

Frank Shallieu - Revelation

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And signified it by his angel unto his servant John, who bear record of the word of God.

If we found a book with that purporting to be a message of this nature and hadn't ever heard of it before, we'd say what a wonderful message this is. If it's true that this purports to be a mystery that God has had in his mind and he purposes it to show it to his children. Now, suppose you found a book like that that hadn't been discovered or known about previously. Why, your heart would just leap with joy if you found internal evidence that its claims might very well be true. But it's the commonness of the Bible and it's what it purports to tell to the Lord's people, like the sun coming up in the morning, that we lose fact and sight of the power and the wonderful gem that we have in our possession.

Now, this first verse, what does it remind you of? Just to start out the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him. Doesn't that suggest a familiar picture to you?

What about the fourth and fifth chapters of Revelation? There was a throne scene, right? And there we see the heavenly father seated on the throne with a scroll in his hand, and no one was privileged to really gaze on that scroll and to know its contents.

No one was found worthy. But ultimately we found that Jesus proved to be the worthy one, right? And God gave that scroll to Jesus. So tie in the first chapter, the first verse, with this other throne scene. See how beautifully they harmonize.

God had a scroll in his hand. He gave it to Jesus, ultimately, and Jesus opened that scroll section by section. He broke one seal, another seal, and so forth.

John, when he first found that nobody could open that scroll, for nobody was proven worthy to gaze thereon and to interpret it and reveal it, he wept very much. I think that really, if we are to know the mysteries of God, we must have in part the zeal and attitude that John had. If we have not that in us, that innate desire burning within us to know things. If it's God's time and it's within proper bounds, we haven't that urge. I don't think we'll ever get to know too much about the secret things of the Lord, like Daniel inquiring Daniel.

And so John, he wept because nobody was found worthy, and then when someone was, you can imagine the joy that, and this was just a literal vision that he saw the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified it. Brother Russell has that in italics.

You notice in the reprint, he takes that word signified and puts it signified. That is, God in this book discloses its mysteries by visions or pictures or signs. That's the method in which this revelation was disclosed by signs. The things that John saw and heard which he discloses to us. Now, the next point in that first verse tells us about he signified it by his angel unto his servant John.

The general explanation of the angel there, who is the angel that took this message to John, the general interpretation is that one of the heavenly messengers took the message from Jesus and gave it to John. That it came from God, Jesus, and then an angel from Jesus to John. But I don't think that's the thought in that particular verse. Several years ago in the study, I can remember the particular night. Doesn't matter the particular setting.

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But we happened to be reading the fifth volume, and let's move here.

Thank you. I usually have the red one that forgot.

And Brother Russell ties in that fifth chapter with the first, the fourth and fifth chapters.

Okay. Second chapter of the fifth body.

Now, if this thought were fully received that the Almighty Jehovah himself is the Savior, the author of the great plan of salvation, and the executor of it through willing agents and representatives, it would deliver many from false conceptions of the relationship between the Heavenly Father and the heavenly Son in respect to the salvation of mankind.

When we thus see page 35 from the Scriptural standpoint that the great Jehovah himself is the author of the salvation brought unto us by our Lord Jesus, it leads us more fully and more properly honor and love our Almighty God. While it does not detract from the honor, love, and esteem in which we properly hold and reverence our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. For we see in the heavenly Son the Heavenly Father's image and recognize him as the messenger of the covenant through whom all the covenanted blessings of Jehovah are to be brought to mankind, and without whom none of the divine blessings are obtainable, and it's in harmony with this thought that our Lord Jesus in all matters acts as *italics*, the representative of the Father Jehovah in the work of salvation. Then he goes on and gives several scriptures that indicate that.

Then in the 36th page, he opens the worthy, the Lamb that was slain, and he pictures the throne scene there, the fifth volume, page 36, and shows the scroll in his hand and how Jesus ultimately was proven worthy to take that scroll.

Now, page 36, thus is pictured to us the high exaltation of the heavenly Father's representative, the messenger servant of the covenant, because of his humility and complete submission to the divine will. Now, I believe that this angel in the first verse of Revelation was Jesus himself, where it says that he sent his angel to his servant John. The thought, I think, is not that Jesus sent the angel to John, but that the he there is God. God sent his messenger or angel to John, and that angel proved to be Jesus himself. Elsewhere in the Book of Revelation, there are several instances where Jesus is spoken of as an angel.

Other chapters he's pictured under that figure an angel, and then this fifth volume mentions him as a particular messenger of the covenant. We come to another part there. It shows to me in the first verse that the Father is the one who is especially desirous of disclosing this message and that Jesus is the medium through which it is accomplished. I think it puts the Father in a little higher role because when we start off the revelation of Jesus Christ, where it's really God's revelation, Jesus was the Revelator, or he disclosed the message through John.

John was like the stenographer. He bare record of the word of God. It tells us who bear record of the word of God. That is, he took and made a record of it, and the testimony of Jesus Christ that goes on.

Blessed is he that readeth in this particular verse. We're very appreciative and thankful for Brother Magnuson's suggestion on this verse. He brought something to that I've never heard before. I've read a little bit on Revelation in other writings at one time.

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Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear. The word of this prophecy goes on and keep the things that are written therein and so forth. Now you notice the contrast with the singular and the plural. Blessed is he that readeth singular and they that hear plural. Now, we use that sort of logic to prove that Brother Russell is that servant.

We take the text in Matthew and we say it was a single messenger who discloses to the Church these various things, and we emphasize the singular and the plural, showing that the messenger, this particular servant, had to be an individual, not a class, as some believe. Well, we believe the same principle holds true in this verse, that when it says, blessed is he that readeth, it does not refer to any individual who reads that. You get the Bible, you pick it up, and anybody that reads this will be blessed. No, we find that that isn't generally the case.

There are many conditions. They can receive a Blessing. True, if they read reverently and the time is due that they can understand in measure, and if they keep what they understand that's disclosed to them, well, then they get a partial blessing. But it isn't just that way that blessed is he that readeth. In that sense, we had come to the conclusion in this, studying this verse, that the thought here was, blessed is he that readeth aloud.

And they that hear read the word of this prophecy. That's the thought, and we were surprised when this Bible came out. There are other Bibles that prove that same point. But the new translation that we have.

Never mind, leave that there. I'll pick it up later. Take the new translation. That's just the way it starts out, and so many cases this Bible has printed things along this nature that has surprised me.

Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written therein, for the time is near.

This is based upon the custom which Jesus and the Apostle Paul took advantage of when they went to the synagogue. Jesus very often read the word of God in the synagogue. It says that on the Sabbath he read the word as he was wont or accustomed to speak. The Apostle Paul did the same thing, took advantage of the privilege, and many wondered about Jesus learning how he could do this without having a formal education.

They say, well, we know this man and we know his children, his relatives rather, and we don't understand where he gets this ability. But they recognized it and he had that privilege.

We believe that the reader here is an individual, but that there were seven readers in the Gospel age, that the seven messengers to the church that are spoken of in the first chapter were each one individual that God used only one individual at a time. Down through the age. When it says, write to the messenger of Ephesus this, this what I tell you. Then he gives the text our Lord. Now, that messenger, when he got that message, he publicly circulated the theme in that church's message.

Of course, the various seven messengers didn't just get up and explain and go to the Bible and say, well, here's the meaning of the Ephesus. It's time to know Ephesus, and then they read and interpret every verse. That isn't the thought. The thought is that our message in the first stage of the Church of the nature, briefly epitomized here was the type of message that the church, that the Lord's people had from a dispensational standpoint.

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There are certain truths we have all down the Age basic truths that we have to have to sanctify us, that we might be made fit for the kingdom of heaven. But there are other types of truths that are dispensational, and those dispensational truths were revealed progressively and gradually, and that the Lord had a special messenger to disclose the message that he desired at a particular stage of the church's history. Just like he raised up prophets in the Old Testament, we have Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Daniel, and the various ones that God raised up at times who disclosed a message to the Jewish people.

So down through the Gospel age he has had readers, and that reader had the special blessing because he was a special servant of God with the privilege of explaining, expounding in a general fashion the word of God. Blessed is he that reads aloud, and they who hear read. That's the thought. Of course, in the Greek you could read or look up the word read and.

And it would mean very much like our word read. When you see the word re a d, what does it mean? It means to silently read. You can read this silently or you can read it aloud, and the only way we know which is meant is by the context generally.

That's how we know if somebody says, well, will you read this? Well, you know, by the whole atmosphere, whether he means aloud or whether he means to read it silently. Well, the Greek word permits the same thought. But some have caught that thought and put it read aloud. We believe that's the thought Brother Magnuson used to use this Blessed would be that per public servant that the Lord would use to read the message.

And blessed would they be who come within range of that voice. If they came within range of the voice at that time and responded to it, they would be similarly blessed by the Lord. So we believe that this singular and plural in that verse is very significant, and much is lost if we take just a common interpretation that we get a blessing. If we studied the Book of Revelation with a reverential attitude, we think it goes much deeper than that, and that the same force and reasoning in this we could use as in Matthew 24 to prove that Brother Russell is that servant by using the same type of logic to illustrate the same thing.

Let us go to the Old Testament. Zechariah, the fourth chapter.

You remember the vision that Zerubbabel had, or Zechariah had of Zerubbabel. We'll read just a portion of it. The second verse, fourth chapter, and said unto me, what seest thou? And I said, I have looked and behold a candlestick, all of gold, and A bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps which are 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.

So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, what are these, my Lord? Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, knowest thou not what these be? And I said, no, my Lord. Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, this is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Now notice the similarity.

Here we have a candlestick, don't we? The golden candlestick in Zechariah. In the Book of Revelation, the first chapter, we have similarly a candlestick there, right? Remember, the one walking in the midst of the. You're familiar with this Book of Revelation, but we're just trying to tie these in.

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But notice the peculiar thing that this candlestick had. A central bowl had one particular prominent bowl, and on either side of the candlestick were two trees, two olive trees, which fed this candlestick with its supply of oil. The two olive trees represent the word of God in this picture. The Old and the New Testament.

They are the sources of oil to supply light for the church. The candlestick holds the light. It's a supporter of the light that pictures the church. The seven phases of the church down through the Gospel age. But notice the central bowl, before that oil went to that candlestick, it first went to the bowl.

And that bowl represents our Lord Jesus Christ himself. That in him all the fullness of the Spirit dwells, that that all went to him, and it's through Jesus that. That the oil goes to the remainder of the church. But it says that this bowl which supplies oil to the candlestick, it doesn't even then just drop in the candlestick.

It gets there by seven pipes, right? It says the bowl and seven pipes which lead to the candlestick. We understand those seven pipes to represent the seven channels of God's message. The candlestick itself, in seven parts, would represent the seven phases of the church. So here we find that God is the source of truth in His Word.

But we find that that would not mean much to us, the word of God, unless through Jesus, he revealed it to us. Whether that applies to the Book of Revelation or with any part of the Bible, we wouldn't get very far studying it unless we had Jesus personal help to guide us. It isn't by studious effort. So we find that it's God his word in connection with Jesus, through Jesus, in Jesus, that the church gets its light, but that it comes through seven prominent channels spoken of in this chapter in Zechariah.

In the message to the church in the first chapter, you notice that the way it's addressed, we'll just take one unto the angel of the church of Ephesus, write these things, saith he that has the seven stars, and so forth. Now, John wrote a message to these seven angels, and it was the responsibility, pardon me, or duty of these angels to carry that message to the congregation at large. That was their responsibility.

Some get the erroneous thought that all the rebukes and commendations are expressed to the angel personally. But that isn't the thought. The angel is the conveyor of God's message. He conveys the message that God has for the church to the church, and thus he's very favorable. He is not one that God is rebuking.

Because they're handpicked messengers, aren't they? You notice in the first chapter, it says that these messengers were likened to seven stars. Remember, it says, and these stars, the angel tells us at the end of the. The Revelator tells us at the end of the chapter, these stars are the messengers to the church, while the candlestick represents the church itself.

We go to the fifth chapter now.

And then we want to come to Caesar's way to get the scroll. Somebody who's helping that birth with the land freshly planed. The story. So many people. I think it's here.

Here there's six birds. That's it. All right. Do you want to read then?

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And I beheld, and while in the midst of its realm, and after four heaps, and in the midst of the elder, stood a lamb and had been flamed, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Now. Well, you have that read. Just keep. Keep that in your mind. Let's go back to Zechariah.

One minute. Remember after, when Zechariah had this vision of the olive trees and the candlestick and the bowl and the seven pipes, and he didn't know the meaning of it. The angel gave him the interpretation thereof, and what was his explanation of it? He said that this temple of the Lord, that's the gist of the setting, would not be built by might.

You see, Power, human power that way. But by God's spirit. But by my spirit, saith the Lord, and that spirit is that which was supplied from those trees, the holy oil, the olive oil, that's the Lord's Holy Spirit, which enlightens the church to successfully accomplish its mission. How beautifully this is pictured with the wise and foolish virgins.

They had lamps, but the oil they didn't have a sufficient supply of, and their lamps later went out because they didn't have enough of the Holy Spirit to make it their own to carry them through for the chief blessing of entering into the marriage with the lamp.

Then we're told that this blessing becomes sealed on our hearts if we keep the things that are written therein. For the time is at hand. The time is at hand. Of course, we could say from a more general standpoint that the kingdom is at hand even way, way back there. But we believe the thought here that the time is at hand even now, even at that time, for the beginning of the fulfillment of the things that John saw, that the whole message of revelation wasn't meant just for us down here.

I think we'd have a pretty narrow view and a pretty poor view if we thought that all the mysteries of God, he just saved them to the end of the age. Only now the thought is that the message was revealed gradually and progressively down through the age, and that even in John's day and thereafter, parts of that message were disclosed to the church and did benefit them, and that's why the message is given to the seven stages of the church. But notice this Lamb. Getting to the text that Sister read, it mentions that the Lamb had a peculiarity there.

Would you read that in the physical hearing, the Lamb had seven horns and he had seven eyes?

The thought would be that the Lamb would be specially close and helpful to his church throughout the seven phases of its development. The seven doesn't mean just completion. When we say seven, we're not just trying to emphasize that this is the whole thing. That's a part of the meaning of seven. But the word seven also means literally seven phases.

Just like when we say the seven churches. When we say the seven churches in Revelation, we don't mean just that this message is for the whole church. We mean that in addition to being a message to the whole church, it was especially portioned into seven parts down through the age. In other words, there were seven periods or epochs down through the Gospel age, and for each of these time periods, God had a special message.

That message would be, in a general sense, applicable to the whole church. In other words, if we read the promise to the church of Ephesus or Smyrna, it would be applied to us too, if we complied with the the. The context of the requirements to gain the prize. But those particular messages had a

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primary application in the time period which they covered, and so we find that the seven messages were chronologically fulfilled down through the age.

And it's not just a message in the broad sense to the whole church, and that's the end of it. Now when we come to the message, it's the same with the messengers. There were seven messengers. That doesn't mean all the messengers of God, but it means seven literal messengers that God chose to serve his church with seven individuals down through the age.

The individuals did not live together contemporaneously as far as giving their message. We believe the first two lived contemporaneously, but not in the same of delivering the special message that they have.

So we find that the 7 is literal as well as symbolic of the whole or symbol of the comprehensive picture of the whole church. Now, the Lamb had seven divisions of power and seven eyes. Now the eyes are spoken of as the seven spirits of the Lord. What are the seven spirits of the Lord? We would say let's just read here in the first chapter.

It might be interesting to just go over that particular part.

Take the fourth verse, which we haven't read. John to the seven churches which are in grace be unto you, and peace from him which is, which was and which is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness, who is the one referred to that, this message of grace and peace from him which is, which was and which is to come. Who would that be that's pictured by that title?

Anyone?

Yes. That couldn't be Jesus, could it? If you really think on that text, that would not be Jesus. Because there was a time when Jesus was not when Jesus was in the tomb. There was a brief time in Jesus experience when he did not exist.

But this text is as much as saying in common words the ever living God, the one who always was, who now is, and who always will be. It's another way of saying God himself, and so if we go through the book of Revelation and examine this title, where it is elsewhere used, we find that it applies to Jehovah in the other contexts, and from the seven spirits.

What would the seven spirits be before God's throne?

Generally, the word spirit, when it's used in many places, has to mean the word of God as it is revealed to his people. In a sense like this, it says the spirit speaketh expressly. That in the latter times, latter days, perilous times shall come. That is, the Holy Spirit in God's word discloses to us that when the end of the age comes, the world will not be appreciative of the fact of the nearness of the kingdom of heaven. Far from it.

They'll be the opposite. They'll be in a very poor condition, spiritually speaking.

The Spirit there would be God's revealing to his church through his Holy Spirit a particular message. That's it. The message. The Spirit expressly says that at the latter days, perilous times shall come. That is, this is a message from God revealed to us by His Holy Spirit.

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It says, try the spirits. Whether they be of God. Doesn't it. Does it mean to try the angels to see whether they're fallen angels or holy angels? That is not what that text means.

And so we find that when Brother Russell explains it, he says, test the doctrines. That's what the word spirits means, doctrines, and so here we have seven spirits. Now, from one standpoint, this message in first chapter tells us John is writing to him. He says, oh, may the blessing of God himself and his Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ be upon you when we baptize, right, we mention that this baptism is by the authority of God himself and of his Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

That's the authority by which they're baptized. So John is telling us, in effect in this message that this message is from God in a hearty sense. It's as though he were writing it right here. Especially when we read into that message, we find that John puts his whole heart into this message, and he goes right forward from his day down to us and speaks to us in intimate terms.

Not just at the end of the age. I mean, down through the age he wishes to greet all. Now, God's Holy Spirit could be spoken of as seven spirits in the sense of being his complete Spirit. But the thought we believe is that the seven spirits represent seven outpourings of God's spirit through the age. That there would be seven particular messages to the Lord's people down through the gospel age.

Seven churches. Yes, seven messengers to those churches. Seven spirits is what the content of the message is. It's the doctrine that God desires his people to know. Dispensational doctrine.

And so the seven spirits would be these seven love letters that God has that he wants to convey to us through His Son Jesus, and each of these letters are sealed. I'm using another illustration of separate letters. But the thought, as far as it being disclosed to the churches along that line. He had seven missives or missals for us.

And each one was addressed to a particular church. Unto the church of Ephesus write these things, saith he so and so I know thy work, so forth, and so with each message it was an outpouring of God's spirit for that particular stage of the church's experience.

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness. Now, if we take this which is, which was and which is to come and apply that to Jesus, we have a repetition here. We have the Heavenly Father alludes to Jesus in the first part of this message, which is, which was and which is to come, and then he does it again later and from Jesus Christ. That isn't the thought the which is, which was and which is to come means the ever living one.

God has always existed and always will exist, never can die. It's God, his Holy Spirit and our Lord Jesus himself, and then the Apostle John in this message, he puts his own personal touch in this message. John is so solicitous that we get the blessing of this message that he puts his own self in that message, and he says, I John.

And he says, I'm your companion. If we can only get the feeling of the warmth in back of this message, I think it would be very inspiring to us as well as the cold fact of its interpretation. So we find that John says that he experienced back there trouble and tribulation because of his faithfulness to the word of God, and, and he realizes too that any who are faithful to God in proportion that they are, they will suffer tribulation too.

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And he says, I am your companion in this common trouble experience that we have, and he addresses us down now and it reminds us of our Lord Jesus just before his death. While he prayed to the Heavenly Father for his living church, he also prayed for them that would yet hear later and understand the writings of the apostles, and he had that comment. It's not only like the 23rd hymn we sang tonight, Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love.

It's not only our own little fellowship that this tie should embrace, but should be one that's more universal. We should be in our hearts thinking of the brotherhood of the church throughout the land, not only those that are close to us, and if we're even more imbued with the Holy Spirit, as special messengers have been Apostle Paul and our Lord and John here we would even look future. Of course, now we're at the end of the age. But that would be the disposition of God's people to be looking forward to that victory and the common brotherhood of the church and when all would be comprehended by the plan of God when it is finished.

So we find there's a hymn that has that spirit in. I think if I can remember it now go forward. Christian soldiers marching us to war. But there's one who brings in the unity there like a mighty army. Oh, that's it.

All one body we. I'm with Christians now. Does that apply to the living church? It applies to the living and yet to be living church. That hymn goes forward as well as backward.

It embraces the whole church in spirit. He looks back on the faithfulness of those in the past and says we're going to do the same that they did and carry up the banner of Christ and that it will yet go future, and that's all comprehended by the thought. All one body we not meaning just those living at the particular day of the writers time.

How much time before I get what I forget?

Oh, the sixth horn. Thank you. You have to remind me because the horn is a symbol of power, and so God Jesus, and this was the particular one who God used strengthened his church.

Just like the high priest that walked in the midst of the candlesticks, remember trimming the wicks and so forth. So Jesus, while he is the Christian's ever present friend, he has especially overseen dispensational truths down through the age. Our Lord Jesus himself and these seven horns represent the nearness and power that he will be to his people during these seven periods of time. He says in one place I go away and I will come again, and then at the end of the age he'll come so forth.

But in another way he says lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age, and that's the thought here, that our Lord would be a special power. Even though he's invisible, even though he couldn't be seen with a natural eye. He wants to encourage us that we might walk as seeing him who is invisible, as though we could see him like Moses, and so to give us that close touch.

The Lord wants us to know that if we can enter into the spirit of this prophecy, he is ever with us, and that these pictures give us some comprehension of the scope of his operations and of the nearness of which that he is to us. The eyes are a symbol of intelligence and the eye here would be is connected with the seven spirits or message which would serve to enlighten his people. What to do? We should Never be in a quandary from a general standpoint, say, well, we don't know what to do as Christians.

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We might not know what to do in connection with a certain decision or a certain trial, but our attitude in life shouldn't be that we just wandering in the wilderness of God that isn't, or the wilderness of sin. That's what happened with Israel. Many of them, they wandered in the wilderness 40 years instead of having gone in and entered at once into the promised land. To them, those 40 years must have seemed to serve no special purpose because they did not achieve their perspective, and then they died not accomplishing what they had desired.

And so the apostle said that we should not be as one beating the air, but we should fight with a purpose in mind. So we find here that these seven I's would be the seven messages that would serve to enlighten God's people living in each of the seven periods of the Church's history. He would be an eye to them in their. In giving them enlightenment as to what to do from a dispensational standpoint, especially as it's written in the Book of Revelation, those seven stars which represented seven angels, we believe they represent seven individuals, and the way we would quench this in our own line of reasoning would be this.

Remember in the 12th chapter where we had the 12 stars on the woman's head and the moon under her feet? Remember in the 12th chapter with the dragon scene, it says that this woman had, I saw a wonder in heaven, and it says that this woman was clothed with the sunlight and had 12 stars on her head and the moon was under her feet, and then I saw another wonder in heaven, a great red dragon, and.

And then it shows in the scene that the dragon was about to devour the woman, but that woman had 12 stars in her head. Does that mean the 12 offices? Does it mean. Does it teach us apostolic succession? No, those 12 stars are teaching us 12 prominent messengers to the church, namely the 12 apostles themselves.

So we can't interpret these stars. We believe in the first chapter as representing seven agencies, in the sense that if one individual dies, if another one can fill his boots or to step in his place. Some have gotten that thought. Whether it's the society or whether an individual dies and another one gets in his place and continues the work, we cannot look on them in the same light as these messengers. That particular privilege was peculiar and separated only to that individual down through the age.

And so the seven stars in the first chapter represent seven individuals just as much and with equal consistency, harmonize with the 12 stars in the 12th chapter of Revelation on the woman's head. Now, the difference my wife called my attention to this about how do we account for the fact that the 12 stars in the 12th chapter were apostolic stars and had the thought of the infallible teachings of the apostles themselves? Whereas in the seven stars in the first chapter, while they would picture prominent leaders of God's people down through the age, we know that they were not absolutely infallible in their teachings. The great majority of them. Well, we think that this distinction is noted right in the picture.

In the 12th chapter, the 12 stars are pictured as being on the woman's head and would suggest divine inspiration. Divine inspiration, which is quite different than the seven stars in the hand. The seven stars in the hand would say that these seven individuals pictured in the first chapter would be specially divinely guided. So we would make a distinction between being divinely guided and being divinely inspired. As to who these seven messengers are, we believe that two of them represent apostles, and the fact that they would be pictured in the hand would not mitigate the fact that they could also be pictured in the 12th chapter as some of the stars on the woman's head.

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We would reason it this way, that while in the first chapter it pictured these seven stars as being divinely guided, that it could be also true that a person could be also divinely inspired as well as divinely guided. But we find that only five of these, that five of these were not divinely inspired. Let's take just a few of the more prominent ones, like Luther, Pastor Russell. We don't believe they were. They were divinely inspired in the sense that.

What's that? Ex cathedra, the expression that's given to papal announcements, that when they speak in public, their words are infallible. They feel that they are like the apostles themselves, that when they write or speak on ecclesiastical matters, they are infallible. They never err when they speak in that way. Well, we know that these messengers that God used down through the age did not have all of those that prerogative, but every one of them was divinely guided.

Some of them, in addition to being divinely guided, were also divinely inspired. Some of the earlier, we'd make that distinct. So we feel that we cannot get around the fact that these stars were particular messengers to the church. Just like it says, in harmony with the first chapter, that the seven stars that thou sawest in my right hand are the seven messengers to the seven churches, and it harmonizes beautifully we are indebted to the seventh volume as far as for the identification of all seven.

For a time there we were troubled with two of them, but over the years we feel that it is right. The seven that are enumerated there in the reprints. We could cull or glean three of the messengers by name, but no more. As far as the actual writings of Pastor Russell himself, we could reason with our own reason and, and identify one more, make it four, but still there'd be three unaccounted for.

So we find that in the seventh volume that maybe only 10% of it is right, but that 10% is mighty helpful and is peculiar to that volume. Nobody else had it. Who else has disclosed that? Nobody living today. So we have to recognize the good that we can see from others and not be so prejudiced or blind that we reject some very good and helpful thoughts.

Because we see some blunder in the individual does not mean that he cannot have the spirit of the Lord in some matters. So we think we're thankful to the seventh volume on the identification of the seven messengers. There are a few other thoughts contained in that book that are helpful, even if the majority of them are not specially informative.

Another thing that impresses me, this first chapter, we would dance at the sixth verse, right? Have we got time for another verse?

Well, not now. Not now. I mean, that isn't a special point. We're trying to emphasize that there have to be seven individuals. That's the big block.

If we once see it has to be seven individuals, then we would not be too adverse to being Brother Russell being one of them, Luther being one. But if we try to interpret it that an enlightened class in the church turns around and serves the congregation like they interpret in Matthew 24, well, we would be going off on a tangent. We believe we would be going out of harmony with the plain declarations within this chapter, as well as in the 12th chapter, which teach that it represents individuals that God would use, not offices, but individuals that God would use to do his service.

Let's take this other verse about the clouds, isn't it?

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And hath made us kings and priests. John is speaking unto God and his Father, and to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

One other we might take this. Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him. They also which pierced him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so.

Amen.

Notice in this, this particular verse, it mentions two particular classes that wail those which pierced him, and every eye that shall see him. All the tribes of the earth, in other words, right? We have the all the tribes of the earth would wail, and those who pierced him. We would put a little different slant on this verse than one of fear. We don't think that's the thought that behold, he cometh with clouds.

The clouds do mean trouble. That's true. Behold, he comes with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. The thought we believe here is that while at first the world will be made cognizant or aware of the fact of Messiah's reign through the medium of trouble, while it will at first produce some fear, this thought here goes further. It says they shall wail on account of him.

It would be a mourning that be very deep. The thought is they will beat their breasts. That's the Greek word has the thought of beating the breasts that shows a contrition and sorrow, and not one motivated by fear. The thought is here that when, for instance, those that appear to him have recognized that this indeed was the Messiah, it will produce the mourning that's spoken of in Zechariah and other chapters in the Old Testament where it mentions that the Jews, when they recognize Messiah, while the picture Joseph shows that there will be a moment of fear. That is not the special emphasis in the Scripture.

The Scripture is that they shall mourn for him as for a firstborn son who had been lost in death, and that they would go each separately to their own homes and wail and mourn in the same way that they previously did in the valley of Hadrad Rimmon in connection with King Josiah's death, when there was genuine grief in the nations, motivated not by fear but by sorrow of what had been done, and their neglect and lack of appreciation of the work and ministry of Christ down through the age. When they are made aware of the fact that the Messiah is a living Christ, and that he died for them, gave his own life, and they put that together with their inattentiveness to the call of God through the age, it will put in their hearts contrition and would make them very humble to see their failure to recognize and appreciate what the death of Jesus really meant. Instead of constraining them to consecration, they were driven off to pleasure and lust and other things, instead of heeding the voice of God down through the age.

Apostle John is thoroughly in harmony with this conversion. You notice how he ends it up even so. Amen so the John isn't saying, well, oh, that's a terrible day, but wait until we get over that, and then on the other side, it's going to be so wonderful, you know, the bright cloud on the other side. No, but he sees that even in that wailing there will be a lot of good.

And so just take as an individual, a person who has hardened his neck to the call of God. If we see an individual break down and become converted, you know, that is a wonderful lesson to our own hearts, and it makes us realize what a wonderful thing to think of the hard soil of that individual's heart being broken, that the seed of truth might prosper on the soil and go forth and bring honor to the Lord. So we find here that the apostle John is very emotional. Apostle John isn't a cold theologian.

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He's this Boanerges, the son of thunder and so forth. We find that he's that way. He can't be. His exuberance comes out when he sees something that sounds pretty good to him. He says, even so, amen.

And that's not Jesus speaking. This is John speaking, even so, amen. He was given the privilege of writing it down, but he was so elated and transported with the glorious theme of this message that he just bubbles out with it, and so we find there are other instances in the book of Revelation where he does that again, just like at the end. Even so, come quickly.

Lord Jesus is another case that's something extemporaneous and comes forth from the apostle would to God that we had some more like that that would try to soften us up. I wish I could do that more and have some more have that disposition instead of frowning on it when it's done in promiscuously, of course, that's another matter. This is a general warmth, a genuine warmth of spirit. So the apostle John, while he was very solicitous of the church and wrote about their welfare, he was even looking forward to this great mourning period because he knew that that would then be lay the foundation for real reform work. Until we are broken in spirit, the word of the Lord won't mean too much in our hearts, in our conversion.

That's the Lord usually humbled us, great majority of us, through one experience or another, and that in that humbling period we were made susceptible to the truth. It appealed to us and lifted us up in the right way, right path.

I think the time isn't it? Is it pretty late?

How much time should I speak about?

So the message comes from God, the Father, who's the author? Jesus is the one that God used to convey this message to his church, his personal representative, his personal servant. John is the human servant who recorded the message. He wrote it down while he was in the isle of Patmos, and he wrote this message, the wording of it, addressed to the various churches.

He was the Lord's stenographer, and he took down the dictation of Jesus. These messengers, when they appeared on the scene, they saw that that was the message that God wanted them to deliver, and so we find these men, while they came, some of them from humble surroundings, they ultimately became convinced of the mission which they were to perform. So we find that they served with a particular pointed purpose in connection with their ministry. Any of these seven messages, and the Lord put it in their heart and overruled that if you were to condense the teachings of Pastor Russell, for instance, take all his volume and squeeze them into a nutshell, you would have the message to Laodicea.

That's the way the Lord gave us that message in describing, in a very few words, in a pithy manner, the message that he has for his people. It's found in that message. The presence and the coming out of Babylon and so forth, and the great riches in the kingdom, they're all found in that small message, and so it's true with all the others that the Lord has used down through the age. If you were to take, and we're not all capable of doing that because we don't know all the details of their lives or their writings, but we have it from the Lord's standpoint that if you were to take the effects of their general ministry and to condense them to a few words, they would be in harmony with the outline to the message that God intended them to.

To deliver in the first place. So in a grand way, the Lord has privileged us to look upon this book.

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And we need each other's help to call our attention to the fact of this privilege and to exhort one another to serve the Lord and to help one another. When we see one another wandering off into unprofitable paths, like the duty of husband and wife or brothers in the church, that we should feel that oneness, that we can kindly admonish one another in that family way. If we could only have that spirit more, I think it would be one that would be very conducive to our making of our calling and election. Sure, it would be most helpful to us. Thus, any rebukes as well as encouragements would be looked upon in an entirely different life, they would be looked upon in the family life and would be easily forgotten.

It wouldn't be as penetrating some remarks that cut to the soul to such an extent that some of the friends are estranged for the rest of their life because of one incident in their life for the rest of life. There is a bar of separation there that's never healed and that ought not be unless one is departed from the Lord that should not. That complete suffering that we can't separate one another from the Lord until we have it from the Lord's word or the conduct of the individual is such that it forces us on account of the cause of the truth, that we curb our association just from that standpoint.

We can wait another time. I'm the 24 elders. I thought I'd bring that in. But it might be well to go into that as a separate subject. That's all tied in here.

Eventually. It comes in a later verse. When you come to the messages to the churches. You have those in the reprints. In the early reprint, the first reprint, you'll find the message to Ephesus and Smyrna and so forth, where Pastor Russell tells us briefly what those messages are.

We'll try to go over them if the Lord permits, if you so desire. In the future, if not, we'll go past them. Whatever you think best.

But I thought I could bring the 24 elders and tie it in here because it's related to it. But that's too big, and we would like to cover it completely, to take all the points one way or the other and analyze them and see if we could come to an acceptable and a definite conclusion.

That was the very fine book.

Thank you, brother.

First chapter of Revelation. Now may we close our meeting with a hymn?