

David Stein - Conflict Irrepressible

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The lesson, as has been mentioned, is the conflict, and here's the word irrepressible. If I can get my. There. No, too far.

All right, there we go. You know, here's the definition of irrepressible, because this is an interesting word to consider because it's not a word we hear quite a lot in our language dictionary, as it was, as it is difficult or impossible to control or restrain as an irrepressible laughter. Two, not capable of being repressed or restrained or controlled. Irrepressible joy or irrepressible conflict. I thought this last one is interesting because that's the title of the chapter and the title of our lesson.

Three, not containable or controllable. You know, the pastor's choice of this word is telling. The conflict will not be impeded in any way. Let me make one change here on my screen. There we go.

It will not be impeded in any way. That's what irrepressible means. But what kind of conflict is it? Well, the answer is it's a social conflict, and nothing, absolutely nothing can be done to avert it. We're going to use as a theme text in our lesson today, Luke, chapter 21, verse 26.

Men fainting for fear and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world. For the powers of the heaven shall be shaken. Now let's start by identifying the combatants. In the pastor's day, the two sides at odds with each other were the wealthy and advantaged versus the poor masses. It has not changed in the 21st century.

We have those in power by virtue of their economic and political positions, who. Who rule over the rest of the people. The rest of the people are in fact the restless masses of mankind, the lower classes who have little or no say in the plans of the advantaged classes. In times past, the lower classes had little recourse but to work within the oppressive social and political systems. But several things changed what had been the social order for millennia.

The first is the increase of knowledge. This was predicted to occur in the end times by Daniel, the prophet. Daniel, chapter 12, verse 4. But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book even to the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

With the invention of the printing press in 1440 AD for the first time, it became possible to share knowledge quickly and in a relatively cheap and permanent way. The lower classes could now gain knowledge on any topic and were not at the mercy of the educated elite as they had been previously. Knowledge is power as the saying goes, and now the lower classes began to accumulate power. Martin Luther wrote, printing is the ultimate gift of God and the greatest one. The printed page powered the Reformation and the growth of knowledge.

For the first time, wide circulation of ideas provided a basis for debate and discussion. The elite no longer controlled who heard what, and the printed page presented a serious challenge to those in power. This in turn led to another development, this time a political one. As the errors of the Dark Ages began to be exposed, people also began to challenge the existing political and religious structures. They began to conceive of basic rights of man and justice for all.

They started to question the rights of kings to rule over them. This is nowhere more apparent than with the Declaration of the Independence of the United States from Great Britain. Many of the ideas about the rights of man emanated from the writings of a man named Thomas Paine. Born in England in 1737, he arrived in America as the conflict between the colonists and England was

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reaching its height. He published a booklet on January 10, 1776, entitled Common Sense.

This booklet, more than any other publication, laid the foundation for the Declaration of Independence. Later in his life, having returned to Europe, he published a book entitled Rights of Men. To the ruling classes. These ideas were an affront and his book was banned and the publisher imprisoned. Paine was one of many who were actively promoting the concepts of the rights and liberties of man.

This social political movement of the lower classes resulted in the creation of democratic governments. The US Was first followed by France and eventually led to the fall of most of the kings of Europe. After 1911. The theories of political liberty reported the increase of knowledge and created a growing hunger for freedom on the part of the masses. Brother Russell was a keen observer of these forces at work.

To illustrate the power of liberty, he quoted the words of Senator John J. Engels from Liberty is something more than a name. He who depends upon the will of another for shelter, clothing and food cannot be a free man. In the broad, full meaning of word. The man whose daily bread for himself and his family depends upon wages that an employer may give or withhold at pleasure is not free.

The alternative between starvation and submission to a schedule is slavery. Freedom does not consist in definitions. The Declaration that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness or the inalienable rights of every human being makes no man independent. The right to liberty is an empty mockery and delusion unless the power to be free exists also. Freedom is not merely the removal of legal restraints, the permission to come or go.

Added to these must be the capacity and opportunity which only exemption from the necessity of incessant daily labor can bring. To paraphrase Shakespeare, poverty and liberty are an ill matched pair. Freedom and independence are incompatible. The abolition of poverty has been the dream of visionaries and hope of philanthropists from the dawn of time, and this is from the fourth volume.

Brother Russell quoted him on page 415. This statement and many others who had an unbiased view of the social, economic and political movements saw the trouble ahead of them. We who are living near the end of the age see how these developments are nearing finality. The systems of this world produce an environment where the rich are growing richer and the poor growing poorer. According to the Quarterly Journal of Economics, Volume 131 issue 2 May of 2016, the wealth owned by the top 1% of families in America grew to 42% in 2012.

Think about that. 42% of the family's wealth owned by the top 1% of families. 100th of the population possessed almost half the wealth of the country. But within this statistic we find something even more troubling. The top 0.1% owned 22% of the country's wealth, up from 7% in 1978.

The rich are growing richer and the poor are growing poorer. Brother Russell, directed by the prophecies of the last days, saw this development clearly and wrote again from the fourth volume, page 414 and 415. Wealth and government will gravitate again into the hands of a few. While the masses, as in the earlier civilizations of the east, were merely exist. This will eventually result in a catastrophic confrontation which brings destruction to these systems.

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This is a current and will be final fulfillment of the prophetic Psalm in 46 Psalm 46:2,3. Therefore we will not fear though the earth do change, and though the mountains be shaken into the heart of the seas, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains tremble with the swelling thereof. Selah. Let's review quickly the symbolisms here. Earth, stable society collectively consisting of the political, economic, social and religious elements.

Mountains, the kingdoms and autocratic governments of the earth, the civil powers and ruling classes. Seas, the unstable restless elements of of humanity, the rule classes, which eventually become anarchistic and ungovernable, and the waters is another symbol of that. Seas that though the waters of the seas thereof roar and be troubled. The pro.

This prophetic psalm clearly demonstrates the ultimate demise of the old heavens and old earth. This demolition comes as the masses of humanity, so long oppressed and suppressed, rise up and consume the old order. What is Significant is that the old order sees it coming. We are told. The mountains tremble with the swelling thereof.

The swelling is a growth of the revolutionary fervor which strikes fear into the ruling classes, and they tremble before the inevitable. This is the work of the Lord's great army. So let's take a look at the combatants once again. Capital versus labor.

The rulers versus the ruled. The haves versus the have nots. The elites versus the masses. Tool owners versus tool users. It should be noted that the geographic scene that we're looking at is primarily the western nations, so called Christendom.

And it is appropriate and logical that our focus be here because of the judgment coming upon Christendom. Turn to Revelation 16, verses 12 through 16.

And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river. The river Euphrates, and the waters thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that come from the sun rising, and I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs, for they are spirits of demons, working signs which go forth under the kings of the whole world to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God the Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked.

And they see a shame, and they shall be gathered, and he gathered them together into the place which is called, in Hebrew, Armageddon. We see the activity of the dragon and the beast and the false prophets. While a deeper examination of these symbols is beyond the scope of our presentation today, we will simplify somewhat and quickly note what they represent. The dragon, here as elsewhere, represents civil government.

Beast represents papacy. The false prophet in this final guise represents the confederation of Protestant denominations. These work together to maintain their existence and counter the threats they see coming against them. The rising of the power of papacy and its cooperation with Protestant power has an element that is especially interesting to us. I want again to quote the pastor and zero in on a comment that he made.

This is from the fourth volume, page 147. While this is alas only too true, it is not only danger. A religious despotism whose hateful tyranny can best be judged by the records of past days of its power also threatens this country. That danger is Romanism. Yet this danger is not generally

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discerned because Rome is making her conquests here by cunning art and base flattery.

She professes great admiration for the free institutions and self government of the United States. She courts and flatters the Protestant heretics who form so large a proportion of the intelligent population and now calls them her separated brethren for whom she has an undying affection, and yet at the same time she lays her clammy hand upon the public school system which she is anxious to turn into an agent for the further propagation of her doctrines and the extension of her influence. She is making her influence felt in both political and religious circles and the continuous tide of immigration to this country is largely of her subjects. Did you pick up this last sentence?

Immigration? This is a powerfully political hot topic today. Practically speaking, the southern border of the US is open. Who's coming in? The majority are Hispanic people.

And what is the religion of most Hispanic people? Catholicism. They are supporters of Papacy and millions of these poor people have come into the country since 2021. I think this is another insight of the Pastor that will come into play in the near future. Back quickly to the Dragon Beast and False Prophet.

This is all Christendom. God's interest in them since they have misrepresented his son for centuries and murdered his Saints have to face the consequences of their evil. However, their evil doctrines go out beyond Christendom to the entire globe, gathering them together to Armageddon. It is truly an irrepressible conflict, fear and desperation. As we get closer to the final wrap up of the destruction of the old heavens and old Earth, we can expect extreme measures to be taken by the rulers of this world to maintain and retain their power.

The growth of anarchy which we are already seeing must be stemmed in order for these to survive. This will lead to the restriction of constitutional liberties to preserve social and economic order. Let me throw something up here on the screen for you. Do you recognize the House of Representatives Bill HR 3162? It may be more familiar to you in the title of the Patriot act of 2021.

This law, enacted by Congress and signed by President Bush was a knee jerk reaction to the terrorist attack on the US on 9 1101. It dilutes constitutional protections under the guise of reducing terrorism. Freedoms guaranteed in the first, fourth, fifth, sixth and eighth Amendments may be set aside in the pursuit of any alleged terrorism. He's already been used to infiltrate religious organizations and arrested those critical of the US for its policies. Your emails, phone calls, instant messages, browsing history may all be inspected by the government on the mere assertion of terrorist overtones.

It is not hard to see that this law can be and has been put to use for political purposes unrelated to preventing actual terrorist activities. Again, Brother Russell's attention to Bible prophecy and reasoning on these Scriptures permitted his valuable insight into the conditions becoming real today. This is from the foreword. Looks like page 14 of the fourth volume. For a brief time, as we understand the Scriptures, these combined forces of Armageddon will triumph.

Free speech, free mails, and other liberties which have come to be the very breath of the masses in our day will be ruthlessly shut off on the plea of necessity, the glory of God, the commands of the church, etc. The safety valve will be sat upon, and thus will cease to annoy earth's kings with the sound of the escaping steam, and all will seem to be serene until the great social explosion described in the Revelation as an earthquake will take place. In symbolic language, an earthquake signifies social revolution, and the Scriptural declaration is that none like it ever occurred before.

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See our Lord's reference to it in Matthew 24. A little bit further on, on page 146, he writes this the American people are being aroused to a sense of danger to their liberties and to action in view of such danger with the energy which has been their marked characteristic in every branch of industry and every avenue of trade.

Though the real causes of their danger are not clearly enough discerned by the masses to direct their energies wisely, they see only that congested wealth is impoverishing the many influencing legislation the many influencing legislation so as to still further amass wealth and power in the hands of a few, and so creating an aristocracy of wealth whose power will in time prove as despotic and relentless as any despotism of the old world. Up to this point you will notice that the increasing knowledge light on every subject is the main factor producing dissatisfaction within the masses. This process has been gathering steam for some centuries, but is noticeably accelerating as we approach the full end of the age. Revolution on the Horizon A generation ago, the suggestion that there could be revolution in this country would be dismissed as impossible because the level of patriotism in the population. But as you all have observed, the level of dissatisfaction with life in the US has risen to concerning levels.

In a political column published in 2019, the author wrote but after years of teaching on protests, uprisings and revolutions, it seems to me the US is currently showing all the signs political scientists and historians would identify in retrospect as conducive to a revolutionary uprising. What are the signs? This writer is referring to what brings about a revolution. He lists three that provide the genesis of a revolution. Reading on first, tremendous economic inequality.

Second, a deep conviction that the ruling classes serve only themselves at the expense of everyone else, undermining the belief that these inequalities will ever be addressed by the political elite. Third, there is a rise of political alternatives that were barely acceptable in the margins of society before. Reading on As a result of these basic problems, people develop a deeply felt and widely shared sense of injustice, an almost palpable conviction that that the system is not working for the majority and only for the the very few who abuse their positions of privilege. These qualities weaken any regime's claim to legitimacy, but they're not solely sufficient. The indispensable ingredient of a political revolution is the mental revolution that occurs before personal convictions that a system is no longer working and needs to be replaced Once again.

The image of the mountains falling into the midst of the sea reflect the reality of today. Greed, selfishness, pride, and the desire for power to control over others leads invariably to destruction. Jeremiah 23:19 20 Behold the tempest of Jehovah. Even his wrath is gone forth, yea, a whirling tempest. It shall burst upon the head of the wicked.

The anger of Jehovah shall not return until he have executed, until he have performed the intents of his heart. In the latter days ye shall understand it perfectly. I love that expression. It shall burst upon the head of the wicked. These have brought the inescapable consequences upon themselves.

It is Jehovah's wrath, but it is also in large part the natural consequences of ignoring God's laws of proper behavior. There's one other factor that we haven't mentioned which has been a problem since Eden the presence of Satan and his demons. As we approach the terminal experiences of the age of sin and death, we expect the fallen angels to inflame the situation further. In the photodrama of creation slide 17, we are told the liberties of the fallen angels demons were restrained. They are unable to use deceptions in the light, unable to materialize as formally.

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Note, however, that the limitation unto implies that when the great day of wrath shall come, these fallen angels will be permitted to materialize and become potent factors in the strife. Other scriptures indicate that these fallen angels will have much to do with the great time of trouble with which this age will close and in which Messiah's kingdom will be inaugurated. Let's go back for a moment to Revelation 16, 13, and 14. Do you note the reference to spirits of demons working signs? This will have the effect of further deception of the masses.

But never forget, Satan's prime motivation is to prevent the completion of the church by whatever means possible. So we Dear brethren, are directly in his target sights. Paul warned us in Ephesians 6:12 for our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. These will have effects on the Church. We have several prophecies that describe the complexity of events which will take place as this system disintegrates.

Let's look at a the sealing of the Church. The little flock will be completed or sealed as this old world breaks down in anarchy. Let's Turn to Revelation 7:1 4 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow upon the earth, or upon the sea, or upon any tree, and I saw another angel ascend from the sun, rising, having the seal of the living God, and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and sea, saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

And I heard the number of them that were sealed, 140 and 4,000 sealed out of every tribe of the children of Israel. The setting here is at the end of the Gospel age, the time of the end. The four corners of the earth represent the four directions of the earth, in other words, in every direction and the four inclement winds of the earth, political, social, economic and religious. These forces are held back or controlled so that the remaining members of the church can be sealed, make their calling and election sure, and when the ceiling is finalized for the 144,000, the implication is that the winds of the earth can be released for the final dissolution of this old world.

A note on the Great Company Please note that the Great Company is not recognized until the 144,000 are sealed. The Great Company comes after this sealing verses that we read in Revelation 7. This is consistent with the Apostle Paul's statement that there is only one hope. In Ephesians 4:4,5 he writes, There is one body, one spirit, even as ye are called in the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. There is no call to the Great Company as a group.

They are recognized only after the one hope is fulfilled in the 144,000 as a mercy class. They are given something that was never promised to them as a hope, but it does show Jesus grace to them. Let me read a note here from Tabernacle Shadows.

Actually, let me go back. See Tabernacle Shadows. Note is this this is on tabernacle shadows, page 70. Through the favor of the High Priest, and note that through the favor of the High Priest, the Great Company are to go into the Great Tribulation and have their flesh destroyed.

This will not make them voluntary overcomers, nor give them membership in the body, the Bride of Christ. It will not give them a place on the throne of kings and priests, but a position before the throne as perfect Spirit beings, though not of the highest order, the spiritual, the divine. Let's take a look at another picture, that of Elijah and Elisha. We're going to be working through Ch. 2 Kings chapter 2.

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And there is the quote that I didn't get quite to the narrative begins with Elijah and Elisha in the town of Gilgal. From there they go to Bethel and then to Jericho, and then to the Jordan River. Elijah divides the Jordan, permitting the two of them to walk on dry ground to the other side. Elisha, at Elijah's prompted, asks for a double portion of his Spirit. As they walk, they are parted by a chariot of fire, and Elisha ascended by a whirlwind into heaven.

Elisha's mantle fell from him, and Elisha put it on. He then went back to the Jordan river, smote the river, and departed for him. Of course, Elijah represents the last members of Little Flock and Elisha represents the Great Company. The narrative reflects their mutual experiences up to the full end of the gospel age. In volume two, Elias shall come first, page 250, and also in reprints 5771, 72 and reprint 4757.

Brother Russell provides a detailed interpretation of the type. In it he suggests that the places Elijah and Elisha visited represented Gilgal 1874, Bethel 1878, Jericho 1881, Jordan 1914. We're going to suggest a second application based upon the meanings of the names of the places they visited. Names in Scripture often represent conditions, so we'll work on that basis. Gilgal their starting place.

Here we parallel the pastor corresponding to 1874, the beginning of Jesus second presence. Gilgal means a rolling away at this point in time. In 1874, members of the Little Flock recognized the nature of Babylon the Great, and they began their withdrawal from the nominal systems. Truly a rolling away of the shame of these systems. We have a couple of texts where Gilgal is associated with false worship.

In Hosea, chapter nine, verse 15, we read, all their wickedness is in Gilgal, for there I hated them because of their wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of the house. I will love them no more. Their princes are Revolters. Here's the second one also from Hosea. Chapter 12, verse 11 is Gilead Iniquity.

They are altogether false. In Gilgal they sacrifice bullocks. Yea, their altars are heaps in the furrows of the field. You can see Gilgal is a place you want to leave, and so our pastor and our movement left the apostate Christian systems.

They went next to Bethel. Bethel means house of God. This condition of the church is one of unity. It well describes the situation of the church during the ministry of Brother Russell. The brethren were mostly united and working in unison in promoting the gospel of the kingdom and teaching.

Jesus Christ died as a ransom for all, and I believe, not coincidentally, the fact that Brother Russell called his headquarters Bethel provides a very nice parallel, and here are the thoughts.

Jericho. Jericho means a place of fragrance. We think this is provides a perspective of us of when the Brethren had to leave the Watchtower. The society was taken over by Judge Rutherford and began changing the doctrines of truth. Now this idea of place of fragments suggests a condition where the consecrated are walking by faith, not by sight.

After the pastor's death, many were uncertain how to continue. The society's work was taken over by the Judge and he began changing things. Thus the previously visible organization which had functioned so wonderfully during the pastor's ministry was now slowly moving into error. Many felt they had to separate and walk by faith and continued the work of the seventh messenger. This has been the condition of the church since 1917.

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No longer a reliance on organizations, but rather emphasizing the ecclesia arrangement as the mainstay of public service. Now we come to Jordan. Jordan means to judge down. In other words, to make a judgment and lay it down. The disruption of the Jordan river is suggested here to be the disruption of peoples.

Waters sometimes represent peoples. Like in Revelation 17:15. He saith unto me the waters which thou sawest where the harlot sitteth are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. Water also represents the truth. Truth being the power behind the disruption and the mantle the authority of God.

So it would seem that the feet members of Little Flock would have some message to deliver the world that causes disruption. It's hard to imagine how this could happen given the size of our movement. But our God Jehovah is powerful and regularly makes amazing things happen. I believe this message has yet to be given. So what would be the character of this message?

It would be a powerful message. One of notoriety. It would expose the true condition of Christendom. Its false claims will be exposed, as will its cooperation with the state, and this cooperation with the state is a spiritual adultery.

Remember how James expressed it? James 4:4 Ye adulteresses, know ye not that friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whoever therefore would be a friend of the world, maketh himself an enemy of God.

The message that would be particularly successful, or that the message would be particularly successful, is suggested that in the description of the waters of the Jordan river the waters were divided hither and thither. It was a spectacular reaction, and it was a mixed reaction, both pro and con. Note also that the account not only says the waters were parted, but they went over on dry ground. Perhaps this means that the message will be able to be given in relative peace. The disruptions that come from the message does not affect the church immediately.

Remember that even John the Baptist had a period of popularity among the people before his imprisonment and beheading for the message he gave. Jesus himself also gave a powerful judgment message against the scribes and Pharisees just a few days before his execution. One more observation and suggestion about the crossing of the Jordan River, I think as a singular judgmental event, it represents the moment when the 144,000 are sealed. Put a different way, the actual individual makeup of the little flock in great company are judged and settled at this point.

In verse nine we read, it came to pass that when they were gone over that Elijah said unto Elisha, ask what I shall do for thee before I am taken from thee thee, and Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit come upon me. This request from Elisha seems to mirror another request made by the foolish virgins, who are another representation of the great company. In Matthew 25, 8, 9 we read, and the foolish said unto the wise, give us your oil, for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, peradventure, there will not be enough for us, and you go ye rather to them that sell and buy it for yourselves.

These two pictures provide a couple of different perspectives of the same situation. Elisha's request is to be equipped with Elisha's spirit in order to carry on the requirements of his successor. The double portion request should be understood as a firstborn request, where the eldest got the double portion of the father's inheritance. But Elijah says, this is hard, verse 10 and he says, now it asked a hard thing nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee

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but if not it shall not be so. Elisha did not at this point possess the mantle, so he had to stay with Elijah in order to get it.

In the case of the foolish virgins, they did not have the oil they need, so they had to go out and buy some. But when the foolish virgins got the oil, they came back. The great company at this point in the antitype, does not have the authority to speak Jehovah's judgments. They demonstrate a better level of trust by staying with the little flock as long as they can, perhaps motivated to study more and thus gain the oil. In fact, we are told that Elijah and Elisha talk together as they went forward.

It appears they had more conversation than they had had all day. But the end comes suddenly. The Elijah class, the final members of Little Flock, finish their course in sacrificial death, and are taken beyond the veil that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire, which parted them both asunder and Elijah went up by a whirlwind unto heaven.

Let's take a look at some of the details of this of this particular verse, which I think are of interest to us. The chariot of fire the horses of fire part of them asunder. Elisha went up by a whirlwind unto heaven.

Matthew 25:10 they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. This is the separation of the members of Little Flock from the great company and entering into their reward. Likewise first Thessalonians 4:7 then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord in the air.

Details Chariot of fire Horses of fire Whirlwind and into heaven Charity of fire Literal chariots are instruments of war meant to carry a rider or riders into battle. This suggests that some arrangement or organization which battles the saints. It is a fiery chariot, in that it shows the fiery trial which will prevail at that point in time. Horses of fire Horses represent doctrines teachings. This suggests that the doctrines of truth will be assailed by the doctrines of error.

It also suggests that part of the final trial will be loyalty to the Lord. Important observation the chariot and horses separate Elijah and Elisha. So this fiery trial will separate the feet members of the church from the great company. Brother Russell has an interesting comment on this in reprint 5845. Chariot of Fire to make separation what does this signify in antitype?

We think that it signifies a division between the little flock and the Great Company. We are to be careful not to form a judgment as to who are to be of the Great Company. However, some say to us, what do you think of such a brother? We are not to judge one another. It is not for us to say that such a one belongs to the Great Company class.

We are to consider all the friends as one people. Only the Lord knows who are his holy and faithful ones, and he is leaving the matter to be manifested at the end of the earthly career of the little flock. The Lord Himself will do the dividing Whirlwind the Hebrew word here strong's 5591 means a strong destructive wind, a tempest or whirlwind. Whirlwind, which seems to occur in most translations, seems correct as it lifts Elijah upwards, something that a straight line wind is less likely to do. But tornadoes do this all the time.

The more general word for wind is strong's 7307. This word suggests a different, more intense destructive wind. In Job 38:16 God speaks to Job out of this whirlwind, which shows that he is in it, and it seems to be localized. Whichever way that the wind blew, it took Elijah away. So too with the

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feet members of the church.

They will exit this earthly scene in a fiery trial that will end their service in the flesh and instantly bring them triumphantly to scenes of glory in the presence of Jesus into heaven. This is not the heaven where God resides. Rather it would be the atmospheric heavens for Elijah. Interestingly enough, it's the same for the feet members of the church in first Thessalonians 4:17 then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with the Lord, be caught up to the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Of course the entire church will in due time meet the grand Creator Jehovah face to face. Elijah's reaction verse 12 and Elisha saw it and he cried, My Father, my Father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof. In reprint 3429 we read this when Elijah was taken up in the chariot, Elisha did not recognize the did recognize the fact and shouted, my father, my Father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof. This was his goodbye salutation and indicated that he fully recognized that the God of Israel had taken his servant by his own mighty power. As a prophet he probably expressed more than he himself understood.

We've already seen that the translation of Elijah was Elijah taught in a typical or pantomimic way the change of the last living Members of the church, the antitypical Elijah, you know, please note the change from chariots of fire to horses of fire and chariots of Israel and horsemen thereof. What exactly does this mean? I think there's two ways of interpreting this. Number one, the reference here could be to the nominal spiritual Israel Babylon. The nominal systems are not destroyed until after the church is complete and in glory.

The little flock are permitted to escape these things coming upon the face of the earth. The great company would have observed the part that the nominal system played in persecuting the church and their death in the flesh, and the statement of Elijah antitypically placed responsibility upon Babylon. But there's a second possible interpretation or maybe an additional one. The second possibility is that Israel is referred to is referring to the holy remnant of Israel.

Anti Semitism and hatred of Israel will be peaking at that time. Certainly seems to be peaking right now. Doesn't seem that the church was persecuted for her support of the natural seed of Abraham. This also suggests the privilege of the great company may have in preaching a positive message to the holy remnant with the Holy Spirit and starting the removal of their blindness. This is suggested in Solomon, Song of Solomon, chapter 5 and 6 and it describes this process.

Interesting note. King Joash used this same phrase when sorrowing over the soon coming death of Elijah. Notice what King Joash said now. Elisha was fallen sick in his sickness whereof he died and Joash the king of Israel came down unto him and wept over him and said, My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof. I am not sure dear brethren, how this relates to Elijah, but the fact that it's exactly the same words I offer to you for let's say a little bit of homework.

The Fall and Destruction of Babylon let's consider a few scriptures that concern the fall and destruction of Babylon. This, as we mentioned, occurs after the glorification of little flock. Revelation chapter 18, verse 21 and a strong angel took up a stone as it were a great milestone, and cast it into the sea, saying thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city be cast down and shall be found no more. This is clearly a reference to the destruction of Babylon, not merely her fall from being used. There are several key items here to note.

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The strong angel took up and lifted her up. The lifting up does suggest the raising up of influence of Babylon the Great just prior to her complete destruction. Many of us believe in a church state cooperation when things start to unravel as an attempt to maintain power and stuff seem to endorse the idea. We'll see further evidence of this as we go on. 2.

The stone was cast into the sea. This agrees with so many scriptures that describe the disintegration of this world at the hands of the sea, the restless masses of mankind. Remember, we saw this back when we looked at Psalm 46, found no more at all. This seems to clearly declare the full end and destruction of Babylon the great. Let's take another perspective of the finality of Babylon's destiny.

Revelation chapter 14, verses 17 through 20, and another angel came out from the temple which is in heaven. He also having a sharp sickle, and another angel came out from the altar. He that hath power over the fire, and called with a great voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, send forth thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.

And the angel cast his sickle into the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress of the wrath of God, and the winepress was trodden without the city, and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses. For as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs in the previous verse, verse 16, which we didn't read, we had the reaping of the harvest of the earth, which seems to apply to the glorified church. Thus we have the completion and glorification of the church.

Now we have the vine of the earth. This vine is the false vine of the apostate church. Brother Russell taught that the harvest is not complete with the gathering of the saints beyond the veil. It also includes the burning of the tares. We have that very thing here.

The vine of the earth and her grapes are cut up and cast into the winepress of the wrath of God. The output of the winepress is not juice, but blood. In the Scriptures, blood represents life. Leviticus 17:11 14. For the life of the flesh is in the blood.

Deuteronomy 12:23. Only be sure that thou eat not the blood, for the blood is the life. The winepress is crushing the lifeblood of Babylon. We see the same scene in Isaiah, chapter 63, verses 3 and 4. I have trodden the winepress alone.

And of the peoples there was no man with me. Yea, I tried them in mine anger and trampled them in my wrath, and their lifeblood is sprinkled upon my garments, and I have stained all my raiment. For the day of vengeance was in my heart.

And the year of my redeemed is Come notice where this trampling takes place without the city or outside of the city. The only cities mentioned in Revelation are New Jerusalem and Babylon. Only Babylon is mentioned in this chapter. So where would outside of Babylon be? It would seem to be natural and logical to connect this final destruction of Babylon with the destructions of the nations that come against Israel in the time of Jacob's trouble.

That location is certainly outside the city of Babylon. I believe that's the point here. The miraculous deliverance of Israel will also be the time when Babylon has her life crushed away. We might also observe that Babylon, the magnum opus of Satan, is affiliated with the nations being led against Israel.

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The blood or life coming out of the winepress reaches a height or depth of the horses bridles. Horses in Scripture, as we've already observed, often represent doctrines. A bridle is what controls and directs a horse. Interestingly, James uses the same metaphor with respect to controlling our tongues and our bodies. In James 3:2 he writes, for in many things we stumble.

If any stumble not in word, the same is a perfect man able to bridle the whole body. Also, putting this together seems to express the idea that Babylon will no longer have the power of life to control people with erroneous doctrines. The last symbolism regarding Babylon's full and complete and permanent destruction is the reference to the distance the blood extends. It is 1600 furlongs.

40 is the number representing complete testing. Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Jesus was tested in the wilderness for 40 days. 40 squared is 1600. So the 1600 may well represent the final and complete testing and subsequent judgment of Babylon.

We briefly reviewed the circumstances leading to the development of the conflict irrepressible and its natural consequences in the disintegration of the old heavens and old earth. Much more could be said both from the Scriptures and from the testimony of current events. What are the prime takeaways? 1. The light of truth in the minds of imperfect man leads to dissatisfaction and trouble.

2. Those who have had the reins of control of this world, with few exceptions, trample on the rights and lives of the masses. 3. This led to the time of trouble in which we now live. 4. The Feet members of the little flock had many opportunities to let their light shine and engage in the remaining work.

Jehovah, God has us for us to do. 5. Courageously engaging in that work will allow us to be sealed and make our calling and election sure. 6. Holding back will lose our crowns.

Psalm 46:2 Once again, therefore, we will not fear though the earth do change, and though the mountains be shaken into the midst of the sea, rather Luke 21:28 but when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draweth nigh. May the Lord bless this to.