it of the several coloured breastplates that the soldiers wore; some of a red and flaming colour, like fire; others blue, like the jacinth; some pale: all such as wear them look terribly. Mr. Mede hath here again a peculiar notion; thinking that the Holy Ghost doth here signify their fighting with great guns, (not known before the siege of Constantinople), which throw out fire and smoke, &c., and so alter the air, the medium by which we see, that the opposite party in fighting appear to those that use these arms, as if they were covered with breastplates that were red, and blue, and pale. To confirm this, he tells us of Chalcondylas's report of this siege, who mentioneth great guns used at it of that vast bigness, that one of them required threescore and ten yoke of oxen and two thousand men to draw it, &c. It is at least a very ingenious conjecture, and I could not but mention it in honour to the learned author; leaving it to my reader's liberty, whether he will, with Mr. Mede, judge this literal sense of the text is best, or interpret all these phrases more generally, only of a terrible appearance of those armies.

### Revelation 9:18

Ver. 18. That is, a great part of men were killed by these numerous armies. No such devastations were ever made by any enemies that ever appeared in the world, as by the Turks have been; nor ever were there such vast great guns made, out of which came *fire, and smoke, and brimstone.*

### Revelation 9:19

Ver. 19. By *their tails* some understand their infantry or foot soldiery; others, their serpentine craft and subtlety: as the locusts, Re 9:10, are compared to scorpions, whose sting was in their tails, and who were said to hurt with their tails; so the same thing is said of these armies, intimating that the Turks should be mischievous by the same arts and means as their predecessors the Saracens. These are said to have had heads in their tails, which was not said of the locusts; the reason of which interpreters judge to have arisen from the different animals by which they are represented.

### Revelation 9:20

Ver. 20. *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues;* the two-thirds of men that should be left, for we read of one-third part destroyed; and this also must be understood of men dwelling in countries subject formerly to the Roman empire on this side of the Euphrates.

*Yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils:* this leaves this applicable to none but papists; for there are none else but them who worship demons, Greek, δαιμονια, or idols of gold and silver. By *devils* are meant demons, that is, persons that are dead, whom the heathens made their petty gods, and worshipped as middle beings between them and the supreme gods, according to their notion; which is the same thing the papists are guilty of, with this only difference, (as Mr. Mede excellently observeth), that the heathens made many supreme gods, and these modern idolaters own but one in that notion, but as many *deastri* or demons as they did, which are all those saints to whom they pay an adoration, as to those who should present their desires to God, which, as Mr. Mede sufficiently proves from writers, was the very work the pagans allotted for those whom they canonized after death. From whence came the names of Baal and Bel, &c., but from Belus, who is said to have been the first prince, whom, being dead, they made a god, and adored? Which demons God in Scripture calleth devils. Nor do any but they now worship images, the works of men's hands, made of *gold, silver, brass, and wood*, who are here described in the same words as by the psalmist, Ps 115:4 135:15. Notwithstanding God's great judgment executed upon the Grecian churches, yet they repented not of their idolatry and superstition; so as God hath brought them wholly under the power of those barbarous enemies; and though the Romish party seeth this, yet neither do they repent; which may give them cause to fear that God should make use of the same adversary to destroy them likewise; especially considering that neither to this day do they repent.

### Revelation 9:21

Ver. 21. *Neither repented they of their murders;* of their murdering the



saints of God, but go on in that practice; *nor of their fornication*, which is publicly allowed amongst them; *nor of their theft* and sacrilege, and other wickedness, but are as infamous for their debaucheries as for their superstition and idolatry. How long this great judgment of the Turk shall continue upon Christians we cannot tell; it is Mr. Brightman's opinion that it shall determine in the year 1696; but of that the Scripture hath not informed us, and guessing is a vanity, where we have no sure foundation; and so many have appeared to have been mistaken in such particular determinations, that he lightly exposeth his reputation that will adventure further upon such rocks.

## Revelation 10:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 10:1-4 A mighty angel appeareth with a book open in his hand,

Re 10:5-7 and sweareth by him that liveth for ever, that there shall be no more time.

Re 10:8-11 John is commanded to take and eat the book, and to prophesy.

### Chapter Introduction

We have had in the former chapters Christ's revelation to St. John of what should happen in the Roman empire under the first six seals, that is, during their pagan state, which determined in Constantine's time, Anno 310, or 325. Under the seventh seal (that is, from Re 8:1) he hath revealed to him what should happen after that time to the Roman empire by the Goths and Vandals under the first four trumpets, and by the Saracens under the fifth trumpet, and the Turks under the sixth trumpet, who are yet rampant and going on in their outrages. The seventh trumpet in course should sound next, but we come not to that till Re 11:15. In this chapter, and to the 15th verse of the next chapter, seems an interruption of the history, that Christ might reveal to his prophet the main things that should concern his church. About the sense of this interpreters are divided, some thinking this a distinct prophecy relating to the affairs of the church, yet not in a continued story, but made up of several visions, some

contemporary with the times before mentioned, some continuing to the time after the sixth trumpet; which prophecy, as they judge, beginneth at Re 11:1, to which what we have in this chapter is introductive. Of this mind are our Dr. More, Mr. Mede, and other very valuable interpreters, whose reasons may be read in Mr. Pool's Latin Synopsis upon this chapter, and some of them may be noted by us as we go through this chapter. Others think it is no distinct prophecy.

Ver. 1. *And I saw another mighty angel;* the most and best interpreters understand by this angel, Christ, formerly represented to us as a *Lamb*, here as an *Angel*; none but he could call the two witnesses, Re 11:3, his witnesses; besides, the glorious appearance of this angel speaketh him no ordinary angel.

*Come down from heaven;* God being about to do or speak some great thing, is oft thus set out as coming down from heaven.

*Clothed with a cloud;* Christ is described as coming with clouds, Re 1:7.

*The Lord hath said that he would dwell in the thick darkness,* 2Ch 6:1.

*And a rainbow was upon his head;* which was the sign of the covenant made with Noah, Ge 9:16, and fitted Christ's head, as he that brought peace to the world, and to his church in special.

*And his face was as it were the sun:* see Mt 17:2.

*And his feet as pillars of fire;* signifying the steadiness and efficacy of his actions.

## Revelation 10:2

Ver. 2. *And he had in his hand a little book open;* the same book with that mentioned Re 5:1; though some by it understand the Scriptures. There it was represented to John as *sealed with seven seals*; here *open*, to let us know that all the counsels of God, however sealed as to us, are open to Christ, and that he would open to John what should come to pass in his church to the end of the world.

*And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth;* to let us know the dominion he had over the whole world, as well the more unquiet as quieter parts of it.

### Revelation 10:3

Ver. 3. *And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth:* this voice suited him who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah: the lion's voice is both loud and terrible.

*And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices:* interpreters judge these seven thunders to signify those judgments of God which should be executed in the world upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and precedaneous to the day of judgment, which we shall find more fully opened under the seventh trumpet by the seven vials poured out, which signify the same thing; yet some understand by these *seven thunders* the powerful preaching the gospel; but the other seemeth more probable.

### Revelation 10:4

Ver. 4. *I was about to write;* to write what he understood of the voices of these thunders.

*Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not;* he was forbidden the publication of them, because they concerned things to be fulfilled at some distance of time, and should be afterward more fully revealed.

### Revelation 10:5

Ver. 5. *And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth:* see Re 10:2; which Angel was Christ.

*Lifted up his hand to heaven;* as Da 12:7, with which prophecy this agreeth. It is an ordinary gesture used in swearing.

### Revelation 10:6

Ver. 6. *And sware by him that liveth, &c.;* that is, by God; for this description can agree to no other, neither is it lawful to swear by any other: see Da 12:7.

*That there should be time no longer;* there shall be an end of the world, so some; but this John knew well enough. It is rather to be understood of the time of the fourth monarchy, the Roman empire should come to an end; or, the time of the afflictions of the church, whether by pagan or antichristian enemies, should be no more.

### Revelation 10:7

Ver. 7. *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel;* of whom, and his sounding, we shall read, Re 11:15.

*When he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished;* from that time that he beginneth to sound shall begin the mystery of God to be finished; either the mystery mentioned Re 11:15, when *the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ;* or, more generally, whatsoever God hath revealed concerning the propagation of the gospel, the ruin of antichrist, and the end of the world.

*As he hath declared to his servants the prophets;* whatsoever God hath declared by his servants the prophets about these things, (as to which see Isa 24:1-23 26:1-27:13, 66:1-24 Da 7:11,12 Zec 14:1-21 Mal 3:4), it shall be fulfilled, and begin to be fulfilled when the seventh angel shall begin to blow; within which period of time most interpreters judge we are, as being begun some time since.

### Revelation 10:8

Ver. 8. *And the voice which I heard from heaven;* the voice mentioned Re 10:4.

*Go and take the little book;* the little book mentioned Re 10:2. John is bid to take this book, by which some understand the Scriptures; but it is most probably the book mentioned Re 5:1, before sealed, now open.

### Revelation 10:9

Ver. 9. *Take it, and eat it up;* thus Ezekiel was bidden to eat the roll; and it was in his mouth as sweet as honey, Eze 2:8 3:3. The eating of a book signifies the due reading of it, digesting it, and meditating upon the matters in it.

*And it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey;* it should be sweet in his month, as it was the revelation of the mind and will of God, (which is sweet to all pious souls; see Jer 15:16), but in his belly it should be bitter, being the revelation of the Divine will, as to the bringing such terrible judgments upon an impenitent people.

### Revelation 10:10

Ver. 10. *And I took the little book, and ate it up;* according to the command, Re 10:9.

*And it was in my mouth sweet as honey;* as it was the revelation of God's will.

*And as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter;* but when he came to think upon it, it was either so mysterious that he could not comprehend it, or the matter of it was so sad that it gave him great trouble.

### Revelation 10:11

Ver. 11. *Thou must prophesy again:* these words (as many think) evince this a prophecy distinct from the former; he must *prophesy again*.

*Before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings;* who shall be

concerned to hear what shall now be revealed to thee concerning the rise of antichrist, his rule and tyranny, and his fall and ruin, which are things began long before, during the periods of time, when the six before mentioned trumpets sounded, but were not there clearly revealed; which things I will reveal unto thee, that thou, and after thee the ministers of the gospel, may in their several periods reveal them in the hearing of *many people, and nations, &c.*; so that hereby John (as some think) was constituted a prophet to reveal the state of the church under antichrist, and his tyranny, and finally his ruin, which began at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, Re 11:15; but when it shall be finished, God alone must inform the world by the issues of his providence.

## Revelation 11:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 11:1,2 John is commanded to measure the temple, all but the outer court.  
Re 11:3,4 The two witnesses that shall prophesy,  
Re 11:5,6 their power,  
Re 11:7 the beast shall fight against them, and kill them,  
Re 11:8-10 they shall lie unburied three days and a half,  
Re 11:11,12 and then rise again, and ascend into heaven.  
Re 11:13 A great earthquake.  
Re 11:14 The second woe past.  
Re 11:15-19 The seventh trumpet sounded: the heavenly choir celebrate the glories of God's kingdom.

Ver. 1. *And there was given me a reed like a rod;* the next words tell us the use of this reed. It was a *measuring reed*, such a one as Ezekiel in his vision (Eze 40:3) saw in the man's hand. There, the measuring was in order to a rebuilding; here, in order to preserving.

*And the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God:* we cannot well understand what followeth, without understanding the structure of the temple. The Jews, for the place of their worship, had first a

tabernacle, then a temple. The tabernacle was a movable house, which they took down and carried about with them in their journeyings, and pitched down when in any place they pitched their tents. We read of it, Ex 40:1-38. We read but of one court in that, into which only the priests and Levites entered; the people were without it, pitching their tents round about it. It had in it an altar of gold for incense, Ex 40:5, which stood before the ark, Ex 40:26,27; and an altar for burnt-offering, which stood by the door of the tabernacle, Ex 40:29. The temple was built by Solomon, 1Ki 6:1-38, and afterwards rebuilt by Zerubbabel, upon their return out of captivity. That was built with two courts; an inner court, 1Ki 6:36, in which was the altar; and an outward court, which is called *the great court*, 2Ch 4:9, and in Ezekiel, many times, the *outward court*. This is called *the house*, in 1Ki 6:17. It was in length forty cubits; the oracle was within it, 1Ki 6:19, where stood the ark covered with the cherubims. Into the inward court the priests and Levites only came; into the outward court came any of the Israelites. Herod, upon the additional building to the temple, added another large court, called *the court of the Gentiles*; but that not being of God's direction, nor in Solomon's temple, or Zerubbabel's, is not here mentioned. This *temple* was a type of the church under the New Testament, 1Co 3:17 2Co 6:16, and is so to be interpreted generally in this book: for the material temple at Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans more than twenty years before this prophecy, never to be built more; not one stone was left upon another; so that John here was bid to measure the church.

*And the altar, and them that worship therein;* yet not the whole church, but that part of it which the inner court typified; the altar, and those that worshipped within that space where that was, which of old were only the priests and Levites; and under the New Testament signified those who were to be *a holy priesthood, a spiritual house*, those that should offer up *spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*, 1Pe 2:5, who could endure a measuring by God's reed, the word of God.

## Revelation 11:2

Ver. 2. There is no great doubt, but the same persons are here to be understood by *the court which is without the temple*, ( that is, without the inward court), *and the holy city*; and by them, both the generality of those

people who come under the name of the Christian church, who are all of them, in some sense, *a holy people*, 1Co 7:14, as all the Jews were; yet, for the greatest part of them, John is commanded to omit, or neglect them, as those who would not endure a measure by the reed, and of whose preservation God would take no such care, but give them up to the Gentiles, to be trodden under foot; by which many learned and good men understand God's suffering antichrist to have a power over and against them. I find some understanding by *the altar, and them that worship therein*, the primitive church, that for some hundreds of years after Christ kept close to the Divine rule, whom God preserved, though in the midst of the ten first persecutions: and by the outward *court*, the church after that time, which God suffered to fall under the power of the beast, and antichrist, that is, the papacy; which are well enough called *the Gentiles*, as bringing in Gentilism again into the church, and hardly differing in any thing, saving that the old heathens owned many supreme gods, and these new Gentiles but one. God showeth John here, that he would give up the outward court, or this *holy city*, the generality of Christians, to these Gentiles, that they should rule and domineer over them for *forty and two months*, the meaning of which we shall by and by show. A late pious and learned writer differs a little in his sense, as thinking that God here showeth John something further, viz. that under the sixth trumpet he would give the generality of those called Christians, that will not endure the measure of the reed, so over to antichrist, that they shall turn papists, and help to kill the Lord's witnesses; of which we shall speak, Re 11:3. So as this is not a new prophecy, but a continuation of what shall happen after the sounding of the sixth, and before the sounding of the seventh trumpet: if so, I conceive that those words, *shall they tread under foot forty and two months*, must be understood, until the end of the forty-two months; for the forty-two months being the whole time of antichrist, or the beast, must be in a great measure spent before the sounding of the sixth angel. But it seems to be the opinion of this learned man, that a very great part of those who pretend to constitute the Reformed protestant church at this day, but are but as the outward court, not such as worship within the oracle, shall, before the sounding of the seventh trumpet, apostatize, and fall off to popery, until antichrist's one thousand two hundred and sixty days shall expire, and join with papists in the killing of the witnesses. The truth of which we must leave to the providence of God in time to discover; although whoso considereth the face of things this day in Europe, (within which the greatest part of the Christian church is), will judge there is too



great a probability of what this learned man saith; but I dare determine nothing in it.

### Revelation 11:3

Ver. 3. *And I will give power unto my two witnesses:* there hath been a great dispute amongst godly and learned men, who these *two witnesses* should be: some have thought them to be Enoch and Elijah, who, though long since glorified, they have thought (with no great probability, as I suppose any indifferent person will judge) shall come again, and be killed on the earth; yet this is the general notion of the popish writers. Others would have them the two sorts of gospel churches, one of which was made up of native Gentiles, the other of Jews proselyted to the Christian faith. Others have interpreted it of the Old Testament and the New: others, of some two eminent divines; and as to them there have been various guesses: others, of the ministers whom God employed upon the Reformation: others, of a Christian magistracy and ministry. For my own part, the name of *witnesses* is so often applied to the first ministers of the gospel, Ac 1:22 2:32 3:15 4:33 5:32 10:41 22:15 26:16 1Pe 5:1; that I cannot but understand it of that faithful part of the ministry, who preach the gospel faithfully during the whole reign of antichrist. Neither do I think that the number *two* at all relates to their number, but to their witness bearing; *two* being the number which God ordained as sufficient to establish all civil things, De 17:6 De 19:15 Mt 18:16 Heb 10:28; unless there be a regard had to those pairs, which all along the Old Testament bare testimony for God; Moses and Aaron, Caleb and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha; and after the captivity, Zerubbabel and Joshua, and the two olive trees, mentioned Zec 4:11,14, to which plainly this text hath relation, Re 11:4. To which some also add Abraham and Lot, Ezra and Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah, Paul and Barnabas, Peter and John; and note, that when Christ first sent out his apostles, Mt 10:1-42, he sent them out two by two.

*And they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth:* we read before, that *the holy city*, that is, the true church, should be trodden under foot by the Gentiles *forty and two months*; we read here, that the witnesses should *prophesy in sackcloth a thousand two hundred and threescore days*. It is apparent, that in the prophetical style a day signifies a year, Nu 14:34, *Forty days, each day for*

*a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years.* So Eze 4:6, *I have appointed thee each day for a year.* So Da 9:24, the *seventy weeks* must signify four hundred and ninety years, (for in seventy weeks there are four hundred and ninety days), or else the promise as to the coming of the Messiah failed. So the prophetic year contains three hundred and sixty years, and the prophetic month thirty years (for they did count thirty days to each month); so forty-two months are just one thousand two hundred and sixty days, that is, one thousand two hundred and sixty years. We shall find, Re 12:6, that the woman (that is, the church) was in the wilderness just this time, one thousand two hundred and sixty days; and in Re 13:5, this was also the time of the beast that rose up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns: by which it appeareth, that these four things ran all parallel at the same time; the beast arising, and exercising his power; the new Gentiles trampling upon the church, the holy city; the woman's abiding in the wilderness; and the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth. If we could find out where any one of these began, we should find out the time of all the rest. Those who fix the rise of the beast in or about the year 400, must add to this 1260. Then in 1660 antichrist's reign should have determined, and also the time of the church's persecution, and the time when faithful ministers should prophesy in sackcloth: but if the rise of the beast were in the year 500, the expiration must be in 1760; if it be fixed in 600, all these things will determine in 1860; for the same number of days being assigned to all the four, it is manifest that all four began together, and shall end together, and that at the end of a thousand two hundred and sixty years after the beginning of them. For my own part, I look upon it as very hard to determine: but the difficulty lies in finding out the time when the beast first arose; for that being once found out, it is easy to conclude from Scripture, when both the popedom shall have an end, and the calamitous time for the church, especially the ministry of it, shall cease. That which God showeth John in this verse, is only, that his faithful ministers that should truly reveal his will, (which is here called prophesying), should have a mournful time for a thousand two hundred and threescore years.

#### Revelation 11:4

Ver. 4. Here is a manifest allusion to Zechariah's vision, Zec 4:2,3,11-14, though with some little difference. He saw *a candlestick all of gold, with a*

*bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which were upon the top thereof: and two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.* The angel tells him, that *these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes did empty the golden oil out of themselves, were the two anointed ones, or the two sons of oil, that stood by the Lord of the whole earth.* By which some understand Zerubbabel and Joshua; some, those godly magistrates and priests, which after the captivity the Jewish church should have, and prefigured a gospel ministry, who being filled with knowledge and grace, should feed the Lord's church (as pastors after his own heart) with wisdom and understanding, from the gifts and graces of God's Holy Spirit, which they should receive; which further confirmeth me, that by the *two witnesses, Re 11:3*, we are to understand a godly magistracy and ministry, or rather the latter only, to whom prophesying most strictly agreeth, and who have a more special relation to the candlesticks here mentioned, by which churches are meant, Re 1:20.

*And the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth:* in Zechariah's vision was but one candlestick, how comes here a mention to be made of two? Mr. Mede confesseth himself at a loss here, unless here another candlestick be added to signify the Gentiles' conversion to Christ. Others think that it denoteth the small number of gospel churches that should be left; they were reckoned seven, Re 1:20; here they are reduced to two. Possibly it may denote the different state of God's church. In the Old Testament God had but one church, viz. that of the Jews; but now he hath many churches, and they are all fed from faithful ministers, as olive branches pouring out their oil of grace and knowledge upon them.

### Revelation 11:5

Ver. 5. *And if any man will hurt them;* that is, my faithful ministers, the two olive branches before mentioned, which fill the candlesticks with oil.

*Fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies:* here is a plain allusion to the stories of Moses and Elijah, calling for fire from heaven; but God showeth, that the victory of his ministers under the gospel shall not be by a miraculous fire called for down from heaven, (as Elijah hurt the captains and their bands sent to apprehend him), but by *fire out of*

*their mouths; according to that, Jer 5:14, Behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them: see also Jer 1:9,10. This also is according to Zechariah's vision before mentioned, and the revelation of the will of God in it, Re 11:6: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. The meaning is, that they shall be too hard for them, either by their faithful, lively, and powerful preaching, or by their fervent prayers.*

### Revelation 11:6

Ver. 6. It is plain that here is an allusion to Elijah, who *prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months, Jas 5:17; see the story, 1Ki 17:1:* and to Moses, who turned the waters into blood in Egypt; and after was an instrument to smite the land of Egypt with plagues. But what power analogous to this the ministers of the gospel have had, or have, is not easy to determine. It is certain, the apostles had a miraculous power, but they rarely used it, but in doing good to men; Ananias and Sapphira indeed were struck dead upon their word, Ac 5:1-11; and Elymas the sorcerer was struck blind by them; but this power is long since ceased. Mr. Mede understands this power of the keys of doctrine and church censures the ministers of the gospel should be intrusted with; so as they should not preach the gospel unto such as contemned their ministry; by the withholding of which means of grace, also, they would be deprived of the dew of heavenly grace. And, indeed, this seemeth more proper than to understand it of the keys of discipline; for what power of this nature have ministers over those who are without? I take a general explication to be the best. If any hurt them, God shall revenge their cause, not only by spiritual, but by temporal judgments, bringing all manner of evils upon their adversaries. They are said to have power to do it, because God will do it in the revenge of the injuries done unto them.

### Revelation 11:7

Ver. 7. *And when they shall have finished their testimony; οταν τελεσωσιν* Mr. Mede notes, that this is ill translated by the preterperfect tense; the true English of it is, when they shall be about to finish their

testimony: when they have prophesied in sackcloth the most of their twelve hundred and sixty years, they shall meet with *ultimum conatum antichristi*, the last struggle of the beast for life.

*The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit*, that is, the beast mentioned Re 13:1,4, (by which the papacy is meant, whom they have plagued all the time of their prophecy, though continual sufferers from it), *shall make war against them;* shall get life again, and make one push more, possibly the sharpest yet made; *and shall overcome them, and kill them;* and be too hard for them, and kill them. It is a great question, whether this be to be understood of taking away their natural lives, or of a civil death relating to them as witnesses, making them as if they were naturally dead. The latter of these seemeth to me much the more probable, for these reasons:

1. Supposing the godly magistracy, or ministry, or the latter alone, to be the *two witnesses*, it doth not seem probable that ever the papacy shall so far prevail, as to kill all such over the face of the whole church.
2. Neither is the Holy Ghost here speaking of them as men, but as *witnesses*.
3. Nor would either friends or enemies suffer dead bodies to be unburied three days and a half, in the street of a great city, as Re 11:8,9.
4. Neither is their resurrection, mentioned Re 11:11, to be understood of a corporal resurrection. I take therefore the killing here mentioned, to be understood of a destroying them as witnesses, turning magistrates out of their places, and ministers out of their places; though it be not probable that such a malice and hatred as should cause this, should terminate without the blood of some of them; but that surely is not the thing principally here intended.

### Revelation 11:8

Ver. 8. Their bodies dead, in the sense before mentioned, shall continue so for three days and a half, of which we shall speak, Re 11:11. But what is here meant:

1. By *the great city*?
2. By the *street of the great city*?

Some, by *the great city*, would have Jerusalem understood; but that was now far from a great city, nor do the addition of those words in the latter end of the verse prove it; for Christ was not crucified in that city, but without the gates. Most judicious interpreters, by *the great city* here, understand Rome, which is seven or eight times (under the name of Babylon) so called in this hook, Re 14:8 Re 16:19 18:10,16,18,19,21; nor is any other city but that so called. This great city is here said, in a spiritual sense, to be *Sodom and Egypt*; *Sodom*, for whoredom and filthiness; *Egypt*, for oppression of the Lord's Israel. As to the second question, what is here meant by *the street of the great city*? Mr. Mede hath irrefragably proved, that it cannot be meant of any parish, or such place in this city, as we call a street:

1. Because our Lord was crucified neither in any street, or parish, or any other place within the walls of Jerusalem.
2. Both Jerusalem and Rome had many more than one street.
3. Because the bodies being dead, doubtless lay in the place where they were slain; but men do not use to fight in the streets of cities.
4. Nor was that a place for all people, kindred, tongues, and nations, to see them in.

He therefore rightly judgeth, that the Greek word which we translate *street*, signifies the territories and jurisdiction of this city. See what he says to justify this in his *Clavis Apocal.* 40. p. 138. And this makes the last clause plain; for though our Lord was not crucified within any city, or in the street of any city, yet he was crucified in a place belonging to the jurisdiction of the Roman emperor; and it is very likely that it is in Europe that the witnesses shall be slain, which, in this sense, was all of it a street belonging to the city of Rome.

## Revelation 11:9

Ver. 9. *And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations;* that is, a multitude of people of all sorts shall take notice of this suppression of these two witnesses in their bearing witness for God, and all the cruel dealings with them.

*Shall see their dead bodies three days and an half:* there are great disputes what time these *three days and an half* denote: it cannot be understood of three natural, or artificial days; for (as it is noted by the most judicious interpreters) this is much too short a time for all people to *see their dead bodies*, to *rejoice over them*, and to *make merry*, and to *send gifts one to another* in testification of the satisfaction of their lusts, upon the victory got over them. I find some understand these *three days and an half* of the one thousand two hundred and sixty years, wherein they prophesied in sackcloth, Re 11:3, which they thus make out; they first conclude, that these are prophetic days, and so signify three years and a half; then they resolve each of those years into days, and count three times three hundred and sixty days (for in those countries they say the year was counted to contain but three hundred and sixty days); to which they add one hundred and eighty, the half of three hundred and sixty, for the half day, which make up one thousand two hundred and sixty days, or forty-two months; which is the just time both of the beast's reign, and of the woman's abode in the wilderness, and of the witnesses' prophesying in sackcloth, and of the Gentiles' treading down the outward court.

1. But it seems very hard, thus first to make the three days three years in a prophetic sense, and then again to resolve those years, into days, and make those days so many more years; this looks as much like oppression to the text, as the counting interest upon interest to a debtor.
2. It plainly confounds the time of the prophesying of the witnesses in sackcloth, with the time of their lying dead.

Now although the time of their lying dead must be within the one thousand two hundred and sixty days, in the latter end thereof, (for it must be within the beast's forty-two months, mentioned Re 13:5), yet it seems hard to make it as long as the beast's reign. It certainly signifies a time toward the end of the beast's reign, when there shall be a more eminent and universal

suppression of the faithful witnesses of Christ than ever was before: it seemeth therefore rather to be understood more generally for a short time, as much such a phrase or way of speaking is used, Hos 6:2, or else for a determinate time of such three years and a half as we ordinarily count. I must confess the half day being added, makes me more incline to the latter; for though it be usual with us to express a short time by, two or three days, and this seems by that text of Hosea to have been an ancient way of speaking, yet we do not use to put in half days when we so speak. I do therefore agree with those who think the time here specified is to be understood of three ordinary years and a half; and the rather, because this is the very time that Christ was under the power of the Pharisees. As three days (that is, part of them) was the time of his being under the power of death, so three years and a half was the just time of all the indignity that he suffered from his manifestation to the world, to his death: and (as we read in 1 Macc.) it was the just time of Antiochus's oppressing of the Jews, whom divines judge that Daniel, in his 11th chapter (Da 11:1-45), makes a type of antichrist.

*And shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves:* divines are divided whether these words be to be understood of enemies or friends. If it be to be understood of friends, the death being a civil death principally that was spoken of, it signifieth the providence of God so working for his witnesses, by the adherence of a party to them, that their adversaries the popish party should not wholly extinguish them; which hath been seen all along the story of the church: though their adversaries have been warring against them, overcome and killed them, yet they have not been able to bury them; nor shall they be able to do it at this last pinch, when they shall have a greater victory over them than ever before, and kill them to a further degree. But methinks the phrase rather signifies this an act of enemies, who, to show their further malice to them, and contempt and scorn of them are said to be so inhuman, as not to suffer their dead bodies to be buried.

### Revelation 11:10

Ver. 10. It is plain by the repeating of the same words in the close of the verse, that by those that  *dwell upon the earth*  are meant earthly, carnal men, whether papists or atheists; men that are mad upon their lusts; for



these are those in whose consciences faithful and powerful preaching breeds a torment and uneasiness, so as they always count godly ministers their enemies, (as Ahab told Elijah), and are not able to bear their words (as the Israelites could not bear the words of Amos).

*Shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another;* these therefore shall keep holiday, when they see these their enemies conquered, and show all signs and expressions of joy. These preachers were they that hindered them from a quiet sleep in their beds of lust.

*Because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth;* and though they fought against them only with a fire going out of their mouths, as prophets declaring the will of God to be contrary to their lewd practices, and denouncing God's wrath against those that did such things; yet their preaching made their heads ache, partly by alarming their consciences, so as they often flew in their faces; and by it they were exposed to the reproach of people, as living directly contrary to the Divine rule, and in defiance of his law: thus they torment wicked men, who therefore always did, and always will, triumph in their suppression, or in any evil that shall betide them. And as they see their suppression greater than ever before, (as it will be undoubtedly during these three years and a half), so the triumph of lewd and wicked men will be proportionably more, though it will be but like a widow's joy, for a short time, for it will appear that their dead bodies were not put into the grave.

### Revelation 11:11

Ver. 11. *And after three days and an half;* after that short time which God had determined for antichrist, (just before his time should be expired), or after the precise time of forty-two months, or three years and a half, was expired, when the Gentiles thought they had fully prevailed, and should be no more troubled with Christ's witnesses.

*The Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet;* God, who alone can quicken the dead, reviveth them, and restoreth them again to their employment as his prophets; for it is plain this cannot be understood of a corporal resurrection: for:

1. Their death was not of that nature; nor:
2. Doth the Scripture give us any hints of any such resurrection before the coming of Christ to the last judgment.

*And great fear fell upon them which saw them;* this strikes a great fear into all their enemies amazed to think what God was about to do, and rightly presaging this would be their ruin.

It is a great question now, whether the time here spoken of for slaying the witnesses, and their rising again, be past, or yet to come. I must confess, the papacy had got such a victory over the faithful witnesses of Christ for some ages before the Reformation began in Germany, about the year 1517, and there was so sudden a resurrection of them in the first Reformers, brought to pass and carried on by such a stupendous series of providences, that I cannot wonder that some did think the time past: but we who have outlived that time more than one hundred and fifty years, seeing the Turks (whom all judicious interpreters make the four angels, bound by the river Euphrates, loosed) still so rampant, and the papacy still so predominant, and daily treading down the outward court, have no reason to judge the slaying of the witnesses yet over, at least that they are yet risen, and standing upon their feet; or that the seventh angel hath yet sounded; but that we are as yet under the period of time signified by the sounding of the sixth trumpet; and to expect a further degree of this evening before it will be light over the universal church (for we must not think any particular church intended here): and this appears most probable also from what followeth before the sounding of the seventh angel, Re 11:15.

### Revelation 11:12

Ver. 12. *And they,* that is, the two witnesses, so often before spoken of, *heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither;* heard God by a singular providence calling them again to their former work and station in his church; or (as some) to a higher and more famous place in his church than they formerly enjoyed; for by *heaven* the most and best interpreters understand the church, as it often signifies in this book.

*And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them; and this was done in the face of their enemies. In this sense of this verse I find the generality of judicious interpreters agreed.*

### Revelation 11:13

Ver. 13. *And the same hour;* that is, about the same time, when the Spirit of life from God entered into the witnesses, and they were again restored.

*Was there a great earthquake;* by *earthquake* doubtless is here meant a great confusion in the world, and shaking of nations by differences one with another, and wars: See Poole on "Re 6:12".

*And the tenth part of the city fell;* by *the city* is doubtless meant *the great city* before named, *spiritually called Sodom and Egypt;* elsewhere, *Babylon;* by which Rome is to be understood. What is meant by the tenth part of it falling, is not so well agreed; some by it understanding many kingdoms falling off from its jurisdiction; others, a great part of its tribute or dominion.

*And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand:* these words seem to intimate that the restoration of the witnesses shall not be without opposition, and that the opposition shall not be great; seven thousand is a small number to fall in such a quarrel: but the papal party shall appear to have cheated the world so with their impostures, and so to have imposed upon them, that the world shall grow sick of them, and when the time comes for God to put a final period to them, the number shall be but few that adventure for them.

*And the remnant were affrighted;* others shall be *affrighted,* either from their own consciences, or from the stupendous dispensations of Divine Providence in the fall of the great city.

*And gave glory to the God of heaven;* and give glory to God, by confessing their errors, and turning to an ingenuous and sincere acknowledgment of the truth. Instead of worshipping saints, and angels, and images, worshipping the true and living God of heaven and earth only.

### Revelation 11:14

Ver. 14. *The second woe is past;* that is, here endeth the misery that is like to come upon the world in that period of time which shall follow the sounding of the sixth trumpet.

*And, behold, the third woe cometh quickly:* the *third woe* signifies those calamities which should come in that period of time prophesied of by the sounding of the seventh trumpet; this makes a late learned author think that all that which went before, viz. the Gentiles treading down the outward court, the slaying of the witnesses, and their resuscitation, must be under the sixth trumpet; which period endeth not until the church's enemies be ready to be destroyed; whose destruction is afterwards opened to us in the angels pouring out their vials.

### Revelation 11:15

Ver. 15. *And the seventh angel sounded;* the last of those angels mentioned Re 8:2.

*And there were great voices in heaven, saying;* St. John in his vision heard great acclamations and shoutings for the victory which Christ and his gospel had got over the beast.

*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever;* so that a great part of the world, casting off the papacy, that new Gentilism, together with all their abominable idolatries and superstitions, embraced the truth of the gospel. Here ariseth a great question, whether the seven vials, of which we shall find the 16th chapter treating (Re 16:1-21), do belong all to the seventh trumpet, or some of them belong to the sixth trumpet, of which mention hath been before made. Great divines are on both sides as to this question. Mr. Pool, in his Latin Synopsis, hath collected together their reasons, of which I shall give a short account, leaving my reader for a fuller satisfaction to the Latin Synopsis.

Those who think that the seven vials do all relate to the seventh trumpet,

and contemporize with it, in defence of their opinion say:

1. That the seven seals, and the seven trumpets, and the seven vials, are all mentioned in the same form of speech; and therefore the seven vials are not to be divided, some to one trumpet, some to another.

2. Because the seventh trumpet and the seven vials are one and the same thing, nothing being revealed under the seven vials which doth not belong to the seventh trumpet; they agree in their titles of woes, in the nature of the revelations, in their objects, both the one and the other declaring the ruin of antichrist; both of them are mentioned as the last plagues to come upon the world before the last day.

3. All the vials are of the same nature, declaring but the judgments by which God, setting up the kingdom of Christ, would ruin antichrist; they only differ in the degrees of the plagues, each one rising higher than the other.

4. The seventh trumpet cannot declare the ruin of antichrist, unless the seven vials be poured out under it, for they show the means by which he must be destroyed.

5. The seventh trumpet soundeth immediately upon the slaying of the witnesses, and contemporizeth with the whole course of their renewed liberty, and therefore the period signified by it must be before the fall of antichrist, declared by the sixth vial.

6. The seventh trumpet soundeth immediately after the expiration of the twelve hundred and sixty days; before the end of which none of the vials were poured out.

Those who think that divers of the vials were poured out, or shall be poured out, before the sounding of this seventh trumpet, say, that the beast's kingdom beginning to fall under the sixth trumpet, several of the vials, declaring the degrees of his falling, must belong to that. It appeareth by all we have in this chapter [Re 11:7-15](#), that antichrist's kingdom was in a great measure weakened under the sixth trumpet, particularly from [Re 11:11-13](#). To which those who think that all the vials related to the seventh trumpet say, that they grant that there were some preparations to the final

ruin of antichrist, during the period of the sixth trumpet, but the seven vials signify the further progress and perfection of his ruin, which falls under the period signified by the seventh trumpet. This being premised, I proceed with the text.

It is doubted here whether those words, *are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ,* be to be understood as being actually so, or now beginning to be so. Those who make the sense that they now actually were so, must understand the time to be the day of judgment, or some time next to it, and consequently must think that five at least of the seven vials, mentioned Re 16:1-21, belonged to the sixth trumpet. Those who make the sense, are beginning to become the kingdoms of the Lord, or shall shortly be so, may make all the seven vials to belong to the seventh trumpet. By becoming the kingdoms of the Lord Christ, he means in outward profession; so as antichrist shall reign no more, but they shall be ruled by the officers of the Lord Christ, until they be taken up to reign with him in glory.

#### Revelation 11:16

Ver. 16. I take this to signify no more than the triumph of the saints and angels in heaven upon this victory of the Lord over antichrist, and the promoting of Christ's kingdom; and certainly if there be joy in heaven upon the conversion of *one sinner*, as we are told, Lu 15:7, we must imagine a much greater joy upon the conversion of nations and kingdoms unto Christ.

#### Revelation 11:17

Ver. 17. *Which art, and wast, and art to come;* it is a phrase denoting God's eternity and immutability; we met with it before, Re 4:8.

*Because thou hast taken to the thy great power, and hast reigned;* those celestial beings bless God for exerting his power, and recovering the kingdom of Christ out of the hands of antichrist, and setting his King upon his holy hill of Zion.

### Revelation 11:18

Ver. 18. *And the nations were angry;* those who have not been of thy true Israel, but old or modern Gentiles, they have been angry long enough.

*And thy wrath is come;* now it is time for thee to show thyself angry, and thou hast begun to do it.

*And the time of the dead, that they should be judged;* the time is come for thee to judge the cause of thy faithful witnesses, and all those who have died in testimony to thy truth.

*And that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets;* and for thee to reward such as have faithfully revealed thy will.

*And to the saints;* and not only them, but all thy holy ones.

*And them that fear thy name, small and great;* without respect to their quality in the world, be they little or great.

*And shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth;* the time also is come, when thou hast destroyed, or wilt destroy, that antichristian brood, which so long hath plagued the earth, and destroyed thy people in it.

### Revelation 11:19

Ver. 19. *And the temple of God:* some here, by *the temple of God*, understand the representation of the temple in Jerusalem; others understand the church triumphant; others, the church of Christ militant here upon earth.

*Was opened in heaven:* accordingly, by *heaven* they understand either the natural heavens, or the Christian church: it seemeth to be a plain allusion to the Jewish church, whose temple was ordinarily shut up in the time of wicked and idolatrous princes, who regarded not the true worship of God; so as all the time of Saul's reign the ark abode in the private house of Obed-edom; and when Josiah came to reign, he found the temple neglected

all the days of his father Amon and grandfather Manasseh, and the book of the law in the rubbish. But when good princes came to the throne, such as Hezekiah and Josiah, they opened the temple, restoring the true worship of God. So under the New Testament, during the whole reign of antichrist, where he prevails, idolatry and superstition obtain, and the true worship of God is suppressed; but his time being now expiring, God showeth John that there shall be a restoring of the true worship of God, and a liberty both to ministers and people to worship God according to his will. For though antichrist was not yet wholly destroyed, nor his party extinguished, yet he had lost his power and dominion, and God was now beginning to reckon with him for the blood of his saints; which was all to be done before all the kingdoms of the world should become the kingdoms of the Lord Christ.

*And there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament:* in the temple of old, the ark of the covenant was the great symbol of God's presence; hence God is said to have dwelt between the cherubims. In the ark were the two tables of the law; so as this phrase may either note the pure, free, and ordinary expounding of the law of God, which should be upon the downfall of antichrist; or the presence of God with his church in that more pure and reformed state. But such a work of providence being not like to be effected without the ruin of antichrist,

God showeth it shall be ushered in with *lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail; by terrible things in righteousness,* as the psalmist speaketh. The consequents of which were the seven vials, of which we shall read, Re 16:1-21, pouring out plagues upon the antichristian party, until they should be wholly rooted out and Christ alone should be exalted in his church, and rule as King upon his holy hill of Zion.

From this mysterious portion of holy writ thus opened, it appeareth that God, in these foregoing chapters, hath (though more summarily) instructed his prophet in what should come to pass to the final ruin of the Roman empire, (considered as pagan, that is, till Constantine's time), and also of the reign of antichrist. From whence it must needs follow, that whatsoever followeth this chapter, and cannot be applied to the time of Christ's kingdom, must contemporize with something which went before, and belong to some period comprehended under the vision of the seals, or of the trumpets. The next three chapters are judged to relate wholly to things



past, God therein representing to his prophet the state of his church (as some think) from the nativity of Christ; however, from his time, during the whole time that Rome continued pagan, or should continue antichristian; the following chapters showing the gradual destruction of antichrist by the seven last plagues.

## Revelation 12:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 12:1,2 A woman clothed with the sun travaileth,  
Re 12:3,4 A great red dragon standeth ready to  
devottr her child,  
Re 12:5,6 She is delivered, and fleeth into the  
wilderness,  
Re 12:7-9 Michael and his angels fight with the  
dragon, who is cast out of heaven with his angels.  
Re 12:10-12 The victory proclaimed in heaven.  
Re 12:13-17 The dragon, cast down to the earth,  
persecuteth the woman.

Ver. 1. *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven:* I see no reason to doubt, but that John was all this while in heaven, whither he was taken up, Re 4:2, where he saw in a vision *a great wonder*, or a most remarkable thing.

*A woman clothed with the sun;* I find all valuable interpreters agreeing, that this woman represented the church, well enough compared to a woman;

1. As she is the spouse of Christ (though here expressed as his mother).
2. As the woman is the weaker sex, and the church hath always been the weakest part of the world.

(I look upon the interpretation of it by popish authors, with reference to the virgin Mary, as very idle; for when did she flee into the wilderness? When was she with child, and pained to be delivered?) Interpreters also are as

well agreed, that by *the sun*, with which she is said to be *clothed*, is meant Christ, called *the Sun of righteousness*, Mal 4:2, and he who giveth light, Eph 5:14; and believers (of whom the church consists) are said to have *put on Christ*, Ro 13:14 Ga 3:27.

*And the moon under her feet*: by *the moon*, most understand the world, by reason of its mutability and uncertainty, which the church of Christ despiseth, and hath under her feet, minding heaven and heavenly things. But Mr. Mede rather understands it of the Jewish worship, which, as to its times, was much directed by the moon; which *hand-writing which was against us* (the apostle tells us, Col 2:14) Christ took away, *nailing it to his cross*; so as the gospel church hath it under her feet. The apostle calls them *carnal ordinances*, Heb 9:10, and *the rudiments of the world*, Col 2:20, yea, *beggarly elements*, Ga 4:9.

*And upon her head a crown of twelve stars*; the ministry of the gospel, preaching and building upon the true foundation, the doctrine of the prophets, and twelve apostles, which is the honour of any church.

### Revelation 12:2

Ver. 2. *Being with child*: not with Christ considered personally, who was long before brought forth by the virgin Mary, but with the truth, and gospel of Christ, or with Christ mystical.

*Cried*; desiring to bring many children to the kingdom of Christ; or to bring forth Christ in the souls of others: of this burden and labour she desired *to be delivered*. The phrase is judged to signify both the primitive church's desire to propagate the gospel, and also her many sufferings for that endeavour.

### Revelation 12:3

Ver. 3. *And there appeared another wonder in heaven*; there appeared to John, being yet in his vision, another amazing sight, which was a sign or type of something differing from what it appeared like.

*And behold a great red dragon:* see Re 12:7,9,17. Most judicious interpreters, by the *great red dragon*, understand the Roman emperors that first persecuted: the Christian church, of which Claudius was the first; yet some understand it of the devil, the old serpent; but the most and best interpreters understand it of the pagan emperors, by whom the devil did this work, called a *great dragon*, because of the vastness of that empire; a *red dragon*, for their cruelty against the Christians.

*Having seven heads;* the Holy Ghost, Re 17:9, hath expounded these *seven heads*, by *seven mountains*. The *ten horns* are thought to signify the ten provinces belonging to that empire, the governors of which ruled like ten kings. It is expounded by *ten kings*, Re 17:12. Strabo tells us, that Augustus Caesar divided the whole empire into twenty provinces; ten of which, being more quiet, he gave to the people to govern, the other ten he reserved to his own government. The *seven crowns* are expounded by *seven kings*, Re 17:10, of which we shall speak more when we come so far.

#### Revelation 12:4

Ver. 4. The *tail* of the *red dragon* signifies his followers, his civil and military officers, whosoever were by him employed to execute his commands. By *the stars*, here, are either meant the ministers of the Christian church, or the professors of it.

*And did cast them to the earth;* turning them out of their places and stations, making them as useless as he could.

*And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born;* that is, before the church that was ready to propagate itself, watching upon her increase to devour them. I take this to be a much more probable sense than theirs who understand it of Constantine; for I know not, with reference to him, who should be understood by the *red dragon*. Mr. Mede hath ingeniously observed, that Pharaoh was a type of this red dragon. He is resembled by a dragon, Ps 74:13,14 Isa 51:9 Eze 29:3, and watched upon God's ancient church to destroy it, as the pagan emperors did upon the Christian church.

### Revelation 12:5

Ver. 5. By this *man-child* some understand Constantine the Great; others understand Christ mystical, or many children brought forth unto God. As the Jews multiplied, do Pharaoh what he could to destroy them, so the church increased, notwithstanding all the malice and rage of her enemies. Interpreters accordingly are divided concerning the person or persons here spoken of, that should *rule all nations with a rod of iron*. It was prophesied of Christ, Ps 2:9, that he should *break the nations with a rod of iron*. It is applied to the servants of Christ, who overcome, and keep Christ's words to the end, Re 2:27. So as it is here applicable to believers, whom the church should bring forth, who shall *judge the world*, as the apostle tells us; and I had rather thus interpret it, than concerning Constantine the Great.

*And her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne:* these words are something hard to be interpreted. To interpret it of Christ's being taken up into heaven, is to turn a mysterious prophecy into a plain relation, or history of things past. To interpret it concerning Constantine the Great, seemeth very hard; for how was he, more than any other Christians, *caught up unto God, and to his throne*? If we say, when he died; so are they: if we say the imperial throne is here understood by God's throne, it seemeth to me very hard; for although of magistrates God saith, *I have said, Ye are gods*, yet their thrones are never called God's throne. I had rather give this phrase a more general interpretation, viz. God took this offspring of the woman into his royal protection, so as the dragon could not devour it, it was out of his reach.

### Revelation 12:6

Ver. 6. *And the woman fled into the wilderness:* as the Israelites, when they fled from Pharaoh, went into the wilderness; and Joseph, watched upon by Herod, fled into Egypt; so the church did hide herself during the antichristian persecutions, every one shifting for themselves as well as they could.

*Where she hath a place prepared of God;* God provided for them in some

more obscure places.

### Revelation 12:7

Ver. 7. *And there was war in heaven:* by *heaven*, in this place, doubtless is meant the church of God; and supposing that the pagan emperors are to be understood by the *dragon*, ( which is pretty generally agreed), there can be no great doubt, but by this *war in heaven*, is to be understood those persecutions which the primitive church endured between the years 64 and 310.

*Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels:* the two parties were the pagan emperors, and their officers, and party, and *Michael and his angels*. But who is here meant by *Michael and his angels*? Some, by this *Michael*, understand a principal angel called *the archangel*, Jude 1:9, *one of the chief princes*, Da 10:13. Others, by *Michael* here understand Christ himself, who, they think, is understood by *Michael*, Da 12:1. The matter is not much; it is most certain that the battle is not ours, but Christ's. It is as certain that Christ exerciseth his power by his angels, and that they have a ministration about his church. The meaning is no more than this, that Christ and his party opposed the pagan persecutors and their party.

### Revelation 12:8

Ver. 8. The pagans were at length routed in this battle; the Christians overcame them by the preaching of the gospel, and by their faith and patience; and paganism found no place within the same territories where the church was. This was fulfilled in the time of Constantine the Great, who altered the face of the Roman empire; and more eminently in the time of Theodosius, about the year 380.

### Revelation 12:9

Ver. 9. *And the great dragon was cast out;* the dragon mentioned Re 12:3, which typified the pagan emperors. In casting them out, *the devil* who

influenced them, was cast out, who is here called the *old serpent*, with reference to the form in which he seduced Eve, as well as his malignity to man.

*The devil*, that is, the accuser of the brethren, (of which we have an instance in Job 1:1-22), and *Satan*, which name he hath from his opposition to Christ and all Christians.

*Which deceiveth the whole world;* by seducing them to idolatry and superstition.

*He was cast out into the earth;* cast down from his former state.

*And his angels were cast out with him;* the instruments he used in persecuting the church, were put out of power. Mr. Mede understands it of the demons which the heathens worshipped as inferior gods. John, being in his trance still, thought he saw a great red dragon, (which he judged to be the devil), and Christ, or the good angels, fighting with and overcoming him; and that he saw the devil, and those evil angels assisting him, thrown down to the earth. This prophetically and typically signified; that though the Roman emperors, being pagans, should persecute the church upwards of three hundred years, yet they should be overthrown, and paganism, with all its idolatry and superstition, should be rooted out; which occasioned a great deal of glory to God from the praises and thanksgivings of his people, expressed in the next three verses.

### Revelation 12:10

Ver. 10. *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven:* John undoubtedly heard this voice as in the third heaven, whither he was caught; but it is not only expressive of the joy and satisfaction which the glorious angels and glorified saints had, upon their knowledge of what was done upon the earth, but prophetic of the great joy which should be over all the church, upon Constantine's stopping the persecution. and restoring peace to the church, by casting out all pagan idolatries and superstitions.

*Now is come salvation;* temporal salvation, and deliverance from persecutors.

*And strength;* now God hath showed himself a strong and mighty God.

*And the kingdom of our God;* and the King of kings, who reigneth over all the earth.

*And the power of his Christ;* now Christ hath shown his power.

*For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night;* for the devil, who incessantly accuseth the saints, is overcome. Two things are here observable:

1. That the holy angels call the saints *brethren*.
2. That the accusers of Christians, for their piety towards God, are of their father the devil, for his works they do.

Informers show who is their father, by accusing others, by murdering the servants of God; they differ no more than as elder and younger brethren, both are children of the same father.

### Revelation 12:11

Ver. 11. *And they overcame him;* Michael and his angels, mentioned Re 12:7, overcame the dragon and his angels: the Christians overcame the pagans.

*By the blood of the Lamb:* some translate  $\delta\iota\alpha$  here, *propter*, because of, as denoting the meritorious cause, which is true; for Christ's blood was both the meritorious and exemplary cause of their victory. But this will not agree with the usage of the term in the next words. Others therefore rather choose to translate it, *by*, as denoting the efficient cause, whether principal (as was the blood of the Lamb) or instrumental.

*And by the word of their testimony;* as was their preaching, and professing the gospel.

*And they loved not their lives unto the death;* and by their patient bearing

the cross, not shunning the danger of death, that they might preach Christ, and own his truths, and live up to the holy rule of his gospel.

### Revelation 12:12

Ver. 12. *Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them:* he calls to the angels and saints again to rejoice; some think, to the church also: these tell us, that *the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea,* in St. John's writings, always signify the enemies of the church, earthly, carnal men.

*For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath;* the devil now being divested of the power he exercised against the church, will fall upon you; for though he principally hateth the saints, as most opposite to him, yet he is the common hater of mankind.

*Because he knoweth that he hath but a short time;* and he hath but a little time to execute his malice, he shall shortly be confined to the bottomless pit. It is hard to say whether here be intended all in general, or the worsor part of the world only; for great judgments after this came upon the whole Roman empire by the Goths and Vandals, and upon the church by the Arians, and by antichrist, of whose rise we shall read in the next chapter.

### Revelation 12:13

Ver. 13. *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth;* when the devil saw that he could not uphold his kingdom by paganism, nor further execute his malice by pagan emperors, but was wholly routed and overcome, as to that power.

*He persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child;* to let us know that he retained his malice, though he had lost his former power, he goes on in pursuing the church of God to its ruin, only doth it in another form; heretofore in the form of a pagan, now under the pretence of a Christian; by heretics, the spawn of Arius and Photinus, (who were before this time), and by Pelagius, Nestorius, and Eutyches, who all were between the years 400 and 500, and by antichrist, the *beast* we shall read of, Re 13:1, with *seven heads and ten horns.*



## Revelation 12:14

Ver. 14. *And to the woman;* to the sincerer part of Christians, represented by *the woman*, Re 12:1, and by *the temple, and altar, and them that worship therein*, viz. in the oracle where the altar stood, Re 11:1.

*Were given two wings of a great eagle:* the eagle being the ensign of the Roman empire, and Theodosius having two sons, Honorius and Arcadius, between which he divided the empire, making Honorius the emperor of the west, and Arcadius of the east, leadeth some very judicious interpreters to expound this passage of the providence of God (by this division of the empire about the year 390) in some measure securing his church from the great troubles that presently ensued. For in the year 411, Alaricus king of the Goths took Rome, and continual troubles so ensued, that by the year 480 the western empire was quite extinguished, ending in Augustulus, who, because of his manifold afflictions, is supposed to be the *star* mentioned Re 8:10,11, called *Wormwood*, who fell upon the sounding of the third trumpet.

*That she might fly into the wilderness:* by *the wilderness* is here undoubtedly meant some places which were like a wilderness for solitariness, where the church might have some rest.

*Into her place;* the place said to be by God prepared for the church, Re 12:6.

*Where she is nourished;* where God hid, and protected, and provided for his people a certain time, expressed in the next words. I know not whether we need be so critical or no, or whether it be not safer to expound all the foregoing words more generally, viz. that God graciously provided for his people hiding-places against the storm now coming upon the whole Roman empire, bearing them, as it were, *on eagles' wings*, as he did his old Israelites when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. It is the very phrase used by God, Ex 19:4.

*For a time, and times, and half a time:* it is apparent, that the same space of time is here meant that is mentioned Re 12:6, and called *a thousand two*

*hundred and threescore days.* Most interpreters agree, that it signifieth three years and a half, consisting each of them of three hundred and sixty prophetic days, that is, years; for although we count three hundred and sixty-five days to the year, (and there are strictly so many, besides some odd hours), yet anciently they counted but three hundred and sixty, leaving out the five odd days, as we do now the odd hours and minutes, which in four years make up an odd day, which makes every fourth year leap year. Now three times three hundred and sixty make up a thousand and eighty, to which add one hundred and eighty for the half year, it makes just a thousand two hundred and sixty, the number of days mentioned Re 12:6. If any inquire why what was expressed by one thousand two hundred and sixty days there, is thus expressed here? It is answered: To make this comport with the prophecy of Daniel, Da 7:25 12:7, where it is thus expressed.

#### Revelation 12:15

Ver. 15. *And the serpent;* the devil, the old serpent, mentioned Re 12:9, being able no longer to execute his malice as a dragon, by the civil power of the heathen emperors, tearing Christians in pieces, but discerning the church secured by the special providence of God, went to work another way.

*Cast out of his mouth water as a flood;* corrupting the judgments of several persons, who, out of the abundance of error in their hearts, preached corrupt doctrine. Such were the followers of Arius, Nestorius, Eutyches, Pelagius, &c. *The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters,* Pr 18:4. *The mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things,* Pr 15:28.

*That he might cause her to be carried away of the flood;* on purpose to ruin the church: and, indeed, such were the ill effects of these heresies, that he who is but meanly versed in the history of the fifth age, will see reason to adore the providence of God, that the Roman emperors, upon the sight of them, did not again turn pagans, and add their force to the malice of these pretended Christians against the sincerer part of the church.

### Revelation 12:16

Ver. 16. *And the earth helped the woman:* there are divers notions here of *the earth*; to me theirs seemeth most probable, who understand by *the earth* the Goths and Vandals, &c., who, Anno 410, invaded the Roman empire, and gave it continual trouble, till they had put an end to the western empire, Anno 480. By whose continual contests with the subjects of the Roman empire, the church enjoyed some quiet in the exercises of religion; and though all this while they were troubled by the broods of Arians, Pelagians, Nestorians, and Eutychians, yet they could do them no great hurt; and the church had a liberty to condemn them by the second and third general councils; in which, it is probable, there were many too that deserved no better name than *the earth*.

*And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth;* but yet they served, in a great measure, to swallow up that flood of heresies which the devil threw out of his mouth by these heretics.

### Revelation 12:17

Ver. 17. *And the dragon was wroth with the woman:* the devil hath been defeated in two designs against the whole church; he could not wholly root it out by the ten persecutions under the Roman emperors, nor by the water thrown out of his mouth, pestilent doctrines which he influenced some to broach; but he was angry still, his rage was not extinguished.

*And went to make war with the remnant of her seed;* he gives over his design to ruin the whole church, as not practicable, but resolves to do all the mischief he could to the remnant of her seed, to particular Christians; those especially, which kept closest to the doctrine of faith, called here *the testimony of Jesus Christ*, and to the rule of a holy life, which is meant by keeping *the commandments of God*. Hence antichrist's rage hath not been against Christians in general, as was the pagans', but only against such Christians as he hath not been able to bring over to him, in a compliance with his corruptions in doctrine, worship, and discipline.

## Revelation 13:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 13:1-10 A beast with seven heads and ten horns riseth out of the sea, to whom the dragon giveth his power, wherewith he blasphemeth God, and vexeth the saints.

Re 13:11-17 Another beast cometh up out of the earth, which supporteth the worship of the former beast.

Re 13:18 The number of the beast.

### Chapter Introduction

God is now coming to show his prophet that grand enemy of his church, who is emphatically called antichrist; after the determination of whose time of one thousand two hundred and sixty years, the kingdom of Christ shall begin, whether in the day of judgment, or in some period of time before that, and here upon the earth, I dare not determine.

The rise, power, and prevalency of this adversary, is described in this chapter; the opposition made to him by Christ and his followers, Re 14:1-20; his fall, Re 15:1-18:24; for which praise is given to God, Re 19:1-21.

This enemy of the church is showed to John by the symbol or representation of two beasts; the one having the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion; the other having two horns like a lamb, but speaking like a dragon, Re 13:11.

The reader must understand, that the rise of these beasts, their rage, and prevalency, was contemporaneous with some of the six trumpets, mentioned Re 8:1-13 and Re 9:1-21. For, Re 9:15, upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet antichrist began to fall; whose gradual fall we shall find more fully described in Re 16:1-21, by pouring out of the vials; only (as was before said) there is from Re 12:1-17 a more particular description of what should happen to and in the church under the first six trumpets.

The best interpreters, by these two beasts, understand the antichrist, (for in a larger sense there are more antichrists than one), and by the antichrist

they understand the pope, as armed both with a secular and ecclesiastical power; yet I durst not conclude from that notion, the civil magistracy of the Roman empire, who either helped the pope into his chair, or held him there.

The greatest loss we are at, is to determine the time when the papacy began: it could not be before the pagan empire was thrown down, that was about the year 325, nor before the *silence in heaven for half an hour* was over, which (if that by it the rest be meant which the church enjoyed in the time of Constantine and Theodosius) was about the year 390, or 400; but if we fix the rise of the papacy there, I know no ground for it, and it would, besides, have been determined in the year 1660, or thereabouts. I think, therefore, we must distinguish between the rise and reign of antichrist. It doth not seem to me reasonable to make his reign to commence higher than the year 600, or 606, when he arrogated to himself the primacy; and that was confirmed to Boniface the Third by Phocas, in requital of Boniface's kindness to him, who had got the empire by the base murder of Mauritius his master, and of all his children, and stood in need of the pope's help to support him. From that time, I judge, the one thousand two hundred and sixty years should be counted; but *Nemo repente fit pessimus*, we must allow the papacy some time to come to this virile estate from his cradle. And I see no great harm of allowing the two hundred years, from the year 400 to 600, for this. So that I do think that in this chapter is shortly revealed what should happen to the church from about the year 400, or the space of forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty years, the time of the beast's reign.

Ver. 1. *And I stood upon the sand of the sea:* the place of John's present residence was Patmos, which was an island, Re 1:9. He was yet in a vision, but thought he was upon the sea-shore, either in Patmos, or elsewhere.

*And saw a beast rise up out of the sea;* that is, as I should think, unexpectedly; for who would expect to see a leopard rise from thence?

*Having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns:* this beast is described like the dragon, Re 12:3, (only that is described with but seven crowns), by which we understand the devil in the heathen emperor's of Rome; and we shall find it, Re 13:2, so answering Daniel's vision of the

four monarchies, that I cannot but think the Roman emperors, after the time of Theodosius, are meant, several of which were Arians, as also were the Goths and Vandals, (many of them), who from the year 402 invaded the empire, and were not beaten out till 564, little above forty years before Boniface was confirmed in his primacy.

*And upon his heads the name of blasphemy:* the Arians denying the eternal existence of Christ as God, may well be said to have *the name of blasphemy* upon them, or upon their *heads*: but whether by these ten heads be meant the ten sorts of governors made use of in the empire, or the ten governments into which the Goths and Vandals divided the empire, is not easy to determine, nor, possibly, much material. There are other notions about this beast: some would have it to be the devil, but he is plainly distinguished, Re 12:2,4, from the dragon. Some would have it to be the Turk; but we read of the worshipping of this beast, which is what we read not done to the Turkish emperors, who also began not till above the year 1200, (though indeed the Saracens began five hundred years before), but Rome, which never was the Turk's seat, is made the seat of this beast. Some would have it to be idolatry itself; this was Grotius's notion: see the reasons against it in Mr. Pool's Synopsis Latina. Some would have it the pagan empire of Rome; but John never saw the first rise of that. This is a beast that rose after the dragon was cast down; which must be the Roman empire under the dominion of the papacy, in which respect only it is now one beast again; for otherwise in civil respects it is divided into ten crowned horns, i.e. distinct, independent kingdoms or principalities.

### Revelation 13:2

Ver. 2. Daniel, in his vision of the Chaldaic, Persian, Grecian, and Roman monarchies, by which the world was successively ruled from his time to St. John's, and many years after, had the first represented to him by a lion, for its nobleness and fierceness; the second by a bear, for its cruelty; the third, by a leopard, for the smallness of its bulk, the swiftness of its conquests, its strength, &c.; the fourth, by a beast (not named) strong, and exceedingly terrible, that had great iron teeth, that devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue under its feet. This beast is certainly here described, which had several forms: John saw it at first under the representation of a red dragon, which signified that empire, while pagan,

for three hundred years after Christ; in which time the old serpent could prevail nothing against the church. Then (after a rest to the church of a few years, which ended with Theodosius about the year 380 or 400) he saw it under the form of *a leopard*, ruled by Arian emperors till near 600. This beast had *the feet of a bear* and *the mouth of a lion*. These emperors, with the Goths and Vandals that were Arians, were as cruel to true Christians as the pagan emperors had been. Gitimer, king of the Vandals, Anno 530, and the Goths under Totilas, 540, made miserable havoc amongst the Christians.

*And the dragon gave him his power;* these together inherited both the power of the heathen emperors, *and their seat*, and Rome, which was their seat, or throne, and exercised there *great authority*. All this was done in the form of *a leopard*, not so terrible as that of a dragon; for the Arians disclaimed paganism, and the worship of pagan idols. All this while the papacy was creeping up, but till the year 552, or thereabouts, the Goths and Vandals, and other barbarous nations, were not driven out of Italy. Totilas (who took Rome Anno 547) was then killed, and Thejas succeeded him, who was the last king of the Goths in Italy, who about twenty years after was beaten by Narsetes, and driven out, after the Goths and Vandals had reigned in Italy about seventy-seven years.

### Revelation 13:3

Ver. 3. *And I saw one of his heads;* that is, the leopard's head.

*As it were wounded to death:* the seven heads of this beast are interpreted by the Spirit of God himself, to be *seven kings*, Re 17:10, i.e. seven forms of sovereign government in the Roman state, and these successive one to another; for it is said there: *Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is yet to come:* so that this head must be either that then in being, or that to come; it cannot be that to come, because that does not receive its fatal blow and deadly wound till the final dissolution of the Roman (as the fourth metal) monarchy; therefore it must be that head then in being, viz. that of the pagan emperors: and the wounding of this head to death, is the conquering the pagan emperors, and the abolishing of paganism and idolatry, and putting a stop to persecution by the Christian emperors; *and his deadly wound was healed;* and consequently this wound was healed

when idolatry (for substance the same with the heathenish, though in a new dress) and persecution was restored (gradually) by the doctrine and practice of the Romish Church.

#### Revelation 13:4

Ver. 4. *And they worshipped the dragon:* by *the dragon*, here, is to be understood the devil.

*Which gave power unto the beast;* who gave power to these emperors; not that they did so directly, but interpretatively; they worshipped idols, which ordinarily in Scripture are called devils.

*And they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast?* Possibly worshipping in this latter clause is not to be understood of a Divine adoration, but a civil subjection; people, upon the driving out of these their enemies, generally gave themselves up to the obedience of their emperors and the bishops of Rome, commanding them idolatrous worship; and admired these two, as those by whom they had been delivered from those enemies who had plagued them so long.

#### Revelation 13:5

Ver. 5. *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies:* by *him* here must be meant antichrist, (as appears by the forty-two months, his period, being the same with one thousand two hundred and sixty days), both the secular power of the emperors of Rome at this time, and the ecclesiastical power of the bishops of Rome concurred to make one antichrist. God permitted, and the devil influenced, this beast to speak *great things*, as Da 7:11, which is interpreted by the term *blasphemies*. Blasphemies against God signifies strictly any reproachful speeches against him, whether attributing to him the creature's imperfections, or denying him the perfection proper to him, or giving to the creature what belongs to God only, which blasphemy must be in all idolatry; for adoration is due unto God alone, and when this is given to any creature, there is both blasphemy in the doctrine which teacheth the lawfulness of it, and idolatry in the practice of it.



*And power was given unto him to continue forty and two months:* these forty-two months are (as hath been before showed) the same term of time with one thousand two hundred and sixty days, and must be the term of antichrist, which was given him to tread down the outward court in; so as the beast here spoken of must be the antichrist, who began in the civil power of the Roman empire, but was quickly metamorphosed into the ecclesiastical power of the bishop of Rome; in comparison of whose power (after he had obtained the primacy) indeed the emperor's power was very small.

### Revelation 13:6

Ver. 6. That is, antichrist opened his mouth to blaspheme God. Mr. Mede noteth well, that antichrist's time must not be counted from his beginning to persecute, but from his beginning to blaspheme, either by maintaining pernicious doctrine, or setting up idolatrous worship; for till the year 1206, when the Inquisition was set up, (the doctrine of transubstantiation having been about that time decreed by Innocent the Third, and confirmed by the council of Lateran), the persecution was not great. It is also the observation of the same learned author, that the threefold idolatry of the Church of Rome is here described to us; their blaspheming the Lord's name, by giving Divine adoration to images; their blaspheming the human nature of Christ, (which he thinks is here to be understood by the Lord's *tabernacle*, ) by their doctrine of transubstantiation, giving every mass-priest power to make it of a piece of bread; and their putting the glorified saints in the place of the pagan demons, by their invocation of saints. The observation is very ingenious, but whether the sense of this text I doubt; for we are now about the period when antichrist began to reign, which we suppose to be soon after the year 600. The blasphemies here mentioned, were his first-fruits: but the doctrine of transubstantiation, though it might be broached one hundred years before, yet was made no doctrine of their church of six hundred years after the first beginning of the papacy; and therefore cannot well be reckoned amongst antichrist's first blasphemies. But whoso is acquainted with the history of the church after the year 606, will find enough to justify this text, though we do not restrain their blasphemy to these three things.

### Revelation 13:7

Ver. 7. God showeth John, that after antichrist had gone on blaspheming the name, and tabernacle, and saints of God, some years, the devil should influence him also *to make war* against God's holy ones, and he would suffer him *to overcome them*; and he should have a *power over all the nations* of that part of the world, where God had his church. This was eminently fulfilled after the year 1200, when the doctrine of transubstantiation was established. The Inquisition was set up in Spain, 1206; the number of those murdered by it was exceeding great. But yet this was too slow a work, the pope quickly raised vast armies against the Albigenses, first under the conduct of his legate, then of Simon de Montford. Perionius (one of their own) saith, that more than a million were slain in these wars of these poor people, merely for not complying with the Church of Rome in her apostacy. But what were these to those slain in the valleys of Piedmont, Provence, Calabria, Alsatia, Bohemia, before the year 1517, when the Reformation began in Germany? What slaughters have been since made in Germany, Hungary, Flanders, Ireland, &c., every one knows. The latter clause was eminently verified until the year 1517, there being no nation in Europe but was subject to the pope of Rome, so as he had a *power over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations*. The poor Albigenses thought themselves concerned in this prophecy; for when the popish general, Simon de Montford, had made a vast slaughter of them, and the archbishop of Tholouse interceded for those that survived, upon condition that they would embrace the Romish faith, they boldly refused, sending the archbishop word, that they were the overcome servants of Jesus Christ; and all died comforting themselves with the prophecy of this text.

### Revelation 13:8

Ver. 8. God here showed his prophet the general subjection that would be of all people to the papacy, except some few, whom he had chosen to eternal life and salvation, whom Christ had redeemed with his blood, and would preserve from this pollution.

### Revelation 13:9

Ver. 9. Either, let him hear what hath been already said, and take heed that he be not one of those that worship the beast; or, let him hear what followeth concerning the ruin of antichrist and his adherents: but from the usage of this phrase in other scriptures, where it is oft made use of to stir up attention to some remarkable thing, it seemeth rather to be applied to what went before. The phrase also further lets us know, that (comparatively) the number of those who should refuse to worship the beast would be very small, as indeed it proved.

### Revelation 13:10

Ver. 10. As it was God's manner by the prophets of old, when he had denounced judgments against his people, to comfort them by a prediction of the ruin of their enemies; so here, by this his New Testament prophet, he assureth his church, that antichrist also should have his period, and have the same measure meted to him which he had meted out to others, by leading into captivity, and killing with the sword: and indeed, there are no sins which God doth so ordinarily punish by retaliation, as sins against justice and mercy, (of which nature persecutions are the most eminent), Isa 33:1,2.

*Here is the patience and the faith of the saints;* that is, there is a time for God's people to exercise their faith and patience: patience, because they are like to wait for deliverance a long time, and to suffer many sharp things in the mean time; and faith, because their deliverance will be a thing out of sight, of which they will have no security but from the promise of God.

### Revelation 13:11

Ver. 11. There are great disputes about this other beast, who is represented or signified by it. The popish writers say it is some eminent impostor, who shall appear in the world before the coming of antichrist. Others would have it to be magic practised by Apollonius Thyaneus, the vanity of which notion Dr. More hath sufficiently demonstrated. The generality of

protestant writers agree it to be antichrist himself, the same beast which was before spoken of, only in another form. The design, and time, and power of both is the same; neither hath this other beast any other figure assigned to him; and in the end of this chapter we shall find mention but of one beast, the *mark, name, and number* of the beast, mentioned Re 13:16-18, is but of one beast; and we shall find the power of both to be the same; only he is called *another*, because appearing in another form, or under another type. The former beast typified the civil power of antichrist; this, his ecclesiastical power. He is said to have come up *out of the earth*; either because he was of a meaner extraction than the other, or because he stole upon the world insensibly. The pope and the clergy are judged by the best interpreters to be here meant.

*And he had two horns like a lamb*; he pretends to the power of Christ, as his vicar, and therefore is said to have *horns like a lamb*.

*And he spake as a dragon*; but he should speak terribly; or his doctrines should be such as the apostle calls *doctrines of devils*; or his words and practice should be like those of the great red dragon.

### Revelation 13:12

Ver. 12. *The power of the first beast was to speak great words and blasphemies, and to make war with, and overcome the saints, Re 13:5,7.* This power also should be exercised by the papacy, (according to this prophecy), and time hath witnessed the truth of it. And as, before he arrived at the height of power, he had persuaded the latter emperors to establish idolatry and superstition; so having now the power in his own hands, and being by the first beast made head of the church, he now vigorously causeth all under his power to obey the edicts, decrees, and commands of that nature, which those emperors had published; choosing rather to do this in the name of others, than from himself; that in case of the non-compliance of any, he might charge them with sedition or disobedience to the imperial laws, or dissenting from antiquity, &c. Hence he *causeth them to worship the first beast* rather than himself.

### Revelation 13:13

Ver. 13. *And he doeth great wonders; lying wonders,* 2Th 2:9, such as, by God's permission, false prophets might do, De 13:1,2. Prophets were to be judged true or false, not from any signs or wonders which they did, but from the doctrine they taught, and would by those signs establish.

*So that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men;* wonders as great as those which Elijah wrought.

### Revelation 13:14

Ver. 14. The Lord showeth his prophet by what means the papacy should cheat the world, viz. by pretences of miracles, which it had a power to work, (the doctrines of the Church of Rome to this are sufficiently known), all which are done *in the sight of the beast*, that is, to his honour, and to gain him a reputation. As God gave his prophets and apostles a power to work true miracles for the confirmation of their mission from him, and of the doctrines which they brought; so he permitted others to work *lying wonders* for the confirmation of their false doctrine. The apostle therefore describeth the coming of antichrist to be *with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,* 2Th 2:9,10.

*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:* these words show the design of this last mentioned beast, viz. to *make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword*. Mr. Mede's notion here seemeth best to me, that by *the beast which had the wound by a sword*, is to be understood the dragon, of whose wound we read, Re 6:1-17. He was the type of the pagan emperors, whom God rooted out. Antichrist's design was to make an image of that old beast, in which it might again live; which he did by his setting up the veneration of images, and the invocation of saints; the pagan idolatry lying chiefly in their adoration of persons (who had been famous amongst them) when they were dead, making them their mediators to their supreme gods, and in the veneration of their images and statues. The making the image of this beast, was the restoring of the same idolatry, changing only the names of princes and great soldiers, whom the pagans worshipped after their death, into the names of saints; in which

image the dragon lived again: and it is sufficiently known how the Romish clergy deceiveth people into this idolatry by their stories of miracles done by such saints.

#### Revelation 13:15

Ver. 15. The beast, mentioned Re 13:11, *had power to give life* unto this new formed idolatry, conformable to that of the pagans, in which the old beast again lived: he gave life to it by his decrees and bulls, and canon laws, and by his excommunications and censures of those that would not comply with his idolatry as heretics; after which the persons so adjudged were delivered up to the secular power to be put to death.

#### Revelation 13:16

Ver. 16. No particular character is here to be understood, but only the general imposition of the Romish faith upon all sorts of persons. His *mark* was nothing else but either the profession of his faith and religion, or a vowed subjection to his commands, which we know is the practice of the papacy where it obtaineth in any country.

#### Revelation 13:17

Ver. 17. *And that no man might buy or sell:* this the popish church effects by its excommunications; it was begun in the council of Lateran, anathematizing all who entertained any of the Waldenses, or traded with them; and the late learned bishop of Armagh, in his book *De Successione Ecclesiae*, hath given us an account of such a canon of a synod in France, which in express terms forbade any commerce with heretics in buying or selling. Paraeus tells us Pope Martin the Fifth hath best interpreted this prophecy, in his bull added to the council of Constance, where he prohibits Roman Catholics to suffer any heretics to have any dwellings in their countries, or to make any bargains, or use any trades, or to perform to them any civil offices.

*Save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his*

*name*: there have been great disputes about the *name* and *number of the beast*. I must profess myself not able to distinguish between the *mark*, *name*, and *number* of the beast; they may all signify the same thing, viz. the profession of the Romish religion. Some think the number is contained in the name, and that the name is ΔΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ, in which the number six hundred and sixty-six is contained; of which we shall speak more by and by.

### Revelation 13:18

Ver. 18. *Here is wisdom*; that is, Herein is the wisdom, the unsearchable wisdom, of God seen in the trial of his church; or, (which is more probably the sense), this is a point will exercise the wisdom of men.

*Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast*; let him that is spiritually wise count the number of the beast.

*For it is the number of a man*; it is such as may be numbered after the way men use to number.

*And his number is Six hundred threescore and six*: what this meaneth hath exercised the wits of the greatest divines in all ages. A late learned and valuable writer thinks that 666 doth not signify a certain definite number, but an indefinite number, and that not of years, but of pernicious errors, by the broaching and upholding of which antichrist may be known. But the most interpreters think a number, and that a definite, certain number, of years is to be understood here: but they are again divided; some thinking them determining the time of the fall of this beast; others judging them to determine or define the year or time of his beginning to reign, the time from whence his period and term of forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty years, commenceth: most of those who think this number determinative of the time when he should fall, understood by it the year 1666, which raised the expectation of many good and some learned men (though we see in this thing they were deceived) upon that year. A countryman of our own, who hath written an English Dissertation about the Name, Number, and Character of the Beast, hath with much more probability judged this number definitive of the time when he began to reign under the title of "universal bishop", which was about the year 606;

but there seemeth to be a want then of sixty years; to answer which objection, the aforesaid author (N. Stephens) undertaketh to make out, that the year which according to our account was 606, was according to Daniel's chronology 666; for it is the six hundred and sixty-sixth year of the Roman monarchy, which, saith he, is to be counted from the time when that empire first invaded the church, which was when Cicero and Antonius were consuls, about sixty years before Christ; for then the Romans first subdued the Jews, the ancient church of God. As to this notion, there is nothing to be proved, but that 666 must be counted from that epocha; for admitting that, the time of the beast's reign, as to the beginning of it, fell much about the year 666. I shall only say of it, that I do not judge it a contemptible notion. This makes this prophecy a prediction of the time when this beast should begin to show his power, and therefore it is called *the number of his name* (*name* in Holy Scripture often signifying dominion and power). But there is yet another notion, which is the most learned Dr. Potter's, in his book called *The Interpretation of the Number Six Hundred and Sixty-six*; a book justly valuable both for the great wit and learning in it, and much magnified both by Dr. More, and Mr. Mede, whose judgment of it is prefixed to it; in which he saith: It is the happiest tract that ever yet came into the world, —and though at first he read the book with much prejudice, yet when he had done it, it left him possessed with as much admiration. The foundation on which he goeth is, that this number is to be interpreted by the opposite number of 144, Re 21:17, as the measure of the wall of the new Jerusalem; which is to be understood of square measure, as he proveth, Re 6:1-17; for the wall could not be 144 cubits high, nor 144 cubits broad; but in square measure so much, that is 12 cubits high and 12 cubits broad (for the length cannot be understood); it being impossible that a wall 144 cubits long, should encompass a city 91 furlongs about. In like manner he thinks 666 ought to be counted by the square root of that number, which is 25???. Hence he concludeth, that as 12, the square root of 144, is God's number, so 25 is the square root of antichrist's number 666; and by this enigmatical expression we are taught that antichrist should be a political body, that should as much affect the number of 25, as God seemeth to have in his church affected the number of 12. Under the Old Testament God built his church upon twelve patriarchs, it was made up of twelve tribes: Jerusalem, mentioned by Ezekiel, Eze 48:31, and in this book, Re 21:12, *had twelve gates*; Re 21:21, *these were twelve pearls*; *at the gates*, Re 21:12, *were twelve angels*; *the wall*, Re 21:14, *had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles*; Re



21:16, the measure of the city was *twelve thousand furlongs*; Re 22:2, *the tree of life had twelve manner of fruits*: by all which it appears that 12 was the number God affected to use with reference to his church, and the square root, both of the 144 cubits, which were the measure of the wall, Re 21:17, and likewise of the 144 thousands, mentioned in the next chapter as the number of Christ's retinue. On the contrary, 25 is the square root of 666, (adding the fraction), which is the beast's number; and that learned author proves, that the pope and his clergy as much affected the number of 25 in their first forming their church, as God did the number of 12. They at first divided Rome into 25 parishes, (instead of the old 35 tribes), over which they set 25 cardinals, (which were their first number), who had 25 churches: they made 25 gates to the city; at last they also brought the articles of their creed to 25. This that learned author abundantly proveth, Eze 17:1-20:49 22:1-31, He also, Eze 24:1-26:21, showeth how in a multitude of things of lesser moment they affected this number of 25. This seemeth a very probable notion. I further refer my reader to the learned author's book, where he enlargeth upon these things with great wit and learning. In this variety I shall positively determine nothing, but have shortly mentioned the senses I think most probable, as to this mysterious number 666.

## Revelation 14:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 14:1-5 The Lamb with his company standing on Mount Sion,  
Re 14:6,7 an angel preacheth the gospel,  
Re 14:8 another proclaimeth the fall of Babylon,  
Re 14:9-12 and a third, the punishment of them that worship the beast.  
Re 14:13 The blessedness of those that die in the Lord.  
Re 14:14-16 The harvest of the world.  
Re 14:17-20 The vintage and winepress of God's wrath.

Ver. 1. God, in this part of the vision, showeth his servant John, that during the whole reign of antichrist, till the voice mentioned Re 14:8,

*Babylon is fallen*, should be heard, notwithstanding all his rage, he would preserve his church, though it would be but a small number, bearing no better proportion to the whole world than one hundred and forty-four thousand (the number of those sealed of each tribe of Israel, Re 7:1-17) bare to whole Israel, which were above six hundred thousand upon both their numberings, Nu 1:26. The *Lamb* here signifieth Christ, Re 5:6.

*Mount Sion* signifieth the church of the gospel, typified by Mount Sion amongst the Jews where the temple stood.

*An hundred forty and four thousand* is the same number that was sealed of all the tribes of Israel, Re 7:1-17: not that there was just so many which made up the church under antichrist's persecution; but it signifies:

1. A small number in comparison of such as should be of another stamp.
2. It is a number made up of twelve times twelve, by which is signified that they were a people that should answer the Israelites indeed of the Old Testament, that remnant of the twelve tribes whom God had chosen, who adhere to the doctrine and precepts of the twelve apostles.

*Having his Father's name written in their foreheads*; making an open profession of being the children and servants of God: as those servants and soldiers did that had anciently the names of their masters and generals in their foreheads; it being an ancient custom for masters to brand their servants, and captains their soldiers, as we do our beasts at this day.

### Revelation 14:2

Ver. 2. *As the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder*; a loud voice, and terrible also to the followers of antichrist.

*The voice of harpers harping with their harps*; a musical, melodious voice, as of persons rejoicing. Mr. Mede rather thinks, that *the voice as of many waters*, signifies no more than *a great multitudes*, and indeed it is so expounded, Re 19:6.

### Revelation 14:3

Ver. 3. *And they sung as it were a new song before the throne: by the throne* here is meant the throne of God in glory. The *new song* here spoken of, is probably the same with that we met with before, Re 5:11,12, *sang by the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: called new*, either for the excellency of it; or, because sung unto God after Christ was manifested in the flesh; the design of it was to declare the worthiness of Christ to *receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*: see Re 5:12. Mr. Mede saith thus of it; "If God shall at any time make me fully to understand it, I will happily more largely explain it, for it is deeply settled in my mind, that the whole mystery of evangelical worship is in it contained." And quite through the Scripture generally, a *new song* signifies a song which praiseth God for some new benefits received from him.

*And before the four beasts, and the elders; the throne, beasts, and elders*, described before, Re 4:1-11, *And no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth*: during the reign of antichrist none could learn this new song, viz. to give glory to Jesus Christ alone, ascribing to him *power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, and blessing*; but a small number redeemed through the blood of Christ, from that *vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers*, 1Pe 1:18. All the other part of the world gave Christ's honour and glory to the virgin Mary, angels, and saints, &c.

### Revelation 14:4

Ver. 4. *These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins*; that is, that would not comply with antichristian idolatry and superstition; for idolatry is all along in holy writ compared to whoredom and fornication.

*Which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*; that follow the Lord Christ fully, in all things keeping close to the rules of worship and life which he hath given.

*These were redeemed from among men*; these show themselves to be

redeemed by the blood of Christ from the vain conversation of men, whether towards God, in matters of worship, or towards men.

*Being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb;* that are consecrated to, and accepted of God, as the first-fruits were, being the only part of the world that are not profane.

#### Revelation 14:5

Ver. 5. Not that any liveth and sinneth not against God, but it is to be understood comparatively; they are without fault in comparison of the rest of the world, they have not in them the guile of hypocrisy, they are sincere. Or, possibly by *guile* is here understood a lie. All idolaters are liars, Ro 1:25, and idols are called lies, Jer 16:19 Am 2:4. Mr. Mede expoundeth this text by Zep 3:13. The words may either more generally signify the holiness of these persons, in opposition to profaneness and hypocrisy; or more particularly, their freedom and purity from antichristian superstitions and idolatry.

#### Revelation 14:6

Ver. 6. God having in a vision showed unto his servant John the reign and rage of antichrist, Re 13:1-18, and in this chapter the care he would extend toward his church for the preservation of a godly seed during his reign, he now cometh by further visions to instruct him in what should be done during antichrist's reign of forty-two months. The gospel should be preached: this I take to be the substance of this verse. This angel seems to me to represent faithful ministers' speed and diligence to preach the gospel in all parts of the world. It is called *the everlasting gospel*, either with reference to the time past, as much as to say, the old gospel; or to the time to come, it being that doctrine of salvation, besides which there neither is, nor ever shall be, revealed any other while the world endureth, Ac 4:12.

#### Revelation 14:7

Ver. 7. These angels, or ministers of God, whether civil or ecclesiastical

witnesses, cried aloud against the papal idolatry, in worshipping saints and images, admonishing all men to give Divine adoration only to the true and living God, who was the Creator of all things. The worshipping of images began soon after antichrist began to reign: we find it decreed in a synod held at London about the year 710, but it was abolished by a synod at Constantinople, 712. In 723, it was again established by a synod at Mentz. By a synod in Syria it was defended, Anno 725, and the emperor Leo Isaurus was excommunicated for opposing it; but in 730, a synod at Constantinople decreed for Leo against it. Another synod, held there Anno 755, under the emperor Constantinus Copronymus, decreed against it; but two other synods held in Bavaria, 765, 766, again decreed for it. In the year 786 the second synod of Nice established it; since which time it hath constantly obtained amongst the papists. But as from the first broaching of this idolatry it was opposed by five emperors of Constantinople, so it hath all along been declaimed against by the faithful ministers of Christ, preaching the everlasting gospel, and calling upon men to perform Divine adoration only to *him who made heaven and earth*.

### Revelation 14:8

Ver. 8. The apostle is shown, that other messengers of God should come forth, during the reign of antichrist, that should declare his ruin as certainly as if it were already effected.

*Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city:* these words are taken from Isa 21:9, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath brokers unto the ground.* So Jer 51:8, *Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed.* There is no doubt but both the prophets spake of that Babylon into which the Jews were carried captive; but that Babylon was typical of another Babylon, called here the *great city*, and *great Babylon*, Re 16:19 17:5 18:10,21; and *the mother of harlots*, Re 17:5. There neither is, nor ever was, any city in the world to whom these things could agree, but to Rome, rightly enough called *the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth*, Re 17:5, both in respect of carnal filthiness there tolerated to make the bishop of Rome a revenue, and spiritual whoredom, which is idolatry: called also *Sodom and Egypt*, Re 11:8, the former of which was famous for beastly lusts, the latter for idolatry, and oppression of God's Israel. The ruin of old Babylon is denounced by the prophet, Isa 21:9,

because of her idolatry in image worship, for which the new Babylon is every whit as famous.

*Because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication:* the word translated *wrath*, though it oft so signifies, yet should rather be here translated *poison*, as we translate it, De 32:33 Job 20:16. The LXX. in those texts use the same word that is here used,  $\theta\upsilon\mu\omicron\varsigma$ ; so the sense is, with the poisonous wine of her idolatry, intimating to us the venomous condition of Romish superstitions and idolatries, to entice ignorant people to be in love with them; as harlots use with their philters, or poisoned cups, to make men in love with them. If we better approve of our translation of the term *wrath*, *the wine of the wrath of her fornication* signifieth her fornication which brings wrath upon them that join with her in it.

#### Revelation 14:9

Ver. 9. God letteth his servant John know, that during the reign and rage of antichrist, as he would have ministers of the gospel that should preach the truth, and mind men to keep themselves from idols, worshipping God alone; and others that should assure them the papacy should go down, mystical Babylon should fall; so he would have others that should give warning to men and women of those dreadful plagues that should come upon them that entered themselves in this great city, either worshipping the devil after the pagan manner, or the image of the beast, i.e. committing idolatry after the antichristian, popish fashion, or that should either be subject to this idolatrous head, or be a soldier to fight for it. What those judgments should be, God showeth in Re 14:10, and possibly there is not a more severe denunciation of judgment in the whole book of God.

#### Revelation 14:10

Ver. 10. Those that do yield a subjection to him, and profess his faith, *shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God;* that is, shall feel the severity of God's judicial dispensations, which in Scripture are expressed by *the wine cup of his fury*, Jer 25:15; see also Job 21:20 Ps 75:8 Isa 51:17; either from the intoxicating quality of wine, or the stupifying quality of it,

when mixed with myrrh, or other stupifying things. But here it is said *without mixture*, which signifies their sensible feeling of the effects of Divine wrath.

*And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb;* that is, in short, he shall go to hell at last; the exquisiteness of which torments, as to the pain of sense, is set out by *fire and brimstone*; brimstone being a material in which fire holds longest to torment any flesh put into it.

### Revelation 14:11

Ver. 11. *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever;* that is, their torments shall be everlasting, as well as most exquisite, and causing the most acute pain.

*And they have no rest day nor night;* this is but the same thing in other words; their torments shall be such as shall give them no rest at any time.

*Who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name:* the sense of these two verses is no more than this: That all idolaters shall fall under the vengeance of God in this life, and at last shall be thrown to hell; not only such as worship the beast, committing paganish idolatry, worshipping stocks and stones, and devils, as the term of their worship, but such as worship the image of that beast set up by antichrist, worshipping of angels and saints, or their images. From hence an easy answer may be given to that question, Whether a man can be saved in that which at this day is called the Roman Catholic religion? If they either worship the beast, or the image of the beast, they cannot: whether they do or no, let the reader judge from what hath been before said.

### Revelation 14:12

Ver. 12. *Here is the patience of the saints:* God having in the former chapter shown his servant John the reign and rage of antichrist in his time of forty-two months, and in this chapter what shall be the end of him and all his adherents; here concludeth with telling him: This is a period of time

wherein the patience of his holy ones will be tried, both in waiting for their deliverance, and also in their patient enduring antichrist's oppression and tyranny.

*Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus;* and here will be the trial of men, whether they will keep to the faith of Christ, and obedience of God's commandments, by coming out of, or keeping in, this spiritual Babylon: those that come out of her will show both; those that keep in that idolatrous communion will show neither.

### Revelation 14:13

Ver. 13. *And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write:* these words denote the excellency of the following saying; it is *a voice from heaven*, therefore worthy of our attention. John is commanded to *write it*, to be kept in memory for the comfort and encouragement of God's people, who might be discouraged at the hearing of those calamitous times which they were like to meet with during the reign of antichrist, in which many of them were like to be put to death.

*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord:* this phrase of dying in the Lord, is applicable to any persons that die united to Christ by a true and lively faith; all such die in the Lord. But if we consider the Scriptural usage of it, it seems rather to signify martyrs, such as die for the Lord; for *ev* often in Scripture signifieth *for*, Ro 16:2,8,12 1Pe 4:14, &c. If any shall be put to death for adherence to Christ, they shall be no losers; for they shall be blessed, and that not only upon the account of that glory into which they shall pass, but upon the account of that *rest* which their death will give them from the troubles of the calamitous times before or hereafter mentioned.

*From henceforth:* there is some little difference amongst interpreters about the sense of this participle: certain it is, it is not to be understood of the time following this revelation exclusively, as to those who before died to Christ; for they also were blessed, they also rested from their labours, &c.; yet the participle seems to refer to the time to come. The emphasis of the participle seems to be, to obviate the doubts of those who should happen to die under antichrist's rage, because they died not by the hands of pagans and avowed



enemies of the gospel, but of such as should call themselves Christians; such, saith God, die for the Lord, and are blessed, and shall be blessed.

*Yea, saith the Spirit;* the Spirit of truth affirms it.

*That they may rest from their labours;* they shall be at rest from the troubles of this life.

*And their works do follow them;* and their good deeds and patient sufferings shall follow them, as witnesses for them before the Judge of the quick and the dead.

Here follow two visions, the one of a harvest, the other of a vintage; there is no great difficulty in determining, that they both signify some judicial dispensations of God, that he would bring upon the world, or some part of it, the latter of which should be greater than the former: yet Dr. More and Mr. Mede have another notion of them. But there is some doubt amongst interpreters, whether they signify God's general judgment in the last day, or some particular judgments before that day, mentioned Re 15:1-8 and Re 16:1-21, and belong to the vials which we there read of. Those who think that the last judgment is here showed to John, are led to it from the representation of the day of judgment, under the notion of a harvest, Mt 3:12 13:39. But I rather agree with them who think that the harvest here mentioned, is a representation of some judicial dispensations of God before that time, particularly God's vengeance upon the beast, more fully expressed, Re 16:1-21. For:

1. The last judgment is fully described afterward, Re 19:1-20:15.
2. To express that, there needed not two types, the one of a harvest, the other of a vintage.
3. Here is no mention of the resurrection, which must go before the last judgment.

Mr. Mede hath noted, that there are three things belonging to a harvest;

(1.) Cutting down of corn.

(2.) Gathering it into the barn.

(3.) Threshing it.

Whence, in Scripture, it signifieth either cutting and destroying, or safety and preserving, which is the end of gathering corn into the barn. We have examples of the former, Isa 17:3,5 Jer 51:33; but of the latter we have only examples in the New Testament, Lu 10:2. It is his opinion, that the conversion of the Jews, going before the great slaughter mentioned Re 19:1-21, is that which is here meant; but I rather agree with those who think, that by this parable is signified God's judgments upon antichrist, and that the general scope of both the parables is to declare, that God would grievously punish antichrist, first by lesser, then by greater judgments, as is more particularly expressed in the two next chapters, to which this, to me, seemeth prefatory. Let us now come to the text itself ... See Poole on "Re 14:14".

#### Revelation 14:14

Ver. 14. The description here can agree to none but Christ, sitting, as it were, upon clouds, and coming out in his judicial dispensations of providence, to execute judgment upon his enemies, to which purpose he is said to have *in his hand a sharp sickle*.

#### Revelation 14:15

Ver. 15. Most interpreters understand this of the prayers of God's people, from the church, soliciting the Lord Jesus Christ (say some) to gather in the Jews, or the number of his elect, the fields being now white to that harvest, (as Christ useth the metaphor of the Samaritans, Joh 4:35), or, (as others say, with whom I rather agree), to execute vengeance on antichrist and his adherents.

#### Revelation 14:16

Ver. 16. According to the before mentioned different notion of the harvest,

there is amongst them a different interpretation of this verse; some interpreting it of God's calling in the Jews, or his elect, by the preaching of the gospel; others, of his vengeance upon antichrist and his adherents, more fully expressed, Re 15:1-16:21.

#### Revelation 14:17

Ver. 17. This angel some will have to be some instrument God would make use of to cut down antichrist: others would have it to be the word of God in the mouth of his ministers, which, Heb 4:12, *is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit*; and thus they judge this angel to be the same with the rider upon the white horse, Re 19:11-21, out of whose mouth went a sharp sword, Re 14:15.

#### Revelation 14:18

Ver. 18. *From the altar*; the place of sacrifices and burnt-offerings.

*Which had power over fire*; which had commission to execute God's judgments, compared to fire, Ps 11:6 21:9 1:3.

*And cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying*: God's holy ones cry unto him who hath a power to execute vengeance.

*Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth*; put an end to the rage of antichrist, and gather those clusters which grew upon this vine of Sodom, and were as the clusters of Gomorrah.

*For her grapes are fully ripe*; for their iniquities were come to the full, and they were now ripe for judgment. Our learned Dr. More expounds this ripeness, of a readiness for conversion, as well as for destruction, and thinks the first is here rather intended: the last words of the next verse incline me to judge otherwise.

#### Revelation 14:19

Ver. 19. Dr. More thinks the sense of this is, that men were pressed in conscience upon the sharp conviction of Christ's powerful ministers, with sorrow for their sins, and so felt the wrath of God in them. But Mr. Mede, with whom (as to the sense of this text) I rather agree, tells us, that the treading of the vintage, in parabolical Scripture, constantly signifies a cruel, bloody, and deadly slaughter; he thinks that it is the same slaughter mentioned Re 19:19-21, as to which, Re 14:15, much the same metaphor is used, *he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath, of Almighty God.*

### Revelation 14:20

Ver. 20. *And the winepress was trodden without the city: by the city,* Dr. More thinks Babylon is here meant, and that the meaning is, that the powerful convictions of the word before mentioned, shall not reach Babylon, the Romish hierarchy and polity, as being hardened against any such thing. But Mr. Mede and others think, that the city of Jerusalem is here meant, or the Holy Land, which comprehends exactly one thousand six hundred furlong, that is, two hundred Italian miles, or one hundred and sixty Grecian miles. But what that place shall be, where this slaughter shall be, is a great secret.

*And blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs:* it is plain it shall be a great slaughter, by the depth of the blood mentioned, and the length of the ground which it should to that depth overflow. It is very probable, that great battle is meant, mentioned Re 19:20,21, in the place called Armageddon, upon the pouring out of the sixth vial, Re 16:16. In so difficult a business nothing can be positively determined.

### Revelation 15:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 15:1 The seven angels with the seven last plagues.  
Re 15:2-4 The song of them which overcome the beast.  
Re 15:5-8 This seven angels receive the seven golden vials full of the wrath of God.

Ver. 1. *And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous;* that is, a representation which appeared to John great and wonderful.

*Seven angels;* ministers of God, used by him in the dispensations of his providence.

*Having the seven last plagues;* having a commission to execute the seven last judgments of God, by which he designed to destroy antichrist.

*For in them is filled up the wrath of God;* for by them the wrath of God was to be executed upon him to the uttermost.

### Revelation 15:2

Ver. 2. This *sea of glass* (as our learned More thinks) hath either an allusion to the *sea of glass like unto crystal*, reflected upon by the *lamps of fire burning before the throne*, Re 4:5,6, or to the waters of the Red Sea congealed (while the Israelites passed over) reflected upon by the pillar of fire. Others make it the church gathered out of all nations, said to be of glass, because of its splendour and glory. Others make it to signify the world, which is said to be *of glass*, to let us understand God seeth through it. It seemeth to me to signify heaven; for it is mentioned as the place of the glorified saints, who had overcome all temptations to idolatry, either from pagans, (which were *the beast*), or from antichrist and his party, (which are called the *image of the beast*), and had avoided all kind of compliance with them in profession of the religion which he would endeavour to impose upon them.

*Harpes of God* signify either the most excellent harps, or holy harps. Mr. Forbes saith well, they signify hearts tempered with joy, and love, and a grateful sense of the mercies of God towards them.

### Revelation 15:3

Ver. 3. *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God;* the song

which Moses sang upon God's delivery of the Israelites from the danger of Pharaoh, which we have, Ex 15:1-27; not that they sang those words, but to the same sense.

*And the song of the Lamb*; a song to the honour of Christ, to the same sense that Moses sang, and upon a much like occasion.

*Saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty*; admiring the greatness and marvellousness of what God had done in their deliverance, and giving him the glory of his Almighty power.

*Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints*; acknowledging, that all the acts of his providence were both *just*, God in them giving to every one their due, and *true*, God by them but justifying his promises and threatenings. These words are taken out of Ps 145:17.

#### Revelation 15:4

Ver. 4. Acknowledging, that for this God deserved to be worshipped and served by all the world, because of his holiness, much seen in the justice and truth of his ways; declaring their faith and hope, that now all nations should own and acknowledge Christ, and be subject unto him, now that his judgments upon antichrist, and his justice in all his dispensations, was made so evident to the world.

#### Revelation 15:5

Ver. 5. Here is a plain allusion to the Jewish tabernacle or temple, in which was the holy place, and the holy of holies; into the latter the high priest only entered. There were kept in the ark the two tables of God's law, often called *the testimonies of God*. From this *tabernacle of the testimony* proceeded God's oracles, there God gave answers from the mercy-seat, and therefore in the Book of Kings it is called *the oracle*. The sense some put upon this is: That God here showed unto his prophet the liberty that should be, after the downfall of antichrist, to preach the gospel. But in this sense it must be an anticipation of what orderly should have come in after the pouring out of the vials: I had rather understand it of God's being now

about to give out an answer to his people's prayers for a deliverance from the tyranny of antichrist; as the place called *the oracle* in the Jewish temple was opened when the high priest had been inquiring of God, to give an account of the answer he had.

### Revelation 15:6

Ver. 6. *And the seven angels;* the seven ministers of God's vengeance on antichrist, to whom the vials were given.

*Came out of the temple;* that is, out of *the tabernacle of the testimony*; for in Moses's tabernacle there was only this inward court for the priests, the people worshipped without. They came (as the high priest was wont) out of the oracle to bring God's answer to all his saints' prayers.

*Having the seven plagues:* the answer was *seven plagues*, that is, that God had employed them to bring seven plagues successively upon the antichristian party, and all the enemies of his church, till by them they should be consumed.

*Clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles;* these angels came in the habit of high priests, when they went in to inquire of God, or came out with an answer from God.

### Revelation 15:7

Ver. 7. *And one of the four beasts;* one of those four beasts *round about the throne*, Re 4:6.

*Gave unto the seven angels;* the seven angels mentioned Re 15:6.

*Seven golden vials:* a vial is a plain pot or glass with a wide mouth, used to drink in: these were *full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever*. The meaning is no more than that the seven angels, before mentioned, were commissioned from God, by one plague after another, to bring antichrist to his ruin.

## Revelation 15:8

Ver. 8. *And the temple;* that is, the church, as *temple* most ordinarily signifieth in this book.

*Was filled with smoke:* by *smoke*, doubtless, is meant confusions and troubles.

*From the glory of God, and from his power;* caused by God's glorious manifestation of his power, in bringing antichrist to ruin, who had so twisted his interest with that of the civil magistracy in several kingdoms, that there was no rooting him out, without a terrible shaking of all those parts of the earth where he set his foot.

*And no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled;* so as no part of the church could be at rest until God had fulfilled his ruin by these plagues: nor must any quiet state of the church be expected, until this great work be effected.

## Revelation 16:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 16:1 The seven angels are commanded to pour out their vials on the earth.

Re 16:2-14 Great plagues follow thereupon.

Re 16:15-21 Christ cometh suddenly as a thief: blessed are they that watch.

### Chapter Summary

God having showed unto his servant John in the vision of the first six seals, the fate of the church under the pagan emperors of Rome, Re 5:1-6:17, and its fate under antichrist, in the vision of the six first trumpets, under the seventh seal, Re 8:1-9:21, and diverted him by the vision of the little book opened, Re 10:1-11, and by the contents of it, Re 12:1-14:20,



and instructed him concerning the affairs of the church during all the time of the reign of the dragon, and antichrist, who was the image of the dragon, comes now to instruct him particularly how and by what means he would ruin antichrist, and restore peace to his church.

Ver. 1. *And I heard a great voice out of the temple;* either out of the church triumphant, Christ, the Head of it, commanding the executioners of his justice to go and do their office; or out of the church militant, by their prayers soliciting God to execute vengeance upon the beast. All the beast's territories, or the several parts of his kingdom, are expressed in this chapter, under the notions of *the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains, the sun,* and *the seat of the beast.* The first command to the executioners of God's justice, is, to pour out his wrath on *the earth.* By *the earth;* Pareus understands some parts of the earth; others, the common people; others, the Roman empire; but others, considering the earth as the firmest part of the universe, say, that by *the earth* is meant the popish clergy, the basis of the papacy; and I am very much inclined to judge that the most probable sense of it, not only because there is little of heaven in them, and their whole frame and model is the product of earthly policy, but because experience hath told us that the pope here received his first wound, in the diminution of their power and authority, and a contempt of them. God hath used many instruments to pour out this vial, even so many (whether princes or ministers) as he hath made use of to root out monasteries and abbeys, and to expose mass priests to scorn and contempt. Mr. Mede seemeth to be of another mind, thinking, that by *earth* is meant the commonalty of the people, whose defection from the pope was his first plague: but that which is to be understood by *the earth,* being the affected part of antichrist, I cannot agree with that learned man; for though the beast suffered by the defection of the commonalty, yet I cannot see how those that made the defection suffered at all by it.

### Revelation 16:2

Ver. 2. Here is a plain allusion to the plagues which God brought upon Pharaoh king of Egypt for his oppression of his ancient Israel; God hereby showing us, that he would deal by this Romish beast for his persecutions of his gospel churches, as he dealt by Pharaoh: as he turned the Egyptian rivers into blood, so as the fish died, and the waters stunk, Ex 7:20,21, and

as he plagued the Egyptians with boils and blains, Ex 9:9; so he would plague the papacy by proportionable judgments, until, as Pharaoh with his whole party was at last drowned in the Red Sea, so all the antichristian party shall be rooted out. Here are two of the Egyptian plagues mentioned, but this vision begins with the sixth of the Egyptian plagues, viz. that of boils breaking out in blains. What is meant by this *grievous sore* I must profess myself not to understand, but think Dr. More speaks very probably, interpreting it of trouble and vexation, which the popish party should have upon the first prospect of their kingdom's going down; it being of the nature of sores to vex and disturb those that are affected with them, so as they are very uneasy so long as they are affected with them. And, indeed, I find many interpreters agree in this notion.

### Revelation 16:3

Ver. 3. This answered the first plague upon Pharaoh, Ex 7:20, *All the waters that were in the river were turned to blood; and the fish that was in the river died.* By *the sea* here Dr. More understands the jurisdiction and dominion of the papacy, wherein he agrees with Mr. Mede. I rather agree with those who understand the whole system of the popish religion; their rites and ceremonies, their doctrines of indulgences and purgatory, &c. God showeth his prophet, and instructeth us, that he will bring the papacy to ruin:

1. By bringing his clergy (which are *the earth* upon which he stands) into scorn and contempt; discovering their frauds and cheats.
2. By discovering the folly and vanity of their pompous and theatrical religion, consisting only in vain shows, and idle rites and ceremonies, without any regard to that religion which is spiritual, and pure, and undefiled before God; discovering the cheats of their confessions and absolutions, their masses, pardons, and indulgences; making them appear to be not only idle, but pernicious and damnable; so as Christians could not live in the communion of their church, but it must be damnable to those who keep in the communion of it.

#### Revelation 16:4

Ver. 4. Mr. Mede and Dr. More both agree in interpreting this of the Jesuits and other popish emissaries, and the laws made for the execution of them in England in the time of Queen Elizabeth, not excluding those civil powers which are the upholders and maintainers of antichrist, as the Spaniard, who also within these last hundred years hath had blood enough given him to drink, both in 1588, and in the Low Countries. It seemeth a little hard to interpret a prophecy relating to the whole church, by what is done in so small a part of it. We know in what credit these emissaries are at this day, both in the empire, and in Spain, and in France, and Venice, from whence they sometime were expelled. We have, indeed, laws against them in England, but principally relating to those of them who, being native subjects of England, have apostatized. So as I had rather think this vial is not yet poured out, or that interpreters mistake the meaning of these *rivers and fountains*, than agree with them in that interpretation of this prophecy. I am much disposed to believe that we are not further than the pouring out of the second vial. God, indeed, hath made the Romish clergy contemptible enough, and hath vexed and enraged them sufficiently. He hath also made their scenical religion as contemptible to, and justly abhorred by, a great part of the Christian world; but how far he hath proceeded further to the ruin of antichrist, I do not understand.

#### Revelation 16:5

Ver. 5. This and the two following verses do but express the honour and glory that shall be given unto God, when he shall have accomplished his great work in destroying those who feed, and uphold, and maintain the beast, partly by those instruments he shall use in that work, expressed here by *the angel of the waters*, partly from others.

*Thou art righteous. O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus;* acknowledging the Lord's justice and righteousness in such destruction.

#### Revelation 16:6

Ver. 6. Because of their persecutions of, and cruelty towards, God's faithful ministers and people, which rendered the spilling of their blood but a condign punishment suited to their sin.

#### Revelation 16:7

Ver. 7. Others also, either members of the church triumphant or militant, or both, shall in that day give glory to God, as a God of power, able to do such things; of righteousness, thus giving these bloody men their due; and of truth, thus fulfilling both his promises to his people and his threatenings against his enemies. But it is easier to determine who shall thus rejoice, than the time when this joy shall be. This certainly is God's work, but *in fieri*, now doing, but not yet done.

#### Revelation 16:8

Ver. 8. Here we have no history to guide us in the government of our fancies and judgments, but their opinion seems most probable to me, who, by *the sun*, understand some great prince or potentate, or the whole civil power in the antichristian heaven; suppose the Spaniard, or the emperor. It seems to signify either some destruction of such civil powers, or some defection of them from the papacy, which will vex and enrage antichrist and his party, as if they were scorched with fire. This I look upon as much more probable than theirs who interpret it of the natural sun, or the word of God.

#### Revelation 16:9

Ver. 9. What the damned do in hell, where the wrath of God is poured out upon men to the utmost, that reprobates do upon earth, they are *scorched with great heat*, the vengeance of God cometh upon them; they are mad and enraged, and speak evil of a just and righteous God, who bringeth such plagues on them; but they have no sense of their sins, nor any thoughts of turning to God, confessing their sins, and giving him glory. This will be the upshot of God's lesser judgments upon the papacy: they will be mad at them, and rage, and reproach God's justice, but prove a hardened

generation, given over to ruin, that will never be sensible that these judgments come upon them for their idolatries and superstitions, and for their persecutions, and the shedding the blood of God's holy ones. Not that all adhering to that church will be so, (many, probably, will convert, and be brought to acknowledge the truth), but there will be a great party of them, whom nothing but the wrath of God come upon them in the bottomless pit to the utmost, will ever make sensible that they have done amiss, being given up to strong delusions, to a blind mind, and a hard heart, and a reprobate judgment.

### Revelation 16:10

Ver. 10. *And the fifth angel;* the fifth of the seven angels mentioned Re 16:1: by which, as was said, is to be understood the instruments which God will use gradually to destroy the papacy; the fifth rank of persons, whom God will employ in the execution of this his purpose, by his acts of providence.

*Poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast;* shall execute God's wrath upon the city of Rome itself, wholly destroying the papacy in their power.

*And his kingdom was full of darkness;* upon which his whole kingdom shall be full of the darkness of misery, trouble, and affliction. (Darkness was one of the plagues of Egypt).

*And they gnawed their tongues for pain;* and they shall be full of calamities, like men in so much pain that they bite their own tongues for pain. When this shall be God alone knows. I think, and experience hath proved, that they were much too hasty in their speculations, that prophesied it should be in the year 1656, or 1660, or 1666. For my own part, I do not believe it will be before 1866, or between that and the year 1900. The determination of it depends upon the right fixing of the epocha, or beginning of the forty-two months, or one thousand two hundred and sixty prophetic days, which I think most probably fixed upon the year 606, or (according to Mr. Stephens's notion) 666, which, according to the Julian account, is the same: See Poole on "Re 13:18".

## Revelation 16:11

Ver. 11. This is the same that was said, Re 16:9, of a former party belonging to the beast, and doth but signify, that there will be found the same vein of blindness of mind, hardness of heart, and reprobacy of sense, running through that whole party, until they be wholly ruined.

## Revelation 16:12

Ver. 12. *Upon the great river Euphrates;* upon the Turkish empire: See Poole on "Re 9:14".

*And the water thereof was dried up;* their force, power, and strength shall be destroyed.

*That the way of the kings of the east might be prepared;* that a way may be prepared for the conversion of the Jews. This I find to be the sense of the most learned and judicious interpreters of this mysterious book, amongst whom I count Mr. Mede, Dr. More, Pareus, Mr. Durham; &c. But it will be reasonable to say something further to show the probability of this sense. Euphrates was a great river that ran by Babylon, the depth of it was (as historians tell us) about two men's height. When Cyrus and Darius came to conquer Babylon, they diverted this river, Jer 51:32,36. Here is an allusion to that history. The Turks first took up their habitation about this great river, as was said in our notes on Re 9:14, where the providence of God restrained them for many years, till the sixth trumpet sounded. The Jews, who are observed to be in greatest numbers in the Eastern countries, having had a promise, Ex 19:6, to be *a kingdom of priests*, may well be called here *the kings of the east*. Two things hinder their embracing the Christian faith:

1. The image worship and idolatry of the papists.
2. The power of the Turks, with the success they have had against Christians.

But both these being taken away, by the fall of Babylon and the ruin of the Turks, the way seems to be prepared for the Jews' receiving of the

Christian faith. In a case where nothing can be certainly determined, this seemeth a very probable opinion. To which it contributes a little, that it is probable, that *the sixth vial* answereth *the sixth trumpet*; and that as they were the people first let loose by Euphrates, where they were bound, so they are the people to be destroyed under the notion of drying up the waters of Euphrates: and this seemeth to be a work of providence brought forth after the ruin of Rome, and the total breaking of the power and dominion of the papacy. Thus we have foretold the breaking both of pope and Turk, and all their upholders; but we must not imagine them so ruined, but that parties of both should be left in the world, which combining, made up the army to fight the devil's last battle in Armageddon, of which we shall read, Re 16:16.

#### Revelation 16:13

Ver. 13. God here showeth John, that after the power and strength both of the pope and Turks should be broken, the devil would yet make one push more; to which purpose he would influence some on the behalf of the antichristian secular power, others on the behalf of *the beast* with two horns, or *the false prophet*.

#### Revelation 16:14

Ver. 14. Which, from the influence of the devil, should solicit the kings of the earth to join together in a battle against the church. This is, undoubtedly, the battle in Armageddon, Re 16:16.

#### Revelation 16:15

Ver. 15. *I come as a thief*; that is, I come suddenly and unexpectedly: see Mt 24:43,44 Lu 12:39 1Th 5:2 Re 3:3. It may be understood either of Christ's coming to the last judgment, or of his coming in his vindicative providence to be revenged on his enemies.

*Blessed is he that watcheth*, he is a happy man that maketh it his business to keep himself from sin, in prospect of any such coming, *and keepeth his*

*garments, and that persevereth in my ways and truth; lest he walk naked, and they see his shame; for if he doth not, he will be found one of those that are not clothed with my righteousness, and his hypocrisy will appear to all men.*

#### Revelation 16:16

Ver. 16. Either the devil brought them together, or God by his providence ordered that they should be gathered together, into the place where God designed to destroy them and their armies, for so the word *Armageddon* signifieth, say some; but others make it to signify the mountain of the gospel, or the mountain of apples, or fruits; but the first etymology in this place seems best. The word doth not signify any particular place; but here is an allusion, as some think, to that *Megiddo*, mentioned Jud 5:19, where Barak overcame Sisera with his great army, and where Josiah was slain, 2Ki 23:30. Of the issue of this last battle with the enemies of the church of Christ we shall read more, Re 19:1-21.

#### Revelation 16:17

Ver. 17. *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air:* I take this to be best interpreted (as Mr. Mede doth it) by *the power of the air*, of which Satan is called *the prince*, Eph 2:2, that is, upon all the children of the devil, that had so long given disturbance to the church of Christ.

*It is done;* that is, the work of God is done, his counsels for the destruction of his enemies, and the deliverance of his people, are brought forth in the issue of his providence, not fully yet brought to an issue, but accomplishing.

#### Revelation 16:18

Ver. 18. See Re 4:5 6:12 11:13,19. Either declarative of the majesty and power of God, (as Ex 19:16, when God came forth to give his law), the violation of which God here was coming out to punish; or of the great stirs and confusions in that part of the world where the beast's greatest interest



lay. Or, the *voices, thunders, and lightnings*, may be understood as declarative of the former, and the *great earthquake* of the latter.

### Revelation 16:19

Ver. 19. *The great city*; Rome, afterwards called *great Babylon* in this verse.

*Was divided into three parts*; the pagan part, the evangelical part, and the antichristian part, (saith Dr. More), the three parties that made up the armies that fought in Armageddon: or else this is added as the effect of the great earthquake.

*And great Babylon came in remembrance, &c.*; God now took vengeance on the papacy, and all their adherents, though he had for twelve hundred and sixty years spared them, notwithstanding their idolatries and persecutions, and behaved himself toward them as if he had forgot them.

### Revelation 16:20

Ver. 20. *These are the effects of great earthquakes*: see Re 6:14. Some, by *islands* and *mountians*, understand the inhabitants of both. I know not whether those reverend authors, who by this term understand their idol worship and superstition, or ecclesiastical dignities, (I suppose because the heathens, and Jews, in imitation of them, committed idolatry on mountains and high hills), be not here too critical.

### Revelation 16:21

Ver. 21. The hail was another of the Egyptian plagues, Ex 9:22-25. The allusion also may be to the hailstones by which God fought against the five Canaanitish kings, Jos 10:11. It signifies only further great judgments with which God will pursue the beast and his party, until they all be destroyed. The latter words only show the continued hardness of heart of the beast, and all his party; wherein also they answered Pharaoh and the Egyptians, (their type), who would relent with no steadiness and certainty, until they

were all ruined by the waters of the Red Sea. In all this prediction of the final ruin of the papacy, Pharaoh and the Egyptians are apparently made the type of the pope and all his party:

1. As to their sins, which were idolatry, and the oppression of God's Israel.
2. In the plagues by which they were destroyed gradually; turning waters into blood, boils and blains, darkness, hail.
3. In their impenitency, and hardness of heart; only with these two differences, by which the antitype exceeded the type in wickedness:
  - (1.) We read of Pharaoh oft relenting, though his goodness was like a morning dew, and he returned to his former stubbornness.
  - (2.) We read nothing of the Egyptians blaspheming God, because of their plagues, which is often said of these Egyptians.

### Revelation 17:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 17:1-4 John's vision of the great whore, sitting upon the scarlet coloured beast, arrayed in purple and scarlet, with a golden cup in her hand.

Re 17:5 Her name.

Re 17:6 She is drunken with the blood of saints.

Re 17:7-17 The interpretation of the mystery of the beast, and of his seven heads and ten horns,

Re 17:18 and of the woman.

Ver. 1. This whole verse is but a preface to a new vision which John had; not new, as to the matter revealed in it; for it plainly revealeth matters relating to antichrist; and the matter of it contemporizeth with the three last vials, about the final ruin of antichrist, who was before described under the notion of a *beast*, here under the notion of a *great whore*. A whore properly signifies one that is married, and is false to her husband's bed; and so very well suits the Church of Rome, (if they yet deserve that name), *whose faith was formerly spoken of throughout the world*, Ro 1:8, but is

long since turned idolatrous (idolatry, in the prophetic style, being quite through the Scripture called whoredom). She is said to *sit upon many waters*, either because she exerciseth a jurisdiction over much people, or with allusion to old Babylon, (which gave her her name), which was situated near Euphrates, a river in which there was a great collection of waters. John is called to hear the counsels of God concerning her destruction, which though more generally and shortly revealed before, yet God here designs to reveal to John more fully, particularly, and plainly.

### Revelation 17:2

Ver. 2. *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication;* with which *great whore* several princes of the world have committed spiritual fornication, receiving her idolatrous worship, yielding to her authority, and following her example.

*And the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with, the wine of her fornication;* and not the kings only of the earth, but the generality of the people, have been influenced with a mad heat, and *with the wine of her fornication*, that is, with that wine by which she enticed them to commit idolatry with her. By this *wine* are meant honours, riches, preferments, pleasure, the gaudery of her worship, the magnificence of the apostolic see, their pretended antiquity, unity; in short, whatsoever specious arguments papists use to entice persons into the idolatrous communion of their church.

### Revelation 17:3

Ver. 3. *So he carried me away in the spirit;* that is, being in an *ecstasy*; see Re 4:2; whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell, as Paul expresseth it, 2Co 12:2.

*Into the wilderness;* a place not, or not much, inhabited, either as fittest for contemplation. or to signify that this *great whore*, which had driven the spouse of Christ into the wilderness, should shortly herself come into her state, according to the fate of old Babylon, Jer 1:13.

*And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast; the great whore,* mentioned Re 17:1, upheld by the Roman emperors.

*Full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns;* the same which is mentioned Re 13:1: See Poole on "Re 13:1". Here a great question ariseth, who this *woman* is, or, (which is the same, as appeareth by Re 17:5), what city is meant by *Babylon*, mentioned Re 17:5; a question (as Mr. Pool noteth) of high concernment; for whoever this *woman* is, or whatsoever this *Babylon* signifieth, the people of God are upon pain of damnation admonished to avoid any communion with her, and to come out of her, Re 14:9,10. Mr. Pool hath diligently collected into his Latin Synopsis all opinions about it, and showed what is to be said for or against them; I will give my reader the sum of what he saith.

1. Some would have it to be the whole world of wicked men. Against this it is said:

- (1.) That John speaks here of a certain great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth, Re 17:18: this cannot be meant of the wicked world.
- (2.) The world of wicked men are those *inhabitants of the earth*, whom this woman *made drunk with the wine of her fornication*: now she that made them drunk, and those that were made drunk, cannot be the same.
- (3.) This woman sitteth on seven mountains, Re 17:9, and so do not all the wicked of the world.
- (4.) We are commanded to come out of this Babylon, but we are not obliged to go out of the world.

2. Others would have this *woman*, or this *Babylon*, to be the old Chaldean Babylon. But:

- (1.) Where then is the *mystery*, mentioned Re 17:5?
- (2.) The Babylon here mentioned, is by all agreed to be the seat of antichrist; so was that never.

3. The generality agree it to be Rome. Amongst the ancients, Tertullian, Jerome, Ambrose, CECumenius, Augustine, Eusebius: of later writers, Beda, Aquinas, Salmeron, Pererius, Bellarmine, Lapede, Ribera, (all papists), besides a multitude of protestant writers.

- (1.) That city is also like old Babylon for power and greatness, for oppression and tyranny of and over God's Israel; besides, the city here mentioned is described by two characters, agreeing to none but Rome, Re 17:9, dwelling upon seven hills.
- (2.) Reigning over the kings of the earth: for the first Rome is the only city in the world founded upon seven hills, and famed for it by its old poets, Ovid, Virgil, Horace, Propertius, &c. It is attested to be so founded by Plutarch, Pliny, Dionysius, Halicarnassaeus. The names of these hills are known: Palatinus, Quirinalis, Aventinus, Caelius, Viminalis, Esquilinus, Capitolinus. Both papist and protestant writers agree that here by Babylon Rome is meant; but they are divided, whether it be to be understood of Rome in its old pagan state, or in its present state, or in a state yet to come.

4. Some would have it to be Rome in its pagan state; of this mind are Grotius, and Dr. Hammond, and some others. But against this many things are said:

- (1.) It is manifest that God here describes Rome not as under its sixth head, viz. the pagan emperors, but as it was under its last head, the eighth king, Re 17:11, as it should ascend out of the bottomless pit, Re 17:8.
- (2.) What John saw herein mentioned as a secret about the blood of the saints, which he wondered at; now the pagan emperors' spilling the blood of saints was a thing long since done.
- (3.) The desolation of the Babylon here mentioned was to be final, never to be repaired, as appears by Re 18:21-23; but pagan Rome was never made so desolate.
- (4.) If Rome pagan be here meant, then, after its fall, Rome Christian was the habitation of devils, Re 18:2.

(5.) Rome pagan fell upon our saints with downright blows, not with allurements, making them *drunk with the wine of her fornication*, as Re 17:2.

5. The papists, who grant that by *Babylon* Rome is meant, would have it to be Rome toward the end of the world, when, they say, Rome shall apostatize from the pope to paganism again; but for this opinion there is no foundation in Scripture, nor the judgment of the ancients, and some of the papists themselves reject it as improbable and detestable.

6. The generality and best of protestant writers understand by *Babylon*, and by this *woman*, Rome, as it is at this day under the conduct of the pope, for which they give these reasons.

(1.) Because it cannot be understood of Rome in either of the other notions, as hath been proved.

(2.) Because antichrist is to *sit in the temple of God*, 2Th 2:4, as God, therefore not in any pagan city. *The mystery of iniquity* was working in the apostle's time, but, Re 17:7, the Roman empire hindered the appearance of antichrist till the popes had wrung Rome out of their hands, and were the sole rulers there; then antichrist showed himself.

(3.) Because there is nothing said of this *great whore*, or this *Babylon*, but admirably agreeth to Rome in its present state.

#### Revelation 17:4

Ver. 4. *And the woman was arrayed in a purple and scarlet colour; purple was the colour of kings and princes: this woman*, Re 18:7, said she was *queen*.

*Scarlet* also was a rich and noble colour, anciently most used in a time of war. How much it is in use with the pope and his cardinals, is sufficiently known.

*And decked with gold and precious stones and pearls;* this shows the

worldly riches of the papacy.

*Having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication;* alluring and tempting persons to idolatry, as whores use to do with their philters, or enchanted cups, allure and provoke men to sensual satisfactions.

### Revelation 17:5

Ver. 5. *And upon her forehead was a name written;* as public harlots were wont to write their names, some upon the fronts of their houses, some upon their foreheads: it denotes the open guilt and impudence of this spiritual harlot.

*Mystery;* that is, there is a mystery in what follows in her name.

*Babylon the great;* not to be understood of the Chaldean Babylon, but of a city or polity under the gospel; as, Re 11:8, she was *called spiritually Sodom and Egypt*, so also in a spiritual or mystical sense she is called *Babylon*, because a city like to Babylon for idolatry and persecution of God's Israel.

*The mother of harlots;* not it mere harlot but one that bred up harlots, and nursed up idolatry, communicating it to others. This is the true name of Rome instead of "holy mother church."

*And abominations of the earth;* a place in which not only idolatry reigneth, but all abominable things committed in the world; carnal whoredom tolerated by them, and sodomy, &c.

### Revelation 17:6

Ver. 6. *And I saw the woman, the papacy, drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus;* filled with the blood of those holy ones, which she caused to be slain for bearing testimony to Jesus Christ.

*And when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration;* which he would not have done had it been a pagan Rome he had seen in this vision. But that any that owned Christ, and called themselves the holy church, should kill men for bearing testimony to Christ, and adherence to his rule of faith and life, this caused in John a just wonderment.

#### Revelation 17:7

Ver. 7. The angel promiseth to open this vision, it being the key of the former vision, and is the only vision expounded throughout this whole book.

#### Revelation 17:8

Ver. 8. *The beast that thou sawest;* this beast was the Roman empire, the *scarlet coloured beast* which carried the whore, Re 17:3.

*Was, and is not;* was of old, in Rome's pagan state, and *is not,* not in that form, not now pagan; *and yet is* (as is said in the close of the verse) the same in another form, idolatrous and persecuting.

*And shall ascend out of the bottomless pit;* either, out of the sea, which signifies a multitude of people; or, from hell; the word signifies both.

*And go into perdition;* and shall certainly be destroyed.

*And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, &c.:* but before he goes into perdition he shall so cheat the world, that the generality of the people shall wonder at the beast, (see Re 8:8), setting aside those who are chosen of God to eternal salvation; the one hundred and forty-four thousand, mentioned Re 14:3. I conceive that which hath made interpreters so divided in their notions about this beast is, because those words, *and yet is,* are not added in the beginning of the verse, which being understood, there appears no difficulty considerable; for it is certain the Roman empire was from before Christ, and continued pagan till the year 310; then was not pagan, but Christian, yet after some years was again as idolatrous and bloody against Christians, as the old pagan empire was; especially when



swallowed up by the pope, *the beast with two horns like a lamb*. This is *the beast with seven heads and ten horns*, Re 13:1.

### Revelation 17:9

Ver. 9. *And here is the mind which hath wisdom*; that is, here is that which requireth a mind endued with spiritual wisdom.

*The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth*; the *seven heads* which he saw the beast with, signified *seven mountains* or hills upon which Rome is situated; they were named before: See Poole on "Re 17:3". They tell us now Rome is situated in Campo Martio. *Resp.* Whatever it now is, certain it is, that in St. John's time it was situated upon them, and they are now within the compass of Rome.

### Revelation 17:10

Ver. 10. *And there are seven kings*; the *seven heads* do not only signify seven hills or mountains, but also *seven kings*, that is, (according to the best interpretation I meet with), seven forms of government which ruled Rome; the term *kings*, in Scripture, signifying rulers, whether the government was in single persons, or more, as De 33:5. Rome was governed:

1. By kings.
2. By consuls.
3. Tribunes.
4. Decemvirs.
5. Dictators.
6. Emperors that were pagans.
7. Emperors that were Christians.

*Five are fallen*; five of these were fallen, extinguished before John's time, viz. the government by kings, consuls, tribunes, decemvirs, dictators.

*And one is*; the government by pagan emperors was at that time in being.

*And the other is not yet come; the government by Christian emperors was not yet in being.*

*And when he cometh, he must continue a short space; and when it came, it held but a little time before the bishops of Rome wrested the government of Italy out of their hands. This to me seemeth the most probable interpretation of this difficult text.*

### Revelation 17:11

Ver. 11. *And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth; this made the eighth succession of governments in the Roman empire.*

*And is of the seven; this was of the seventh head; for although this was the eighth government in order as we have counted them, yet one of these, viz. the seventh, (which was that of true Christian emperors), must not be counted as one of the seven heads, which were all idolatrous: so though this was the eighth government, yet he was one of the seven heads, i.e. idolatrous governments.*

*And goeth into perdition; and to be destroyed as they were.*

### Revelation 17:12

Ver. 12. *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings: possibly by ten kings here are not meant monarchs, but governments.*

*Which have received no kingdom as yet; which were not in being in John's time, nor in many years after.*

*But receive power as kings one hour with the beast; but should, during some time of the beast's reign, have power with the papacy, employing their power with his to establish his idolatry. But who these ten monarchs are, or what these ten governments are, I must confess myself at a loss to determine. It is plain they should be:*

1. Such as should be contemporaneous with the reign of the beast.

2. Such as employed their power in conjunction with his.
3. Such as should afterwards be instruments to ruin the papacy, Re 17:16,17.

The beast's reign being twelve hundred and sixty years, there hath been, and will be, such a variety of princes and governments, as it is very hard to determine who they shall be. But their being contemporaneous with the beast, makes me think it cannot be understood either of any that were in the world before the year 606, when the beast's reign began (though *the mystery of iniquity* was working, and the *image of the beast* was making, long before); as also that the ten barbarous nations that disturbed Italy from the year 410 till near 600 could not be meant, being all before antichrist came to any reign; nor did they ever show any great love or hatred to the pope; sometimes serving, sometimes opposing him, as suited their respective civil interests. I am very inclinable to think the prophecy to concern some kings nearer the end of antichrist's reign, who though for a while they served the papacy, yet shall at last be instruments to ruin him; but who they are shall do this, or when it shall be, I cannot determine.

#### Revelation 17:13

Ver. 13. They shall all be papists, and for a while shall employ all their power and strength to uphold the popish religion.

#### Revelation 17:14

Ver. 14. *These shall make war with the Lamb;* these ten kings shall a while oppose themselves to the gospel, taking part with antichrist.

*And the Lamb shall overcome them;* Christ shall overcome them by the power of is gospel, or some of them that way; others, that will not be converted, shall be confounded, some way or other brought to ruin.

*For he is Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful;* for he hath a power above others, and

knows how to fit instruments for his purpose; so as those whom he shall make use of in this work, shall be chosen persons, and faithful in discharge of the trust committed to them.

### Revelation 17:15

Ver. 15. John saw *the great whore* sitting upon *seven mountains*, Re 17:9, and upon *many waters*, Re 17:1; these signified her dominion and jurisdiction over many people.

### Revelation 17:16

Ver. 16. *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast:* see Re 17:3,12.

*These shall hate the whore, &c.;* the ten kings shall apostatize from the papacy, and be great instruments of God to ruin it. When we see some other kingdoms, now in vassalage to the pope, do as much as hath been done in England, and Scotland, and Sweden, and some other places, we may possibly understand this prophecy better than we yet do.

### Revelation 17:17

Ver. 17. *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will;* that is, what he hath determined shall be done; not what he commandeth men to do, or approveth their doing of; his permissive will.

*And to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast;* for God puts malice against himself and his Son into the hearts of none, which is the cause of any persons' assisting the beast.

*Until the words of God shall be fulfilled;* nor shall they do this any longer than till the forty-two months be expired, which he by his word hath declared he hath allowed to these mongrel Gentiles, to tread down the outward court: but till that time be expired, these kingdoms will agree to give their power to the beast, whom about the expiration of that time they

shall hate, and help to destroy.

### Revelation 17:18

Ver. 18. *And the woman which thou sawest:* see Re 17:3.

*Is that great city;* that is, signifieth that great city, *Babylon the great:* see Re 17:5.

*Which reigneth over the kings of the earth,* commanding and punishing them as she pleaseth. To what person or power that either now is, or ever was, upon the earth, is this applicable, but to the pope, who makes emperors hold his stirrup, sends his edicts to princes to execute, excommunicates them, and interdicts their subjects, and arms them against them if they refuse? So that if the pope sits upon seven hills, or Rome he built upon them; if the papacy hath allured the inhabitants of the earth to idolatry; if in her idolatries she be the image of the old pagan idolaters; if to her many princes have given their power and strength; if she reigneth over the kings of the earth; and these things be applicable to no other person or government; there is no more doubt, whether the pope be antichrist, and Rome mystical Babylon, which shall certainly be destroyed for her idolatries and shedding the blood of God's holy ones, than there is of what we have Re 1:1,2, that this book contains *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; which he sent and signified by his angel unto his servant John; who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.*

### Revelation 18:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 18:1-3 A mighty angel declareth the fall of Babylon.

Re 18:4-7 God's people commanded to depart out of her.

Re 18:8 After judgment.

Re 18:9,10 The kings of the earth,

Re 18:11-16 and the merchants,  
Re 18:17-19 and mariners, lament over her.  
Re 18:20 The saints are excited to rejoice over her.  
Re 18:21-24 A millstone cast into the sea denoteth her irrecoverable fall.

Ver. 1. It is a matter of no great moment, whether by this *angel* we understand Christ, or a created angel; the description agreeth to Christ, and may agree to a created angel.

*Having great power;* to whom God had given power and authority to declare the ruin of Babylon.

*And the earth was lightened with his glory;* and he had communicated to him a great glory, suited to his splendour and greatness whose messenger he was.

### Revelation 18:2

Ver. 2. *And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen:* whoever was meant by the *angel* whom John saw, Re 18:1, his business was to give warning to the whole world, (therefore he crieth *with a strong voice,* ) that Rome, the *great city, the mother of spiritual harlots,* should fall. This angel was a prophet, and the messenger of him who calls the things that are not as if they were; and therefore he speaks in a Divine, prophetic style: the prophets (ordinarily) speaking of things to come as past, or present, to denote the certain futurity of them, and doubling their words to assure us of it; for this, *is fallen,* is; expounded by *shall be thrown down,* Re 18:21. We read of this angel, Re 14:8; but it is ordinary with prophets to repeat the same things, and it is done as to the Chaldean Babylon, the type to this antitype, both Isaiah and Jeremiah declared in more than one sermon its certain approaching ruin. These words are taken from Isa 21:9, where the word *fallen* is doubled, as here. They are found also, Jer 51:8. God here explaineth what he had said before, Re 14:8.

*And is become the habitation of devils, &c.:* the words are such as might signify a sinful fall, or apostacy; and what is here, is true of it in that sense;

idols in Scripture being ordinarily called *devils*: but they seem rather to be understood of a penal fall, for such is that spoken of [Isa 21:9](#), after which it should become a habitation of devils, and a cage of unclean birds. See the like spoken of literal Babylon, [Isa 13:19-21](#); wild beasts and hateful birds usually frequenting desolate places.

### Revelation 18:3

Ver. 3. *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication;* that is, her fornications which have brought this wrath upon her.

*And the kings of the earth have committed, &c.;* she hath not only herself committed idolatry, but allured others to it, teaching them to break the commandments of God, and hath influenced princes to establish, and propagate, and to uphold, and maintain it; and all sorts of men have been bewitched by her, growing rich by her abundance, and being drenched in her luxury.

### Revelation 18:4

Ver. 4. *And heard another voice from heaven, saying:* a command from God.

*Come out of her, my people:* they are the words of God by his prophet, [Jer 50:8 51:6](#), calling to his people, that the years of their captivity being now expired, and they having a liberty to go back to Jerusalem, they would not linger longer in Babylon, nor partake *of her sins*; for God was about to destroy that place; and if they were found in it, they would be in danger of being destroyed with it, especially if they were found partakers of its sins. But they are also a general warning to all to take heed of any fellowship with idolaters; and so the apostle applieth part of these words, [2Co 6:17](#). Here they are applied to mystical Babylon, which is Rome antichristian. God calls to all that either love him, or their own souls, to forsake the communion of it; for while they continue in it, they must partake of its sins, worshipping the beast, by paying, at his command, a Divine homage to saints and angels, to the virgin Mary, to images and statues, nay, to a piece

of baker's bread; and doing so, they will be involved in her *plagues*. This text looks terribly upon those who apostatize to that idolatry; and instead of coming out, (in obedience to the command of God), being come out, go in again, and that not by compulsion, but out of choice, and voluntarily.

#### Revelation 18:5

Ver. 5. *For her sins have reached unto heaven;* that is, the cry of her sins; according to what is said of Sodom, (one of the types of antichrist), Ge 18:20,21.

*And God hath remembered her iniquities;* the time is come when God will punish her for her idolatry and persecution, and all the abominable things done and committed by her.

#### Revelation 18:6

Ver. 6. This verse soundeth in mine ears, as if God had reserved he ruin of the papacy to be effected by some protestant hands, some of those whom they had persecuted; if not some of their persons, yet some of the same faith.

#### Revelation 18:7

Ver. 7. *How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her:* this speaketh thus much; That whenever God's time cometh for the ruin of the papacy, the condition of all that party shall appear as miserable as it appears now splendid and happy.

*For she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow;* and one great reason of this so great affliction, will be the pride, presumption, and security of that faction, much after the rate of old Babylon, Isa 47:8. Old Babylon thought itself impregnable; and new mystical Babylon thinks herself infallible and impregnable too; the only church, (if we will believe her), against whom the gates of hell shall not



prevail.

### Revelation 18:8

Ver. 8. *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day;* as was threatened to old Babylon, Isa 47:9.

*In one day;* that is, in a short time.

*Death, and mourning, ad famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire;* all manner of judgments, till she be fully consumed.

*For strong is the Lord God who judgeth her;* for she hath to do with a strong Lord: she thinks she hath secured herself from man, by interesting kings and princes in her quarrel; but it is the Lord that judgeth her, and she will find him strong enough to accomplish his word upon her.

### Revelation 18:9

Ver. 9. Not all of them, for some of them shall help to burn her, Re 17:16; but such as God had left to their hardness of heart, that they still live in her fellowship and communion: or, if others also, it must proceed from their humanity, not being able to see so splendid a city, as that of Rome, ruined, and so many ruined as will perish by her fall, without the moving of their bowels by some pity and commiseration.

### Revelation 18:10

Ver. 10. As well as they loved her, they will not come nigh her in the time of her torments; the fire will be too hot for them, they will only stand aloof off, and pity her, that so great and brave a city should be so suddenly ruined; such a gay and splendid church, so politicly founded and put together, should be in a sudden so broken to pieces.

### Revelation 18:11

Ver. 11. As the merchants, Eze 27:27, lamented for Tyre, that they could barter and truck no more there, because all the trade thereof was destroyed; so those ecclesiastical merchants, that were wont to trade with Rome for indulgences, and pardons, and dispensations, and faculties, for cardinals' caps, and bishoprics, and prebendaries, and other church preferments, shall lament when the papacy falls, that there will be no more such merchandise to be bought or sold there.

### Revelation 18:12

Ver. 12-14. Here is a large enumeration of several sorts of wares, such as were most precious, *gold, silver, precious stones*; such as were most useful for ornament, *fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet*; most gratifying the exterior senses, *thyine wood, odours, ointments, &c.*; most necessary, *beasts, sheep, horses, chariots*; all which, as is prophesied, shall depart from Rome: that is, whatsoever she had, which allured men into her idolatrous communion; all their idols and images, cardinals' caps, priests' copes, all their preferments and dignities, whatsoever served the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, or the pride of life; whatsoever their own carnal and ambitious minds, or the carnal and ambitious minds of others that courted this whore, thirsted after, which brought them to seek her communion; they should all perish, and she be despoiled of them. It is very remarkable, that here is one piece of merchandise to be had no where but at Rome, viz. the *souls of men*; which lets us know they are no earthly merchants that are here understood. As souls are to be sold a thousand ways, so they are to be bought; by paying for pardons, indulgences, dispensations, so the silly chapmen think they buy their own souls; by purchasing of cardinals' caps, bishoprics, great livings, all manner of ecclesiastical dignities and preferments, so they really buy the souls of others; but when the papacy shall be wholly destroyed, none of these things shall any more be found.

### Revelation 18:15

Ver. 15. Not knowing how to help her, and fearing lest the buyers and sellers should be punished both alike; yet bewailing themselves that their trading is destroyed, and they are like to buy such pennyworths no more.

### Revelation 18:16

Ver. 16. *Alas, alas that great city!* The Church of Rome, that was so gay, and splendid, and rich, and glorious.

### Revelation 18:17

Ver. 17. *In one hour;* that is, suddenly. The term denotes rather the surprisal of this judgment, than the short space of time within which it should be effected.

### Revelation 18:18

Ver. 18,19. We all know ship masters and sailors are persons that live by carrying merchants' goods; and therefore, properly, the terms signify all such persons (of what rank and order soever) who get their livings by serving this mystical Babylon, whether silversmiths that make shrines for Diana, or clerks, or notaries, or any officers in that church, employed in gathering its revenues of annats and first-fruits, selling of offices, gathering of Peter-pence, drawing of pardons and indulgences, or dispensations, or such as in that synagogue hold any offices of profit. All who will be highly concerned in the ruin of the papacy, as that by the upholding of which they live, by reason of the great riches thus coming in, the whole rabble of their ecclesiastical hierarchy, with all their petty officers, seem to be here meant.

### Revelation 18:20

Ver. 20. *Rejoice over her, thou heaven;* that is, over her ruin, which is not a more proper object for the sorrow and mourning of all her adherents and dependants, than of the joy of all spiritual, heavenly persons, which are the true church, who oppose this antichristian synagogue.

*And ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her:* you also that were apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, and such as have been exercised as prophets in revealing to men God's mind and will, do you rejoice, for God hath revenged you upon her, for your doctrine corrupted by her, your rules of worship violated, and some of your blood that hath been spilt, and for all the indignities you have suffered from her.

### Revelation 18:21

Ver. 21. *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast, into the sea;* for a sign or symbol of the irreparable ruin of Rome, signified by that great millstone which had ground to powder so many of God's holy ones. By this sign God shows his prophet:

1. That Rome shall be ruined.
2. That it shall be done with violence.
3. That it shall be a total, utter ruin, from whence it shall never recover.

### Revelation 18:22

Ver. 22,23. *And the voice of harpers, &c., shall be heard no more at all in thee;* all these seem to me but the expression of an utter ruin and desolation, by various phrases and expressions; they should have no more occasion of mirth, nor any more business done in their city. If any will understand these expressions, of their organs, and other musical instruments used in worship, and of spiritual craftsmen, I shall not contradict it; but I think it more proper to understand the words more largely.

*For thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries*

*were all nations deceived:* though thou hast had a trade with great men, and by thy enchanted cups of the wine of thy fornication hast intoxicated many in all nations, yet thou shalt use that trade no more; the nations shall be deceived no more by thee; here shall be an end of thee. And one thing that brings thee to thy ruin, shall be thy seducing others to idolatry, so as they have seemed to reasonable men to be bewitched by thee.

#### Revelation 18:24

Ver. 24. In the rubbish of Rome, when destroyed, will be found the blood of all those holy servants of God, whether ministers of the gospel, or professors of it, who ever since the year 606, when the pope came first to his power, have been put to death for the testimony of Christ, and a faithful adherence to the purity of doctrine by him delivered, the purity of worship by him prescribed and directed, or the purity of discipline by his direction set up. As it is storied, that upon the dissolution of abbeys, and monasteries, and nunneries here in England, there were found in holes of walls, and ponds, the skulls and bones of many infants, the supposed bastards of those fathers: so, though men cannot or will not see it now, yet when the papacy shall have its period, men shall understand, that no prophet nor righteous man hath violently been put to death for the truth out of Rome, that is, out of the jurisdiction and influence of Rome; but though it may be they have been no professed papists that have been the cause or instruments of their death, yet they have done it as influenced from that bloody city; and the principles have been perfectly popish and antichristian which madly hurried them on to such cruelties. It was one of Luthers reasons why he would have none put to death for heresy, (as they call it), because he would have this particular character reserved for that antichristian synagogue. —But ah, Lord Jesus! When shall these things be? Or who shall live when the wise providence of God shall effect them, to join with the whole church, both triumphant and militant, in the song which we have prophesied of upon this occasion in the next chapter.

*It is not for us to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power, Ac 1:7.*

## Revelation 19:1

### Chapter Summary.

Re 19:1-5 God is praised in heaven for judging the great whore, and avenging the blood of his saints.

Re 19:6-9 The triumph because of the marriage of the Lamb.

Re 19:10 The angel who showed John these things, refuseth to be worshipped.

Re 19:11-16 The vision of the Word of God sitting upon a white horse, and followed by his armies.

Re 19:17-19 The fowls called to feast on the flesh of those that took part with the beast.

Re 19:20,21 The beast and false prophet cast into the lake of fire and brimstone; and the rest slain.

Ver. 1. *And after these things;* after the pouring out of the fifth vial upon the seat of the beast, Re 16:10; for Re 17:1-18:24, as we have formerly hinted, is but a parenthesis to the history. God, in this chapter, more fully describes the effects of the pouring out that vial.

*I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying:* it may be understood either of the third heavens, or the heaven upon earth, the church of God; for the church triumphant and militant both will concur in praising God for the ruin of antichrist's power.

*Alleluia* is a Hebrew word, and signifies: Praise ye the Lord.

*Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:* all these are but terms of honour and praise given unto God, acknowledging that the church's salvation is from him, the effect of his power; and that to him, upon that account, all honour and glory imaginable is due, as having shown himself his people's God.

## Revelation 19:2

Ver. 2. *For true and righteous are his judgments:* the Lord's judgments, in holy writ, sometimes signify his precepts, sometimes his dispensations of

providence, either more generally, or more specially; in which last sense it signifies (as here) his punishment of sinners: these are just and righteous, and therefore called *judgments*.

*For he hath judged the great whore, for he hath punished the papacy, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, which corrupted a great part of the earth with its idolatry.*

*And hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand; and by these judicial dispensations God hath also taken vengeance on them for the blood of his saints shed by them. It is remarkable, that all along this book idolatry and persecution are made the beast's provoking sins.*

#### Revelation 19:3

Ver. 3. As the church proceeded in her praises, so God proceeded in his judgments upon the great whore, until she was ruined past recovery.

#### Revelation 19:4

Ver. 4. See Poole on "Re 4:1", and following verses to Re 4:11. All the heavenly choir praise God upon this account, desiring that the Lord would fulfil what he had begun.

#### Revelation 19:5

Ver. 5. *And a voice came out of the throne, from Christ, declaring it the will of God, that all holy ones should praise him upon this account.*

#### Revelation 19:6

Ver. 6. By this *multitude* most understand the church. Some understand the Jews as well as the Gentiles, supposing that they shall be before this time converted and added to the church. Others think their conversion is the marriage spoken of in the next verse. The saints do not rejoice in the ruin

of their adversaries, but in the glory of God advanced by it, and as his kingdom is by it promoted.

### Revelation 19:7

Ver. 7. A late reverend author tells us: That as there is a three-fold resurrection mentioned in Scripture;

1. A rising to a newness of life, Eph 5:14;
2. The conversion of the Jews, called *life from the dead*, Ro 11:15;
3. In the end of the world:

so there is a threefold marriage of the Lamb;

1. To particular souls, when by faith they are united to Christ;
2. To his church completed, when the Jews shall be called;
3. When all his elect shall be made one with him in glory, after the general resurrection.

He seemeth to understand it of all these. Probably the conversion of the Jews stayeth for the fall of the papacy, whose worship and persecution are great scandals to them. Probably also, upon the fall of it, many will be converted besides the Jews, and the general resurrection will not be far off. The learned Dr. More seems to restrain it to the Jews' conversion; I had rather understand it more generally.

### Revelation 19:8

Ver. 8. *And to her was granted;* that is, to the Lamb's wife, whether Jews or Gentiles, or both.

*That she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white;* that she should be clothed with the righteousness of Christ, reckoned to her for



righteousness. This is *the righteousness of the saints*; called *the righteousness of God*, Ro 1:17; a righteousness *through the faith of Christ*, Php 3:9: called *righteousness*, in the Greek, because there are many saints to be clothed with it; and because it is imputed both for justification and sanctification, not to excuse us from holiness, but to make up our defects.

### Revelation 19:9

Ver. 9. *And he saith unto me, Write;* write it, as a business of moment, of which a record is fit to be kept.

*Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb*; that is, (say those who understand by *the marriage of the Lamb* the Jews' conversion), who live in this happy period of time when the Jews shall be converted, and with the Gentiles make one gospel church. But this seems to me not sufficient. The *marriage* is one thing, the *supper* another, and (ordinarily) consequential to the marriage itself. The kingdom of glory seems to me rather intended, and those are called to it, who are *made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light*.

*These are the true sayings of God*; that is, these are the undoubted truths of God, and therefore to be called into question by none.

### Revelation 19:10

Ver. 10. *And I fell at his feet to worship him*: prostration, or falling at the feet of superiors, to pay them an homage in consideration of their superiority, was ordinarily used in those Eastern countries, Ge 44:14 1Sa 25:24 2Ki 4:37 Es 8:3. To *worship him*, therefore, here must be understood of prayer or praise, which are pieces of Divine adoration, which it is not probable this great apostle would have offered, had he not mistaken him, and thought him an uncreated angel.

*And he said unto me, See thou do it not*; but the angel doth not only refuse it, but with some indignation;  $\text{Οπα μη}$ , Have a care you do it not. From whence we may observe, what a fig leaf they have made to cover the

papists' idolatry, in worshipping the bread in the eucharist, who (to show us their great skill in divinity) think they may be excused from idolatry in it, because *they think* the bread is turned into the body of Christ; idolatry is not to be excused by *think so's*.

*I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus:* the angel gives him a reason why there was no adoration due to him, because he was his equal in office, though not in nature; he was both his and all their brethren's fellow servant, who by preaching the gospel give a testimony to Christ. Well, therefore, Re 2:1-3:22, may the ministers of churches be called *angels*.

*Worship God;* there is no prayer, no praise, due but to the Creator.

*For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy:* there are divers senses given of the last phrase; but of all given, there are two which seem to me most probable: either:

1. *The spirit of this prophecy,* by which I have revealed these things to thee, is not mine, it is *the testimony of Jesus;* he therefore is to be adored, not I. Or:
2. Thy preaching the gospel, which is thy testimony to Christ, is as much from the Spirit of God, as my spirit of prophecy: we are therefore equals, and I am not to be worshipped more than thou art.

We have the same, Re 22:8,9, to let us know that even good men may twice run into the same error; and to let us know, that by the mouth of these two witnesses this truth ought to have been established, so that papists should not after this have paid any Divine adoration to angels, much less to saints; and if invocation be no Divine adoration, nothing is. This deserveth the consideration of them, who think it so easy to excuse the popish religion from idolatry.

### Revelation 19:11

Ver. 11. The remaining part of this chapter is conceived more fully to open what shall come to pass under the sixth and seventh vials, mentioned Re

16:12,17, more especially the battle in *Armageddon*, mentioned there, Re 16:16. There mention was made only of the armies' being gathered together; here it is more fully described. At the beginning of the gospel, (saith a late learned annotator), John saw only a door opened, Re 4:1. At the resurrection of the witnesses, he saw the temple opened, Re 11:19. Here, after the ruin of Babylon, he seeth *heaven opened*.

*And behold a white horse*: John saw such a horse, Re 6:2. Dr. More observes, that the horse with his rider signifies rule; and the white colour, prosperity and success. It appears that the rider was Christ, because he is called *Faithful and True*, which agrees with Re 1:5; and by the names in the following verses, Re 19:13,16, given to him.

### Revelation 19:12

Ver. 12. *His eyes were as a flame of fire*: see Re 1:14 2:18. This denoted either his piercing knowledge, or his infinite wisdom and understanding.

*And on his head were many crowns*; and there needs must be so; for, Re 19:16, he is said to be the *King of kings, and Lord of lords*.

*And he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself*; this denoted the incomprehensibleness of his Divine essence and perfections.

### Revelation 19:13

Ver. 13. *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood*; either to denote that he was he who redeemed us by his blood; or rather, to signify that he was now coming forth to shed the blood of his enemies, both in vindication of his own honour and glory, or of his people; in which notion it also agrees with Isaiah's vision of him, Isa 63:1-3: *Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment*.

*And his name is called The Word of God*:

See Poole on "Joh 1:1". He is also called *the Word*, Re 1:2, a name given him hardly by any except this apostle.

### Revelation 19:14

Ver. 14. *And the armies which were in heaven followed him;* the glorious angels, 2Th 1:7, and ten thousands of his saints, Jude 1:14, who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

*Upon white horses;* to prophesy success and victory.

*Clothed in fine linen, white and clean;* to denote their glory, purity, and holiness.

### Revelation 19:15

Ver. 15. *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword:* I can easily agree that this two-edged sword is the word of Christ coming out of his mouth, but not the gospel, (the time was past for that, it was the time of the sacrifice in Bozrah), but his word of command, calling out his people to take vengeance upon the remainder of his enemies. The sword was both the sword of the Lord, commanding it to be drawn, and the sword of his people, whose hands were to wield it.

*That with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron:* with this he now smites the remainder of his enemies, and breaks them to pieces.

*And he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God:* his enemies were the grapes, that now were put into the winepress of God's watchful providence; Christ trod them there: see Isa 63:3.

### Revelation 19:16

Ver. 16. The same name as in Re 17:14 1Ti 6:15; See Poole on "Re 17:14", See Poole on "1Ti 6:15"; denoting the sovereign power and authority which he had. This he always had, but he now comes forth openly to manifest it; therefore this name is said to be *written on his*

*vesture and on his thigh*, that all might take notice of it.

#### Revelation 19:17

Ver. 17. The best conjecture I can find at the sense of these words, is, that they signify the preachers' of the gospel bold and clear foretelling the ruin of antichrist. There are divers kinds of fowls; amongst others, some that feed on flesh. These are those fowls here mentioned, such as feed upon dead carcasses. They are invited *to the supper of the great God*; called so, because it is made and prepared by the power of him who is the great God, or because it is a sacrifice to the justice of God: see 1Sa 17:46 Isa 18:6 Jer 12:9 Eze 39:17. God's justice upon his enemies is called *a sacrifice*, Isa 34:6 Jer 46:10 Eze 39:17. Idolaters were wont upon their sacrificing to have a feast; God hath also a feast upon this his sacrifice, but it is for the fowls and beasts, that feed on dead carcasses.

#### Revelation 19:18

Ver. 18. In the former verse God invited all the ravenous fowls to a supper, he here showeth their cheer. The meaning is no more than this, that in the great battle of Armageddon, which was for the destruction of all the remainder of the enemies of the church, whether papists, or atheists, or Turks; men of all sorts and orders should be slain, and their dead bodies made meat for the fowls of heaven, that feed on dead flesh.

#### Revelation 19:19

Ver. 19. *The beast*, whether by it be understood *the dragon*, or *the beast with seven heads and ten horns*, or *the beast with two horns*, or all of them, shall before this time be all destroyed, that is, as to their power and dominion; but there will be relics left, both of pagans, and Turks, and papists, of whom it is probable that this is to be understood; viz. that after God, upon the pouring out of the fifth vial, shall have deprived the papacy of their dominion; and by the pouring out of the sixth vial, shall have deprived the Turk of his dominion; that yet such pagans, Turks, and papists, as shall be left, shall be gathered together, and make one or more

great armies, with whom the Jews and Gentiles (now united in one church) shall fight under the conduct of Christ, as the Captain general of his church, by whom they shall be overcome; and that this shall be the great battle in Armageddon, mentioned Re 16:16.

### Revelation 19:20

Ver. 20. The issue of this great battle will be the total ruin of all enemies of the church, their bodies being made meat for the fowls of the heaven, their souls cast into the bottomless pit of hell. The secular part of antichrist is here meant by *the beast*; the ecclesiastical antichrist, by *the false prophet*, that had cheated credulous princes and credulous people, with his pretended miracles, into an idolatry, that was but the image of the old idolatry of the heathens, in worshipping demons, and the images of such as were in great estimation amongst them while they were alive.

*These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone;* both these, the laic and secular popish party, and all their church party, that should be left to this day, shall all now be destroyed. In a matter of fact, not likely to appear in the world yet of two hundred years or more, and thus darkly foretold, who can be positive and particular? But this seemeth the sense of it, upon the former hypotheses: That *the beast with the seven heads and ten horns*, mentioned Re 13:1, and *the beast with two horns*, also there mentioned, Re 13:11, are antichrist, beginning with those Roman emperors that favoured the idolatry introduced by the bishops of Rome, and ending in ending in the universal bishop, or popes of Rome, and their clergy, who quickly wormed out the emperor's power, and for one thousand two hundred and sixty years reigned, setting up idolatry and superstition, and corrupting the doctrine of faith, and for the six hundred years of time, persecuting the true church of Christ more notoriously. After which God will begin to reckon with him, gradually pouring out five vials upon him. I am very inclinable to think, that we in this age are yet under the pouring out of the second of these vials, seeing little yet effected towards the ruin of the papacy, more than the exposing of their idolatries and cheats to several princes and states, and to the generality of thinking people; nor hath the providence of God proceeded far in that as yet. The three other vials are yet to be poured out upon the papacy, besides that upon Euphrates, and then this last upon all the enemies of the church

together: and who shall live when God shall do these things?

### Revelation 19:21

Ver. 21. In all armies there are are common soldiers as well as officers. What the issue of this battle shall be, as to the leaders in it, the former verse told us: this tells us how it shall fare with those under the command of them. It seems they shall not be excused because they followed their leaders, and did only what they bade them; Christ commands that they also should be slain.

*And all the fowls were filled with their flesh;* and this bloody day (whenever it comes) will be a day of great slaughter, for the dead bodies will be enough to sup and fill all the fowls of heaven.

### Revelation 20:1

#### Chapter Summary

Re 20:1-3 Satan bound for a thousand years.

Re 20:4-6 The first resurrection.

Re 20:7-9 Satan again let loose gathereth Gog and Magog to battle, who are devoured with fire.

Re 20:10 The devil cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

Re 20:11-15 The general resurrection, and last judgment.

#### Chapter Introduction

We are now come to the darkest part of the whole revelation. What is meant by the *thousand years*, and *the first* and *second resurrection*, and by *Gog and Magog*, Re 20:1-15, or *the new heavens and new earth*, and the *Jerusalem coming down from heaven*, discoursed on, Re 21:1-22:21, is very hard to say, and possibly much more cannot with any probability be conjectured as to them than hath been already said. I shall only tell my reader that, leaving him to judge what is most probable, and leaving it to

he Divine Providence to give us a certain and infallible exposition of what is contained in these last three chapters.

Ver. 1. The description of this angel can agree to none but Christ, or one that exerciseth a power by delegation from him: for, Re 1:18, it is he who hath the power *of hell and death*; and it is he who alone is stronger than the devil, which must be supposed to him that binds him, or we must think the devil much tamer than he is.

### Revelation 20:2

Ver. 2. There can be no question who is meant by *the dragon* here, and the *old serpent*, for the Holy Ghost interpreteth it, *the devil*, the enemy of mankind.

*And bound him:* by binding also is meant the restraint of the devil in the exercise of his natural power, or the power God had before allowed him to exercise for the trial of his saints' faith and patience. The devil is restrained in the restraint of his instruments. It is expounded, Re 20:3, *that he should deceive the nations no more.*

*A thousand years:* whether these *thousand years* signify that certain space of time, or a long time, I cannot say; only it is probable, that if it signifies an uncertain, indefinite time, it is much longer time than any other period of time spoken of, (which have all hitherto been expressed by days, or months, or a lesser number of years), by far. But what the complexion of the world shall be during this long time, or when the epocha or beginning of these *thousand years* shall be, are both of them very hard questions. It was the opinion of the old Chiliasts or Millenaries, that six thousand years of the world should pass, then antichrist with all wicked men should be destroyed; that in the next thousand years Christ should appear, and be upon the earth, ruling it with his saints; after which there would be another time of sharp persecution, according to what is said, Re 20:7, to which Christ should put a period by coming to the last judgment. It is plain that (if most men be not mistaken, that have counted the years from the beginning of the world) these men were mistaken; for more than six thousand years are passed, yet there is no such thing come to pass. Divers very good and learned men (leaving out the age of the world when these



thousand years should begin) have judged, that after the great battle in Armageddon, (which, as was said before, shall be after the ruin both of Turk and pope), the church of Christ shall for a thousand years enjoy great quiet under the conduct of Christ, (as some think), who in these thousand years shall personally be upon the earth; or of such a godly magistracy in all places of the church, as shall do and execute what Christ would have done and executed. After which the enemies of the church (mentioned here, Re 20:8, under the notions of *Gog and Magog*) shall rally again, but be destroyed by Christ appearing to the last judgment. This opinion hath had, and hath, many learned and grave patrons. I shall only say this, that I do not understand what these *thousand years* mean, if they do not denote a serene and calm time for the church of God, of long continuance, before the day of judgment. Whether Christ shall be here personally, or none but saints shall be in places of power, or the power of Christ only shall be seen in so ruling and governing all magistrates, that they shall not, as before, impose superstition and idolatry, and kill or ruin men for not complying with them; but the servants of God, that worship him in spirit and truth, shall under magistrates live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty; I cannot determine; but do in my own thoughts most incline to the last, that the *thousand years* only denote a large space of time, (as yet at a great distance), when the church of God shall freely enjoy their liberty, without such temptations to idolatry, superstition, or other wickedness, as they have yet all along had, either from Jews, pagans, or antichrist's party.

### Revelation 20:3

Ver. 3. *And cast him into the bottomless pit;* that is, into hell, his proper place: he shall no longer, or at least not till these thousand years be expired, exercise his power, as *prince of the power of the air*, Eph 2:2, or compassing the earth, and *walking up and down in it*, as Job 1:7.

*And shut him up, and set a seal upon him;* he shall be restrained as much as one shut up in prison, whose doors are sealed up.

*That he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled;* that till this time of God's counsel for the quiet of his church be run out, he shall not deceive people by his old arts.

*And after that he must be loosed a little season; and after that he shall have a liberty again (as Re 20:7) for a little time.*

#### Revelation 20:4

Ver. 4. This is a very difficult text. *Thrones* are places of dignity and judicature; they seem here to signify only places of dignity.

*And they sat upon them;* those mentioned afterward in this text sat upon them.

*And judgment was given unto them;* that is, a power of judgment, 1Co 6:2,3, to be executed afterward. The persons sitting upon these thrones are described to be:

1. Such as had kept themselves from idolatry, or any compliance with antichrist, either in the form of the beast, or of the image of the beast.
2. And for that non-compliance had suffered death, and for witnessing to the truths of Christ contained in his word.

These are described as living with Christ in honour and dignity, all that space of the church's rest and tranquillity before expressed. Our learned Dr. More interprets the *thrones* and *judgment*, concerning those thrones or places of judicature, upon which the dragon's officers sat to condemn the saints of God, from whence issued the putting to death of many of the saints of God, and thinks that in this vision there is a recourse to the second thunder. Now these saints are said to *live and reign with Christ a thousand years;* that is, say some, in heaven, in a blessed state of glory, while the militant church upon the earth enjoyed great rest and quiet on earth. Others have thought that these should be raised from the dead, and live with Christ on earth these thousand years. Which notion (if true) will solve a great phenomenon, and render it not improbable, that the number of the saints on earth will, during these thousand years, be enough to rule the world, and overbalance the number of all the wicked of the earth. Those who think thus, judge there will be two resurrections; the first, of martyrs, which shall antedate the general resurrection a thousand years: but the Scripture no where else mentions more than one resurrection. For

my own part, I shall freely confess that I do not understand this and the two next verses, nor shall I be positive as to any sense of them: for the spiritual resurrection, as to the martyrs, it was long since past, or else they had died in their sins. But of this see more in the next verse (Re 20:5).

### Revelation 20:5

Ver. 5. By *the rest of the dead*, some understand all except martyrs; only that party who adhered to antichrist. Those who by *the rest* understand all the dead, both good and bad, (the martyrs alone excepted), judge that there will be two resurrections: the first more particular, of those that have suffered death for Christ; the second general, of all the rest of the dead. I must confess I find a difficulty to allow this; it is too great a point to found upon a single text, in a portion of holy writ so clouded with metaphors as this, and I know no suffragan text. Those who understand by *the rest of the dead*, only the wicked, understand by this living again, a politic life, that is, recovered not their former power, continued as dead men, able to do no mischief, till the thousand years of the church's peace and tranquillity were expired. May this sense of living, and living again, be allowed, it will deliver us from almost all our difficulties about the sense of these verses; for then, by living, in the foregoing verse, is signified a political living, not a resurrection from a natural death. But then ariseth a question: If these beheaded saints did not rise from their natural death, how could they be restored to places of dignity with Christ in the church? To which they answer: That those formerly suffering for the name of Christ, and all the saints upon the earth, are to be considered as one church; and so those formerly beheaded, lived and reigned with Christ in their successors in the same faith; that is, those alive at that time, being restored to their peace, and liberty, and reputation in the world, the martyrs, who were members of the same body, are also said to live. This appears to me the most probable sense: for that the glorified saints should leave heaven (as to their souls) to be again clothed with flesh, and in it to live a thousand years, and be concerned in the following troubles the church should meet with after these thousand years, seems to me to be utterly improbable, and to lay a foundation for so many difficult questions, as will pose the wisest man to answer to reasonable satisfaction. But yet there remains a difficulty, how this restoring God's holy ones to a better state can be called *the first resurrection*. That it may be called a *resurrection* is plain, as the

conversion of the Jews, and restoring them to their former state as the church of God is called *life from the dead*, Ro 11:15; and the restoration of the witnesses, Re 11:11, is called so; though neither the one nor the other were naturally dead. Nor is it unusual in Scriptural and prophetic writings, to speak of people recovered to their former and better state, as being risen from the dead. It may be called *the first*, with reference to that far more excellent state which they shall be put in after the last judgment, when they shall live and reign with Christ in a more happy and glorious manner. If this may not be allowed as the sense of these two verses, I must confess this such a *δυσνοητον*, or difficulty of Scripture, as I do not understand. I shall proceed with the following verses upon this hypothesis, that this is the sense, though I dare not be positive in it.

#### Revelation 20:6

Ver. 6. That is, they only are holy ones that shall be thus restored to share in the church's happiness, and such as shall not perish eternally; but they shall be as priests to God and Christ, glorifying him with the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and shall enjoy a quiet and honourable station with Christ upon the earth for a long time.

#### Revelation 20:7

Ver. 7. When the long time expressed under the notion of a thousand years shall be expired, God shall take off his restraint from the devil, so as he shall influence the wicked of the earth once more to make opposition to his church.

#### Revelation 20:8

Ver. 8. *And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth;* that is, the devil, being got from under the restraint of Divine Providence, shall fall upon his old work, going about to deceive men over all the world, either tempting them to idolatry, or heresy, or lewdness of life, or (which seemeth most probable) stirring them up to one attempt more to ruin the church. These people are called *Gog and Magog*,

about the meaning of which there are various opinions. We read of *Magog*, Ge 10:2; he was one of the sons of Japheth; see also 1Ch 1:5; he inhabited that country called Syria, and from thence, his posterity being multiplied, (as some think), transplanted some colonies into America. We read of *Gog* no where in Scripture but in Ezekiel, Eze 38:1-39:29, where both *Gog* and *Magog* are mentioned as the great enemies of God's ancient Israel. *Gog* there, Eze 38:2, is named as *the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal*. There are disputes who are meant by *Gog and Magog* in those two chapters. The Jewish rabbies apply the terms to some nations whom the Messiah (expected by them) shall encounter and overcome; but if we consider that prophecy as made in Babylon, and to comfort the people in that captivity, we can hardly think the enemies there intended were to appear at such a distance of time as more than two thousand years, for so many, and more, are elapsed already since Ezekiel's prophecy. The best interpreters therefore rather think, that Antiochus, and the race of Seleucus, (a king of Syria, who in those quarters of the world succeeded Alexander, of whom we read in the book of Maccabees), is there intended, whose ruin is there foretold, as being a great enemy to the Jews after their return from Babylon; yet some think, that in both these chapters Ezekiel prophesied of the same *Gog and Magog* here intended, which should be the last enemies of the church. The papists, who (according to their interest) contend for antichrist as yet to come, make *Gog and Magog* here to signify some king or kings that shall join with antichrist when he appeareth. Others think that *Gog and Magog*, in this place, signifies more generally, a colluvies, or mixed company of all wicked men, a very great multitude, who shall come from all parts, only typified by the *Gog and Magog* in Ezekiel, as being like them,

1. For number;
2. In their design to ruin the church, upon its restoration to a more quiet, peaceable state;
3. And who shall be ruined like them, by the more than ordinary providence of God; for the *Gog and Magog* mentioned in Ezekiel, are described in three texts of that prophecy as coming from the north, but these are described as coming from the four quarters of the world: this seemeth a much more probable opinion than theirs, who will have them some particular nations, whether Americans, Turks, or Indians.

*The number of whom is as the sand of the sea:* these enemies shall make a vast number, therefore compared to the sand of the sea; and in this they hold a proportion also with the *Gog and Magog* mentioned in Ezekiel, who were a *great company*, Eze 38:4, *many people*, Eze 38:6, *covering the land*, Eze 38:9.

### Revelation 20:9

Ver. 9. *And they went up on the breadth of the earth;* that is, in all parts of it where the church of Christ was.

*And compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city;* the church of God (typified by old Jerusalem, which was God's beloved city) they encompassed in a military order and manner, designing to destroy it, or make it subject to their lusts.

*And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them:* thus Ezekiel prophesied of the issue of the *Gog and Magog* by him mentioned, Eze 38:18-22: Eze 38:22, *And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.* The meaning is, that God would destroy them with a quick and terrible destruction, such as is that destruction of persons and places which is by fire.

### Revelation 20:10

Ver. 10. After this shall be the end of the world, when the devil shall be restrained to hell, the place of torments, where he shall have all heathens, and all the rabble of antichrist, who shall be there tormented constantly and for ever and ever.

### Revelation 20:11

Ver. 11. God now giveth his prophet a vision of the last day, the day of

judgment. He seeth *a throne*, a place of judicature; said to be *great*, to denote its gloriousness; *white*, to signify Christ's purity and holiness in his judging the world. And he saw Christ sitting upon it, and all old things passing away. Peter thus describes this flying away of the earth and heavens; *The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works therein shall be burned up, 2Pe 3:10. All these things shall be dissolved, 2Pe 3:11.*

### Revelation 20:12

Ver. 12. The former verses gave us an account of Christ, the great Judge of the quick and the dead in the last day; the Lord Jesus Christ sat upon a throne of glory, about to execute his last holy and righteous judgment. Now he describes the persons to be judged, viz. all, both *small and great*.

*And the books were opened:* to show the justice and righteousness according to which this Judge would proceed, books are said to be opened. What books? The book of God's law; the book of God's omniscience; the book of men's consciences. In the former is contained what all men should have done; the two latter will discover what they have thought, spake, or done in the flesh.

*And another other book was opened, which is the book of life;* the book of life, mentioned Re 3:5, by which is to be understood the book of God's election, wherein are the names of all those who, being from eternity chosen to life, were redeemed with the blood of Christ, and afterwards effectually called, justified, and sanctified.

*And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works;* according to these books shall the last judgment be, Ro 2:16, with respect had unto every one's work.

### Revelation 20:13

Ver. 13. By *hell* is meant all places where the dead are; whosoever shall be at that day in the state of the dead; the bodies of men, whether buried in the earth or sea; and the souls of men, whether they be in the place of

torments or happiness, shall all be re-united to their bodies, that they may both in soul and body receive their final doom of eternal happiness, or eternal misery, accordingly as they have lived in the world; and those who shall be alive at that day, who shall be *changed*, ( as the apostle speaks, 1Co 15:51), are to be counted dead in the sense of this text, their change being instead of death to them. It is not said they shall be judged for their works, (though that as to the wicked is true), but *according to their works*; which is true as to the elect, who though their names be written in the book of life, yet must work righteousness; and they shall have judgment of absolution, not according to the perfection, but the sincerity, of their works, done in obedience to the will of God.

#### Revelation 20:14

Ver. 14. *And death and hell were cast into lake of fire*; there shall be no more natural death, nor any more separate state of souls, (so  $\alpha\delta\eta\varsigma$  signifies), they shall all be swallowed up in the issue of the last judgment, where some shall go into life, some into eternal condemnation. Dr. More expoundeth it of the whole region of mortality being set on fire at the last thunder.

*This*, as to the wicked of the earth, *is the second death*, mentioned Re 2:11.

#### Revelation 20:15

Ver. 15. *The book of life*: See Poole on "Re 20:12".

#### Revelation 21:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 21:1 A new heaven and a new earth.  
Re 21:2 The new Jerusalem.  
Re 21:3-7 The blessedness of God's people.  
Re 21:8 The judgment of the wicked.  
Re 21:9-27 A description of the heavenly Jerusalem.



## Chapter Introduction

This chapter begins with the vision of *the new heaven and the new earth*, by which all understand a new state of the church, but are divided in their opinions, whether what is spoken be to be understood of the church militant upon the earth, or of the church triumphant in heaven. Those who understand it of the church militant here upon earth, are divided in their opinions as to that period of the church which is here spoken of; some understanding it of the thousand years after the time of Constantine, for which I see no reason (nor, I believe, will any that wisely considers the state of the church in that time); others understanding it of the thousand years mentioned Re 20:1-3, in which (as was said) the church should enjoy great quiet and peace. I must confess I choose much rather to agree with them who judge it signifieth the church triumphant, being overcome with the reasons given by those reverend authors, a summary of which may be found in Mr. Pool's Latin Synopsis.

1. That interpretation carrieth on the history in order; whereas, according to the other, we must say the history, Re 20:1-5, was interrupted by the battle with Gog and Magog, and the account of the day of judgment, Re 21:7,15.
2. In reason, as the close of the former chapter gave us an account of the issue of the day of judgment, as to wicked men, so this should give us some account how it should fare with the saints.
3. We shall find some things in the *new Jerusalem* here described, which will agree to no state of the church upon earth: see Re 21:22,23.

Ver. 1. *A new heaven and a new earth;* a new and glorious state of things relating to the church.

*For the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea;* for now there was an end to the world, and all the troubles that the people of God had met with in it, as well as the material earth, heaven, and sea, were passed away. This new heaven was prophesied of old by Isaiah, and more lately by Peter, 2Pe 3:13.

### Revelation 21:2

Ver. 2. *The holy city, new Jerusalem;* that is, the whole chorus or number of the elect of God, answering God's chosen people in Jerusalem.

*Coming down from God out of heaven;* not locally coming down, but who had their original from heaven, and were all persons of heavenly minds.

*Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;* in their best robes of glory, such as brides use to wear, when on their wedding day they adorn themselves for their bridegrooms.

### Revelation 21:3

Ver. 3. What is said here, is applicable to the church of God in this life, yea, to every true believer, whose body is said to be *the temple of the Lord*, and in whom the Lord *dwells*, according to the phrase of the Holy Ghost in many places of the New Testament; of whom it is also true, that God is *with them, and will be their God*; but more especially applicable to the church triumphant, as dwelling signifies a constancy of abode, and more full manifestation of a person. The state of the saints in glory is thus described by a being *ever with the Lord*, 1Th 4:17.

### Revelation 21:4

Ver. 14. Scarce any of the passages in this verse, taken in the plain, literal sense, are applicable to any state of the church in this life: for though in the thousand years, mentioned Re 20:1-3, the state of the church (as it is presumed) will be very happy comparatively to what it ever was before, and free from its enemies' molestations and persecutions; yet I think none hath asserted that in that time no members of it shall die, or be sick, or have any sorrow or pain. There must be a great allowance of figures, if we will apply this to any state of the militant church; but all will be literally true as to the church in heaven.

### Revelation 21:5

Ver. 5. *And he that sat upon the throne, that is, Christ, said, Behold, I make all things new;* behold, I will put a new face upon all things; the state of my people shall not for ever be a troubled and afflicted state.

*And he said unto me, Write:* because the vision is to be for an appointed time, and what I now tell thee will not be accomplished of many years, and yet the knowledge and prospect of it, and meditations upon it, are of highest importance to keep up the spirits of my people

under all their sufferings, during that time of the dragon (the Romish heathen emperors) not yet run out, and the twelve hundred and sixty years of antichrist, &c., therefore write it, that all my people in all ages may know it, believe it, and suffer patiently in the hopes of it.

*For these words are true and faithful;* for, what I tell time is what comes from the true and faithful Witness, and shall have a certain being in its time.

### Revelation 21:6

Ver. 6. *And he said unto me, It is done;* the world is at an end, and all my threatenings against my enemies, and promises to my people, are now fulfilled, in the eternal damnation of the one, and deliverance and salvation of the other.

*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end:* I first made the world, and I have put a period to it. I first gave out those promises and threatenings, and I have now fulfilled them.

*I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely;* and my people who have thirsted after my righteousness and salvation, now have it freely, and shall drink, and drink abundantly.

## Revelation 21:7

Ver. 7. *He that overcometh, shall inherit all things:* God revealed this to John almost sixteen hundred years since; and how long it shall be before this glorious time shall come, God alone knows: the most of this time hath been, and will be, a time of fighting with the world, the flesh, and the devil; but whoever he be that shall fight this good fight, and come out of it a conqueror, shall inherit all the joys and happiness of heaven.

*I will be his God, and he shall be my son:* I will be to him all in all; I will be his God to love and glorify him, and he shall be with me as my son, to live with me for ever and ever.

## Revelation 21:8

Ver. 8. All those who are without the church invisible, whether protime persons, (such are murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, liars), or idolaters, or unbelievers and hypocrites, shall all be cast to hell.

*The fearful,* who, through fear of losing their reputation, estates, honours, or lives, deny me, or shall not dare to own me.

*And unbelieving;* such as will not agree to the proposition of my gospel; or will not come to me that they might have life.

*The abominable;* sodomites, and such as live in beastly lusts.

*Murderers;* such as, without any warrant from God, take away men's lives wilfully, *Whoremongers;* such as defile their neighbours' wives.

*Sorcerers;* such as exercise witchcraft, consult the devil, and trade with familiar spirits.

*Idolaters;* whether they commit the idolatry of Ahab, giving Divine adoration to the creatures, as the term of their worship; or the idolatry of Jeroboam, worshipping the true God by images.

*And all liars;* and all such as are liars with their tongues, speaking what

they know to be false; or liars in practice, that is, hypocrites, seeming to be what they are not.

*Shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death:* all these, and all such like, shall be eternally damned.

### Revelation 21:9

Ver. 9. *One of the seven angels;* one of those mentioned Re 15:6.

*I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife;* I will show thee the whole church, (invisible heretofore), the glorious state of the church triumphant, under the representation of a great city.

### Revelation 21:10

Ver. 10. *And he carried me away in the spirit;* in a trance or ecstasy, as before.

*To a great and high mountain;* from whence men use to have the best prospect of cities, or other places.

*And showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God;* there he caused me to see the whole triumphant church, answering as the antitype to Jerusalem, but more holy; being not of the earth, earthly, but from heaven, heavenly; founded, built up, and adorned by God.

### Revelation 21:11

Ver. 11. *Having the glory of God;* a most excellent glory, received from God.

*And her light,* that is, (as some interpret it), that which gave her light, (as the sun is called the light of the earth), or her enlightener, *was like unto a*

*stone most precious*, was Christ himself, who is a stone most precious: Re 21:23, *The Lamb is the light thereof*.

*Like a jasper stone*: see Re 4:3. God is there compared to a *jasper stone*; here, to a *jasper stone, clear as crystal*. They say of the jasper stone, that it is very glorious to the eye, precious and pure; so it is very fit to resemble in part a pure and glorious God.

### Revelation 21:12

Ver. 12. *And had a wall*, that is, this city, by which is meant the church of God, *had a wall great and high*. Walls are for the protection and defence of a place; the higher and greater they are, the greater defence and protection they give. By this God is meant, who is often called his people's Rock and Defence.

*And had twelve gates*: the use of the gates of a city, are to let persons in and out. The church is said to have twelve gates, because of the free liberty of access to the church while it was militant, and to signify that the church in heaven will be made up of persons come into it from all parts; or for the greater state and glory of it. Some think, because of the twelve apostles, who were the first ministers of the gospel who admitted men into this church.

*And at the gates twelve angels*; denoting the guard of angels about the church; unless by *angels* ministers be to be understood, proportioned to the several parts of the church.

*And names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel*; because as, of old, only the twelve tribes of God's chosen people Israel made up the church in that period; so only God's elect and peculiar people, typified by that Israel, come in at the gates of this church. It is very observable, how God affects the number of twelve in the affairs of his church.

### Revelation 21:13

Ver. 13. To signify it was made up of persons from all parts of the world. This agreeth with Ezekiel's vision, Eze 48:31-34. The triumphant church will be a collection of believers, who from all nations have come into it.

#### Revelation 21:14

Ver. 14. *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations;* the ancient church of God was founded in twelve patriarchs, and twelve tribes; the gospel church in twelve apostles; Christ is the only foundation of both, 1Co 3:11, but he is the foundation upon which the church: is built. The twelve apostles are called the foundations *per quoe* or *per quos*, by which the gospel church had its beginning.

*And in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb;* as workmen sometimes set their names upon foundation stones, by which it is made known who were they that builded the wall.

#### Revelation 21:15

Ver. 15. This seemeth to signify the transcendency of the state of the church now, to what it was before; it was then measured by a man, Re 11:1-19, now by an angel; then by an ordinary reed, now by a golden reed.

#### Revelation 21:16

Ver. 16. The church militant, measured by the reed of the word, is unequal in its parts; some parts of it are purer than others; but in the new Jerusalem all parts shall be equal in perfection and purity, as all the sides of a thing four square are equal.

#### Revelation 21:17

Ver. 17. This could not be the measure of the compass, (it was for that much too little), nor of the height or breadth, (for either of them it was much too great), from whence Dr. Potter concluded, it must be the square

measure; so as the height and breadth of it was twelve cubits, for twelve times twelve make one hundred and forty-four.

*According to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel; as men use to measure, and as this angel measured, who appeared as a man in this action.*

### Revelation 21:18

Ver. 18. *And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; strong and impregnable, not subject to impressions from enemies, as it is said of the jasper, that no hammer will break it.*

*And the city was pure gold; all that make up this city are perfect and noble.*

*Like unto clear glass; pure, without spots.*

### Revelation 21:19

Ver. 19. *And the foundations of the wall of the city, by which, we noted before, are to be understood the apostles, who, building upon the one foundation, Christ Jesus, by their holy doctrine laid the beginnings of the gospel churches, the first stones, (upon the Rock Christ), which were afterwards multiplied, others being builded upon them, till the whole church was perfected.*

### Revelation 21:20

Ver. 20. I cannot tell what to make of these *precious stones*, with which they are said to be *garnished*, unless it be their spiritual gifts and habits of grace; the various manifestations of the Holy Spirit given to the apostles to profit the church withal, with which they adorned the doctrine of the gospel, and won upon the pagan world, making themselves admirable in the eyes of men and women. Nor were it hard to descant upon these several sorts of stones, and to show of what graces they may be types: the *jasper*, of steadiness and constancy; the *sapphire*, of heavenly



mindedness (it being a stone of the colour of the heavens); the *chalcedony*, of zeal; the *emerald* of vigour and liveliness; the *sardonyx*, ( a stone of various colours), of various gifts and graces; the *sardius*, of courage and fortitude, and a readiness to shed their blood for Christ; the *chrysolite*, of love, or wisdom, and knowledge; the *beryl*, of a quickness of sight and understanding; the *topaz*, of searching out Divine mysteries; the *chrysoprasus*, of gravity and severity; the *jacinth*, of spiritual joy, calmness, and serenity of mind; the *amethyst*, of sobriety and temperance. But it seems to me too great curiosity to philosophize so far upon the nature of these stones; take them together, they probably signify all the gifts and graces of the blessed apostles, by which the religion of the gospel was first commended, and made to appear lovely to the world.

#### Revelation 21:21

Ver. 21. I am not willing to descant further in particulars, conjecturing (for it is no more) what each metaphorical term signifies in this unusual description of a city. I do think the scope of the whole is no more, than to let us know that the mansions of heaven will be most glorious places, giving the souls of those to whom God shall give to enter into them, an infinite satisfaction, beyond what the most rich and glorious things in the world can give our outward senses.

#### Revelation 21:22

Ver. 22. *And I saw no temple therein:* I cannot take *temple* so strictly here, as those who understand all this but as a description of the blessed state of the militant church, during the thousand years; but understand it of all such worship and ordinances as we serve God in, and by, in this life.

*For the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple it;* the immediate fruition of God shall there supply all, God shall be *all in all*, 1Co 15:28. Ordinances are but perspectives, of use in this life to see God at a distance; means, whereby we know in part: there we shall see God face to face, and know him as we are known. The saints there shall want nothing, and therefore shall not need a house of prayer; they shall know perfectly, and therefore will not need any to teach them; they shall always see Christ, and

so will need no sacraments whereby to remember him.

### Revelation 21:23

Ver. 23. *The sun and the moon* are the two great luminaries of the world, which God hath made, the one to rule the day, the other to rule the night; in heaven there will be no need of any of these.

*Light*, in Scripture, (in its metaphorical notion), signifies knowledge or comfort; there will in heaven be no need of any created beings, to help us to either of these; God and Christ shall there fill the souls of his saints with knowledge and joy not to be expressed.

### Revelation 21:24

Ver. 24. *And the nations of them, which are saved shall walk in the light of it;* all that go to heaven shall be thus happy.

*And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it;* and such kings of the earth as shall come into heaven, shall see all their honour and glory swallowed up in the glory and honour of that place and state; and confess that all their crowns are infinitely short of this blessed and glorious crown, all their thrones nothing to these thrones.

### Revelation 21:25

Ver. 25. *And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day:* the reason of shutting a city's gates, is either to shut out enemies, or to keep in such as are within: there will be no need of shutting these gates on either of these accounts; there will be no enemies to fear, and those that are within this city will have no need nor desire to go out.

*For there shall be no night there:* we do not ordinarily shut our city gates by day, but there shall be nothing but day, no night in a natural or metaphorical sense.

### Revelation 21:26

Ver. 6. Whatsoever is excellent or desirable in the world, shall be supplied to the souls of those that are in heaven, by good of another make, but which shall be equally (nay, infinitely more) satisfactory to the soul.

### Revelation 21:27

Ver. 27. *And there shall in no wise enter into it:* in the Greek there are two negative particles, which though in the Latin they make an affirmative, yet in the Greek make a stronger negative, which we translate *in no wise*, or by no means.

*Any thing that defileth:* this strongly denying particle is brought to make the bar excluding all unclean persons from heaven evident. And alas! How often had this need be denied, to make men and women, mad of their lusts, believe it! The word translated, *that defileth*, signifieth, what is common; nothing, no person that hath not by a holy life separated himself from the world, and all sin and wickedness, and dedicated himself to God.

*Neither whatsoever worketh abomination;* no profane or lewd person.

*Or maketh a lie;* nor any false or lying hypocrites, nor any idolaters, for idols are lies.

*But they which are written in the Lamb's book of life;* none but those whose names are written in the book of life, predetermined to salvation, and redeemed with the blood of Christ. Some am not pleased with this sense; but what other thing can be meant? This is, at least, the sixth time we have met with this phrase in this book, Re 3:5 Re 13:8 17:8 20:12,15. It is also mentioned, Php 4:3. And what else can be meant in Moses's prayer, Ex 32:32? It is twice (Re 13:8 17:8) said, that names were written in it *from the foundation of the world*. God hath a particular, certain, infallible knowledge who are his, and had it from eternity; and whence he should know it, without willing of it, is very hard to conceive. It is called *the Lamb's book*, to let us know, that the act of redemption by Christ bears proportion to the counsels of election.

## Revelation 22:1

### Chapter Summary

Re 22:1,2 The river and tree of life.

Re 22:3-7 The glorious state of the servants of God.

Re 22:8,9 John is forbidden by the angel to worship him,

Re 22:10,11 and commanded to seal up the prophet.

Re 22:12,13 Christ's coming and eternity.

Re 22:14-17 The blessedness of them that do God's commandments.

Re 22:18-20 Nothing must be added to or taken from this prophecy.

Re 22:21 The concluding benediction.

Ver. 1. *And he;* the angel, who showed him all before mentioned.

*Showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal:* no place can be happy without the accommodation of water; those places have the best accommodation of it that are near a river, especially a pure river. To let us know, that in heaven there shall be no want of any thing that can make the saints happy, it is described as having by it, or running through it, *a pure river*, whose water is clear, and no ordinary water, but such as giveth and preserveth life. What could this signify, but the pure and unmixed joys of heaven?

*Proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb;* flowing from the saints thee enjoying of God and Jesus Christ.

## Revelation 22:2

Ver. 2. *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life:* trees, especially fruit trees, and those laden with fruit, and variety of fruit, and such as, instead of being prejudicial to life, are wholesome, and give life, are very beautiful, especially in or near a city. The city in Ezekiel's vision, Eze 47:7, is thus described. This expression

further shows the infinite pleasure and soul satisfaction the saints shall have in heaven. But we are further told here, that the tree here was *the tree of life*; a manifest allusion to a tree so called in old Paradise, Ge 2:9; and who can this agree to, but Christ?

*Which bare twelve manner of fruits*; in whom all fulness dwelt, the fulness of the Godhead, and who was anointed, and received the Spirit without measure.

*And yielded her fruit every month*; and is daily distributing of his fulness to his people.

*And the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations*; and in whom there is nothing useless, but what tends either to the life or healing of his people out of all nations.

### Revelation 22:3

Ver. 3. *And there shall be no more curse*; nothing that is devoted to the devil, καταναθεμα, no accursed person, or thing.

*But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it*; the presence of a holy and pure God will prevent and forbid that.

*And his servants shall serve him*; it is a place in which God alone shall be served by his own servants.

### Revelation 22:4

Ver. 4. *And they shall see his face*; it is a phrase by which the happiness of the glorified saints is oft expressed, Mt 5:8 1Co 13:12 Heb 12:14 1Jo 3:2; they shall enjoy him immediately.

*And his name shall be in their foreheads*; there shall be none that have the name of the beast on their foreheads; they shall have God's name on their foreheads, and be so manifested to be the sons of God.

Revelation 22:5

Ver. 5. See Poole on "Re 21:23".

Revelation 22:6

Ver. 6. All the words of this book, particularly the things of the last vision, are such as proceed from him who is *the faithful witness*, Re 1:5 3:14; from him who *was called faithful*, Re 19:11; and which God will show himself true and faithful in bringing to pass: and such things as God hath revealed to his prophets under the Old Testament in part, and now to me his prophet, to show to his people the things that shall come to pass, and shall shortly begin to be accomplished: See Poole on "Re 1:1".

Revelation 22:7

Ver. 7. *I come quickly* to the last judgment. He is a happy man that observeth and keepeth in memory, that understandeth, believeth, and liveth up to *the prophecy of this book*.

Revelation 22:8

Ver. 8. *I John saw these things*; I saw the vision.

*And heard them*; I heard the words spoken to me relating to them.

Revelation 22:9

Ver. 9. *See thou do it not*: See Poole on "Re 19:10".

*For I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets*; whose employment is the same with thine, to reveal the will of God; *and of them which keep the sayings of this book*; yea, and a brother to all the servants of God. Thou mistakest the object of thine adoration, I am a created being,

and can accept no such homage.

Revelation 22:10

Ver. 10. *And he saith unto me;* this *he* is Christ, as appeareth from Re 22:12,13.

*Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book;* let these things be open to be promulgated, and published to the whole church.

*For the time is at hand;* for it will not be long before they shall begin to be fulfilled.

Revelation 22:11

Ver. 11. *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still:* it may be the keeping of this book open, and the publication of it, will displease wicked and filthy men; but let them be displeased, the truths of God must not be concealed.

*And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still:* it will, on the other side, confirm the servants of God in their faith, patience, and holiness, and all the fruits of righteousness.

Revelation 22:12

Ver. 12. *I come quickly,* to the last judgment, as before, Re 22:7.

*And my reward is with me;* I bring with me a power and authority to recompense every man according to what he hath done, Re 20:13 Da 12:2 Mt 25:34,35, &c.; Ro 2:6.

Revelation 22:13

Ver. 13. See Poole on "Re 1:8". See Poole on "Re 21:6".

### Revelation 22:14

*Blessed are they that do his commandments; That believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ (for that is the great Commandment of the Gospel) and live in conformity to the Law of God.*

*that they may have right to the tree of life; To Christ, called before, the Tree of Life, ver. 2. by virtue of the Promise, Rev. 2:7. for no Works of ours will give us a right of Purchase to it.*

*and may enter in through the gates into the city; That they may enter into Heaven; the Joys and Pleasures of which have been described under the Metaphor of a great and glorious City.*

### Revelation 22:15

Ver 15. *For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie; Without Heaven; that is, in Hell shall be all Dogs that bark at, and bite, and devour the Church of God, all Profane Persons, Idolaters, and Hypocrites, See Poole on Rev 21:8, 27. See Poole on 1Cor. 6:9-10.*

### Revelation 22:16

Ver. 16. *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches; In these words Christ owneth the Revelation as his, the Angel did but testify, John did but hear, and write it.*

*I am the root and the offspring of David; David's Lord, and yet his Son: His Root, as I am God, and gave a Being to his Family, as to all the Families of the Earth; and yet his Son, a branch out of the Root of Jesse.*



*and the bright and morning star; Who, as the Morning-Star, first brings, or prognosticates Light to the World, so have my self first published my Gospel, or this Revelation, to give Light to my People, concerning the Fate of my People to the last day.*

### Revelation 22:17

Ver. 17. *And the Spirit; The Spirit in the Hearts of Believers, or rather the Holy Spirit.*

*and the bride say, Come; Because the Bride, that is, the Church is also mentioned, to desire the second coming of Christ to Judgment.*

*And let him that heareth say, Come; And every one that heareth of, and believeth these things, should also desire the same thing.*

*And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely; And in order to that, every one that wanteth, and is sensible of his want of Righteousness, or any Habit of Grace, is also invited unto Christ, under the Notion of the Water of Life, to take him freely, as [Isa. 55:1](#).*

### Revelation 22:18

Verse 18. *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book; I Christ, or I John, testify to every one to whose Hands or Ears the words of this Book shall come.*

*If any man shall add unto these things; That if any Man shall invent new Prophecies contrary to the Prophesies contained in this Book.*

*God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; God shall severely punish him, by adding to the Plagues threatned against Sinners, in this Book.*

### Revelation 22:19

Verse 19. *And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy;* But Divines generally do further extend the sense of these two Verses, considering this as the last Portion of Holy Writ, not only placed last in our Bibles, but revealed and written last. They conceive these Verses the Seal of all *Canonical Scripture*, and that God here denounceth a Curse to those who shall pretend any new Revelations of his Will, other than what are to be found in the Books of the Old and New Testament; as also against all those who shall deny, corrupt, or deprave any part of them.

*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; God as to such Persons, saith, they shall not have any such Part of Portion in Heaven as they would pretend a Right to, or seemed to have.*

### Revelation 22:20

Ver. 20. *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly;* That is, Christ, who publisheth these things by his Angel, or by his Servant *John*, saith he is quickly coming to Judgment.

*Amen; John replies, Lord, let it be so.*

*Even so, come, Lord Jesus;* This expounds *Amen* used here as a Particle of wishing and desiring, though it may be interpreted as an assertive Particle, and joined to the former part of the Sentence.

### Revelation 22:21

Verse 21. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen;* This is a Salutation used by the Apostles in all their Epistles containing a desire of the fulness and increase of al Grace, very proper here upon the Prospect which John

in this Revelation had, of the long, and great trials the Church would meet with, before the glorious Appearance of our Blessed Lord and Saviour.

To God the Author of this, and all the other Books of Holy Writ, be Honour and Glory.