

## **THE SEVENTH PLAGUE.**

"And the seventh poured out his bowl on the AIR; and there came forth a LOUD VOICE from the TEMPLE OF GOD [Sinaitic MSS.] saying, IT IS DONE."

Seven is often used as the symbol of completeness; so this seventh plague completes the trouble coming, and will result in the complete unveiling of Satan's deceptions and the binding or destruction of his power and influence. The result of this trouble brings conviction to some. This is shown by the great voice from the Temple, saying, "It HAS been done!" (Literal translation.) When last we saw the temple, or the nominal church, it was filling with smoke and casting out the faithful messengers of truth, saying, "Go your ways; pour out the plagues; do all you can" (Rev. 15:8; 16:1). Boastfully relying on internal strength; but now, when the seventh has been poured out, we hear this nominal temple saying, "It has been done"; we are now convinced of the truths uttered by the faithful messengers whom, in our ignorance and pride, we cast out from us: Who told us that we were in darkness and great distress was coming upon us, and that our systems, which we so fondly cherished, were to crumble into dust. It has been done even as they declared; Babylon is utterly destroyed; as a great millstone cast into the sea, she shall rise no more.

This temple class, which finally recognizes God's dealings when these systems are entirely destroyed, is the same which we have found elsewhere mentioned in Scripture, and which we have designated the second company, who, though losing the prize promised to overcomers of the Beast, etc. (Rev. 20:4), are "saved so as by fire [these severe judgments] in the day of the Lord Jesus." This blessed result upon this second company gives us an intense interest

in and longing for the destruction of the enslaving systems mentioned **[R511 : page 8]** in succeeding verses as the result of this seventh trouble.

"And there were lightnings and thunders and voices." This describes the general effect on mankind; lightnings signifies diffusion of knowledge. "His lightnings enlightened the world" (Psa. 97:4). Voices signify proclamations and general discussion of subjects by those being enlightened. Thunderings signify tumults accompanying the increased enlightenment.

"And there was a great EARTHQUAKE; such as was not since a man was on the earth, such an earthquake – so great. And the GREAT CITY became three parts, and the city [Sinaitic reading] of the nations fell down" (v. 18).

An earthquake would symbolize a revolution, and here brings to our attention the greatest revolution which ever has or ever will take place on earth. This is the great revolution mentioned by the Prophet, in which every mountain and hill (the high ones) should be brought low, and the valleys (humble ones) be exalted, bringing all humanity to a common level as a preparation for the righteous reign of the Lord's Anointed. Each of the previous plagues has tended toward this end, and this last results in the utter overthrow of the triple alliance or association between the Beast (Papacy), the False Prophet (other religious systems teaching error), and the Dragon (civil power), shown under the sixth plague.

The Great City here evidently represents these united three elements which attempted in union to rule over or control the world. This union and power will continue for awhile, but, as here shown, they will again separate – be divided into three parts. Seeing that their alliance and mutual support has failed to control and keep subject the restless and turbulent masses, each will attempt to adopt an individual policy in their effort to adjust and settle society. But their

efforts will be fruitless, and will only hasten the crisis of the hour. As a consequence, we read: "The city of the nations fell down."

But, though the kingdoms shall fall, the religious element of the union shall not escape. Under the name Babylon they all seem to be included (as elsewhere), saying, "Babylon the great was remembered before God, to have given her the cup of the wine of the indignation of the wrath" (verse 19). This signifies that the fiercest of the trouble – the wine or extract of the wrath – will be upon the Babylon systems more than upon the political division.

"And every ISLAND fled and no MOUNTAINS were found." (verse 20.) [Islands seem to symbolize Republican governments – organizations of people slightly above the "sea" level.] This would be the natural result of the overthrow of monarchies or kingdoms, symbolically called mountains, as indicated in Psa. 97:5. "The hills (literal, mountains) melted and flowed down like wax at the PRESENCE OF THE LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth." This is a grandly expressive illustration of the passing away of earth's dominion. In this day of the Lord – the day of His presence, the day of the establishment of his kingdom in the earth – some of the mountains [kingdoms] will melt, or gradually come down to the level of the people, by the fire and great heat, caused by increase of truth and knowledge, while others remaining firm will be overwhelmed – by the "sea" – in revolutions. This last form is described in Psalm 46, which seems to give a complete picture of this seventh plague. It reads thus: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear though the earth [society] be removed, and though the mountains [kingdoms] be carried into the midst of the sea [overthrown by the ungovernable masses]: Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled [in great commotion], though the mountains shake with the swellings thereof." Then follows a more literal statement of the same things.

(verse 6.) "The heathen [lit. Gentiles] raged, the kingdoms were moved; he uttered his voice, the earth melted."

While kingdoms [mountains] shall give place to republics, [islands] so the islands in due time shall also flee away, as we find it here recorded. (Rev. 16:20.) That is, the spirit of liberty will overleap all bounds and order, and end in anarchy. But notice that when the republics are swept away, it will be after kingdoms have all been overturned, as indicated by the expression – "No mountains were found."

It is in a similar manner that the Master speaks of the "sea and waves roaring" as the beginning of trouble and cause of fear. And Peter refers to this time of trouble, which shall burn as an oven, as the time when the earth and all earthly elements shall be consumed and give place to a new earth [society] and new heavens [government], then there shall be no more sea [people not religiously restrained].

"And a great HAIL, as if weighing a talent, comes down from heaven on men; and men blasphemed God on account of the plague of the hail, because the plague of it is exceedingly great." (Verse 21.)

Hail is solidified water. If water or rain, causing fruitfulness and refreshing to earth, be a symbol of truth, refreshing and causing gracious fruits in humanity, then hail must signify truth delivered in such a way as to be dangerously destructive to things with which it comes in conflict. These will be heavy – a talent each – about the weight of a man – sufficient to break down everything before it. This recalls the symbolic use of this same word by Isaiah "And the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies and the waters (truth) shall overflow the hiding place." (Isa. 28:17). Untruth – error – falsity, is the bane of the world, and the time of trouble would be incomplete, and the world still unprepared for the reign of righteousness, were it not for this hail. Recalling a similar plague which came literally upon

Egypt, we find that it injured only those Egyptians who had not respect to the words of Jehovah (See Exod. 9:19-21); and we may safely reckon the same of this symbolic hail; it will smite down and subdue only those who are in opposition to it, and that for their good.

We need not suppose that this hail comes last, for in giving an account something must be mentioned last if all occurred simultaneously. These various things described will occur, or be in process at once – voices, thunderings, hail and lightning among the people, causing the earthquake, fall of Babylon, and mountains, etc. This is more than hinted at, in the fact that these same events, mentioned under the seventh seal and seventh trumpet, are mentioned indiscriminately as one event.

The hail, be it remembered, "comes down from heaven": heaven, as already defined, symbolizes spiritual powers, but not any longer corrupt and vitiated spiritual powers, for these have passed away. Babylon has been cast as a millstone into the "sea" to rise no more. This is the new "heavens" which shall gradually take the place of the old, which is to "pass away with a great noise" or tumult – voices, thunderings, &c. Yes, thank God, he that in verse 15 announces his presence as a thief will have not only broken down the kingdoms of the present, but will also have set up that kingdom for which our Lord taught us to pray: Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as in heaven. "Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness; for his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psa. 30:4,5).

"Blessed be his glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen."

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