**Mystery of the Woman**

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**Chapter 3**

**That Mighty City, Burning**

**Thrown Down, Found No More at All**

**And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven having great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory.**

**And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen…**

**For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.**

**For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities…**

**How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.**

**Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.**

**And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning.**

**Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come…**

**And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down and shall be found no more at all** (Rev. 18:1, 2a, 3, 5, 7-10, 21).

The main thrust of Scripture seen throughout Revelation chapter seventeen into the first part of chapter twenty has to do with God’s plans and purposes regarding *the Jewish people, the Gentile nations, and the Church of God* being brought to fruition, leading into the Messianic Era (*cf.* I Cor. 10:32).

*In a larger sense,* the working out of God’s plans and purposes for all three creations — *Jew, Gentile, and Christian* — has to do with *ruined man* and involves 6,000 years of restorative work, followed by the 1,000-year Messianic Era, *a Sabbath rest* awaiting the people of God. And this is patterned after God’s previous restorative work surrounding *the ruined material creation* — occurring over six days time, with God resting on the seventh day (a Sabbath rest) — in Genesis chapters one and two (Heb. 4:4, 9; *cf.* Ex. 31:13-17; II Peter 1:15-18; 3:3-8).

*In a narrower sense, regarding Israel and the nations,* the working out of God’s plans and purposes in this respect dates back 4,000 years (to the days of Abraham, about 2,000 B.C.) and 2,600 years (to the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles, about 605 B.C.).

And *in a narrower sense yet, regarding Christians,* the working out of God’s plans and purposes in this respect dates back 2,000 years to the inception of the Church on the day of Pentecost in 33 A.D.

The complete scope of God’s plans and purposes is dealt with numerous places throughout Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets — “line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” (Isa. 28:9, 10), with different facets of the matter being dealt with different ways in different places. Each facet provides a different part of *one complete overall word picture,* with the complete picture presenting the matter *exactly as God would have man view the whole of His plans and purposes regarding Israel, the nations, and the Church.*

And, regardless of how or where these things are dealt with in the Old Testament, there is always *a particular emphasis on concluding events —* events which bring the whole of the matter to fruition, as seen beginning in Revelation chapter seventeen and continuing through the first part of chapter twenty.

Thus, when one arrives at this closing part of the Book of Revelation and begins reading extensively about *a Beast and a harlot woman,* he is not left to his own imagination and interpretation concerning that which is in view. Scripture will reveal and interpret the matter for him.

All one has to do is go back to the Old Testament and see how God has previously laid the whole of the matter out, beginning in Genesis.

In this respect, through *comparing that which is spiritual with that which is spiritual* (I Cor. 2:9-13) — in this case, comparing numerous sections of the Old Testament with that seen beginning in Revelation chapter seventeen — *the Old Testament will interpret the matter for the reader.*

(Two Anglicized Greek words are sometimes used to call attention to correct and incorrect methods of Biblical study and interpretation — *exegesis* and *eisegesis.* The Greek prepositions *ek* [meaning, “out of”] and *eis* [meaning, “into”] are prefixed to the same word, which, without the prepositions, means “to guide” or “to lead.”

*Exegesis* has to do with *deriving out of a passage* that which is within the passage. In Rev. 17-19a, *exegesis* allows Scripture to comment upon and identify *the harlot woman.*  And, at every turn, Scripture [O.T. or N.T.], reveals that “the great whore” is a metaphor for *Israel* at the end of the Times of the Gentiles [*ref.* Chapters I, II in this book].

*Eisegesis,* on the other hand, has to do with *reading into a passage* that which is not in the passage.  *Eisegesis,* rather than allowing Scripture to identify the harlot woman in Rev. 17-19a, reads a foreign meaning into the passage, usually attempting to see “the great whore” used as *a metaphor for a false religious system,* often seen as *the Roman Catholic Church.*

*And this type mishandling of the passage is no small thing.* Not only does such a teaching do away with the correct understanding of the passage but such a teaching has the Times of the Gentiles ending in the Book of Revelation after a fashion which is *completely out of line with the way in which the Times of the Gentiles is seen being brought to a close throughout Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets.*)

The Old Testament has already dealt extensively, in minute detail, with *the whole* of that seen beginning with Revelation chapter seventeen and continuing into the first part of chapter twenty. *A complete word picture* has already been presented, for all to see. And this part of the Book of Revelation, dealing with the same thing as previously seen in the Old Testament, places the emphasis exactly where Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets had previously placed the emphasis, which could only be expected.

The Emphasis and Divisions in Revelation 17:1-20:6

The emphasis beginning in chapter seventeen and continuing through chapter nineteen, preceding the Messianic Era in chapter twenty, is placed on *Israel and the nations* (17:1-19:6, 11-21). And, within this section, *the Church of God,* as well, is brought back into the picture from the opening chapters of the book, though only taking up four verses throughout chapters seventeen through nineteen (19:7-10).

Beginning with chapter seventeen and continuing through the opening six verses of chapter twenty, this section of Scripture could be divided into four parts:

*1) In Rev. 17:1-19:6*, though both *the Beast and the harlot* occupy center-stage, *the harlot alone*, residing in the kingdom of the Beast, is the one centrally being dealt with throughout.

The subject matter of this section of Scripture is stated, in so many words, in the opening verse:

“And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; and I will shew unto thee *the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters*.”

*The harlot* is dealt with at length pertaining to *her identity* and *where she resides* (leaving no possible room for anyone to question that being pictured [if Scripture is compared with Scripture]).

And then *the harlot*, within the scope of this section of Scripture, is seen being *completely destroyed* (again, leaving no possible room for anyone to question that being pictured [again, if Scripture is compared with Scripture]).

*The Beast and his kingdom*, on the other hand, are dealt with in this section of Scripture only with respect to *identity and an impending destruction.* The harlot is the one dealt with *in detail throughout*, not the Beast.

*2) In Rev. 19:7-10*, after dealing with various things concerning the harlot and her relationship to the nations, followed by the harlot’s destruction, attention is called to *the bride and the marriage supper of the Lamb*, occurring in heaven, prior to Christ’s return to the earth.

This is the first mention of anything having to do with the bride since chapters one through three of the book, anticipating the relinquishment of crowns (ch. 4) and the redemption of the inheritance (chs. 5ff) — with the redemption of the inheritance being completed following Christ’s return (ch. 19b), allowing the bride to then become the Lamb’s wife (*cf.* Ruth 4:1ff).

*3) In Rev. 19:11-21*, the heavens are opened, and Christ is seen returning back to the earth “with his mighty angels” — *i.e.*, *the armies of heaven* — accompanying and following Him at this time (*cf.* II Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:14).

Accompanying Christ, as well, will be Moses and Elijah (*cf.* Matt. 16:28-17:5; Luke 9:27-32), who will evidently be instrumental in His dealings with both Israel on the one hand and the Beast and his kingdom on the other.

(For details on Moses and Elijah accompanying Christ at this time, refer to the author’s book, MOSES AND JOHN, particularly Chapters III, IV.)

The bride, from verses seven through ten, is not seen among those accompanying Christ back to the earth at this time. In fact, Scripture is quite clear that the bride *will not* accompany Christ back to the earth when He returns.

Christ will be returning to complete His dealings with Israel and the nations, and the bride will have no more to do with this than she will have previously had with Christ’s dealings with Israel and the nations during the Tribulation. The Bride simply will not participate in judgments occurring on earth when the seals of the seven-sealed scroll are being broken, and these judgments will not be concluded until after Christ returns to the earth to complete His dealings with Israel and the nations preceding the Messianic Era.

Note that Joseph’s wife, Asenath, was in another part of the palace when he dealt with his brethren at the time he revealed himself to them.

And note that Moses’ wife, Zipporah, only went part way with him when he returned to Egypt to deal with his brethren in this same respect.

Moses and Zipporah were reunited only after he had dealt with the Jewish people in Egypt, after he had dealt with the Pharaoh of Egypt, after the death of the firstborn, after he had led the Israelites out of Egypt, and after Pharaoh and his armed forces had been destroyed in the Sea.

And the same sequence will, of necessity, be followed in the antitype. The bride, as Zipporah, may very well accompany Christ part way and remain in the New Jerusalem above the earth while He deals with Israel and the nations on earth. Then, once these dealings have been concluded — which will be after Israel’s national conversion and restoration to her land, and after the destruction of Gentile world power (which, according to Scripture, will occur in this order) — Christ will be reunited with the one who will then have become His wife.

(At the time of the destruction of Gentile world power, all the judgments seen within the breaking of the seals of the seven-sealed scroll in Revelation chapter five will have come to pass. This will complete God’s terms for the redemption of the inheritance — with the marriage of Christ to His bride and the re-marriage of God to Israel seen as part and parcel with the redemption of the inheritance [*cf.* Ruth 4:1ff]).

The preceding succinctly covers, in a somewhat general respect, the sequence of events which will occur when Christ returns to the earth, as seen in Rev. 19:11-21.  *Very few* of these events are seen and dealt with in this brief section in the Book of Revelation, but *all* are seen and dealt with in prior Scripture, beginning in Genesis.

Scripture must be compared with Scripture in order to put the complete word picture together, *exactly as God has outlined and provided this information in His Word* (I Cor. 2:9-13).

*4) In Rev. 20:1-6*, all is brought to completion and fruition. Satan is bound, cast into the abyss, individuals are assigned positions of power and authority in Christ’s kingdom, and the millennial reign — that toward which everything in Scripture moves — will then occur.

I Sit a Queen, and Am No Widow, and Shall See No Sorrow

There is only *one possible way* that a person could expect the Tribulation to draw to a close and end in the Book of Revelation. And that would be *exactly the same way it is seen drawing to a close and ending time after time in Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets.*

Whether in the Old Testament or in the New Testament, Israel in the end time is seen enmeshed within and committing harlotry with the most corrupt form of Gentile world power man has ever known or ever will know.

This will then be followed by Israel’s repentance, the nation being cleansed of her harlotry (as presented in Rev. 17-19a, synonymous with the harlot being burned, destroyed by fire), the destruction of Gentile world power, and the ushering in of the Messianic Kingdom.

Though the nation will have paid *a heavy price, one beyond human comprehension,* Israel’s harlotry will be a thing of the past. Israel’s sins will have been “as scarlet,” “red like crimson”; but, with these sins having been completely removed — “as far as the east is from the west” — where *scarlet* and *crimson* once existed, conditions will then be “as white as snow,” “as wool” (Isa. 1:18; *cf.* vv. 21-26; Ps. 103:12-22).

And *a cleansed nation* in that day will realize the rights of the firstborn, fulfilling the purpose for the nation’s existence (*cf.* Rev. 17:16, 17; 18:8-21; 19:2, 3).

*1) Material Wealth, Spiritual Wealth*

The heavy price paid by Israel over centuries of time has been both to her detriment and the detriment of the nations. Israel has been removed from her land, scattered among the nations, and has suffered immeasurably at the hands of the Gentiles. And, at the same time, the nations have suffered as well, *having been cut off from the spiritual blessings which could have been theirs through Israel.*

But, though the nations throughout this time have found themselves *separated from spiritual blessings,* they have, at the same time, found themselves in *a position of power* and *involved with materialism, becoming wealthy* (18:3, 9-19).And Israel, having left her spiritual heritage and found herself scattered among the nations, has become inseparably involved with the world’s *materialism and wealth* as well (17:4; 18:16).

During the Times of the Gentiles (over 2,600 years), *the nations have held the sceptre and have become wealthy at the expense of Israel* (17:2; 18:19b). And, as long as the Times of the Gentiles continues, *the nations will continue to hold power and accumulate this wealth at Israel’s expense.*

Or, viewing the matter from another perspective, as long as Israel remains in the nation’s present condition — a harlot, co-mingling with and having illicit, forbidden relationships with the nations — the nations will continue to accumulate their wealth at Israel’s expense, with Israel involved in and sharing in this wealth.

But once Israel is brought to the place of repentance, followed by Israel’s harlotry being done away with (burned with fire [17:16, 17; 18:8ff]), *it will all be over for the nations.*

*The Times of the Gentiles will end, the sceptre will change hands, and the wealth of the Gentiles will be given to Israel* (Isa. 60:5, 11 [the word “forces,” KJV, should be translated “wealth”; *ref.* NASB, NIV]; *cf.* Ex. 12:35, 36).

The preceding is what a large part of Revelation chapter eighteen is about (through the use of the type language specified in the opening verse of the book, in Rev. 1:1 [*ref.* pp. 6-8 in Chapter I of this book, where this is explained]).

(When seeking to understand the book of Revelation, a major problem results from not understanding and interpreting material in the book after the manner in which God has structured this material — again, something stated in the opening verse of the book, though largely ignored.

Thus, when individuals attempt to understand things in this book from a western mindset, or through any other means different than the way that it was set forth in this opening verse, is it any wonder that they have trouble?)

Note particularly verses nine through nineteen in this eighteenth chapter. The nations will have become *rich,* and these nations will be *quite distraught* when all of this is suddenly taken from them. And it will all be taken from them *through the loss of the harlot in their midst* (again, note the symbolism and type language being used).

The nations can continue in their present fashion *only as long as the harlot remains in their midst*, for, the fact that Israel is playing the harlot is what allows them to live in this manner — accumulating material wealth, etc. But once the harlot is no longer present, once Israel is no longer playing the harlot, *things will change completely.*

(God will use the Beast to do *exactly the opposite* of that which the Beast will set out to accomplish.

The Beast will set out to accomplish something wherein *utter failure* has always marked the path of any and all who have tried — *the destruction of and doing away with the nation of Israel.*

And, in line with that which has happened to all of his predecessors as well, the Beast himself will suffer that which he will set about to inflict upon the Jewish people — *his own utter destruction instead.* Because of God’s unchanging promises to and regarding Israel, matters of the preceding nature *must always work out in this manner* [*cf.* Gen. 12:1-3; Ex. 3:1-7; Esther 5:14; 6:6-13; 7:8-10; 9:10-14].

God, turning matters around, will use the Beast to destroy the harlot [exactly as he used the Pharaoh of Egypt during Moses’ day to bring about His plans and purposes regarding Israel], with the nation of Israel subsequently *existing apart from her harlotry and God’s complete purpose for calling this nation into existence then being realized* [*cf.* Ex. 9:15, 16; Rev. 17:16, 17].)

In that day, Gentile headship will be over, their wealth will be gone, but they will find that they will possess something far greater.  *Spiritual blessings/spiritual wealth, which will be theirs through restored Israel, will far exceed anything which they will have possessed throughout the Times of the Gentiles* (*cf.* Isa. 65:19; Zech. 8:20-23).

*2) The Harlot Destroyed, The Nation Cleansed*

“The great whore” in Revelation chapter seventeen through the first part of chapter nineteen is seen being *burned with fire* (17:16; 18:8, 9, 17-21; 19:2, 3). This is the picture which Scripture provides of *Israel’s harlotry being done away with.* God is seen using the Beast and his kingdom to do away with Israel’s harlotry through a persecution of such an intense nature that “except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved” (*cf.* Matt. 24:22). And this will occur after 2,600 years of Gentile dominance and control.

*Israel will be brought to the place where the nation will have nowhere to turn other than to the God of their fathers. (Rev. 17:16, 17; cf. Ex. 3:23ff). Repentance and cleansing will then occur (Isa. 1:16-21), Israel’s harlotry will be a thing of the past (Rev. 18:8-10), and it will never again be an issue (Rev. 19:3).*

Note how Rev. 19:1-3 is worded:

“After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia, Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up forever and ever.”

(The words, “forever and ever,” in v. 3 are a translation of the Greek words, *eis tous aionas ton aionon*, and should literally be rendered, “unto [or, ‘with respect to’] the ages of the ages.”

The Greek language, as the Hebrew language, does not have a word for “eternal” per se. And this is one of two different ways that the Greek text can express “eternal,” apart from textual and contextual considerations.

The other way is through using a plural form of the word *aion*, meaning “age,” as the word is used in Heb. 13:8, where Christ is said to be “the same yesterday, and today, and forever [Gk., *eis tous aionas* (a plural, articular use of *aion* preceded by the preposition *eis,* meaning ‘into,’ ‘unto,’ or ‘with respect to’); *lit.*, ‘unto (or, ‘with respect to’) the ages’,’ *i.e.*, throughout the endless ages, forever].”

The thought set forth in Rev. 19:3 by the smoke of the burned harlot continuing to rise up throughout the endless ages has to do with Israel’s harlotry never again being an issue. The nation’s harlotry will be completely consumed by the fire, never to rise again [again, note the type pictorial language being used].)

This picture of *the harlot being burned with fire* was introduced in chapter seventeen (v. 16) and is dealt with extensively throughout chapter eighteen. In fact, this entire chapter, one way or another, is taken up with *the harlot’s destruction*, with attention called to this destruction occurring through *a burning with fire* several places (vv. 8, 9, 18).

“Fire” is seen in Scripture as *a purifying agent* (Zech. 13:8, 9; Mark 9:49, 50). “Fire” is seen as *a separating agent*, separating that which is of value from that which is worthless — by burning the latter, with the former enduring the fire (Matt. 3:11, 12; I Cor. 3:11-15; I Peter 1:7).

Thus, the picture of the harlot being burned throughout these chapters has to do with the harlot — Israel playing the harlot — passing through a burning fire which purifies in one respect and destroys in another through separating that which is worthless from that which is of value.

Once this separation occurs, Israel’s harlotry will be *completely destroyed by the fire*; but, on the other hand, the nation itself will *remain untouched by the fire.*

Nebuchadnezzar tried to use fire in the latter respect in Daniel chapter three — in relation to three Israelites, foreshadowing the entire nation — and *failed completely.*

With an oven heated seven times hotter than normal and three Israelites thrown into the midst of this fire (“seven,” *a complete number*, *showing the completion of that in view*, probably indicating that the furnace was heated as hot as possible without destroying the furnace), not a single hair on the head of any one of the three was even singed.

Nor could Darius in the succeeding Medo-Persian kingdom get the lions to eat Daniel (Dan. 6).

Israel has a God-given promise that the fire (or anything else) can’t hurt them (Isa. 43:1-3). They can remain in the fire (or anywhere else) forever and remain unconsumed (Ex. 3:1-7). And, as seen in the previously referenced passage, the reason is evident. God resides in the midst of the nation, and to destroy the nation, God would have to be destroyed.

But still, Israel is going to have to pass through one more fire, for there is the matter of *Israel’s harlotry,* which has to be removed by the fire. And the nation’s harlotry has no chance against the fire. The harlot is going to *be made desolate, naked, her flesh will be eaten, and she will be utterly burned with fire* (Rev. 17:16).

That is the picture which Scripture provides of God’s dealings with Israel’s harlotry. *The harlot will be utterly destroyed — consumed by fire on the one hand, and a nation purified by the fire will live on the other.*

Then, and only then, can God complete His dealing with Israel, deal with the nations, deal with Satan and his angels, and usher in the Messianic Kingdom.

Israel and the nations — Past, Present, and Future

The definition of and thoughts surrounding the use of the word “mystery” in the New Testament have been dealt with at length in the two previous chapters of this book (Chs. I, II). And that which follows in this section — in both of the two main parts to the section — will deal once again with matters set forth by the use of this word, from different perspectives than previously seen.

The first will show the same statements used of Israel in Jeremiah’s prophecy that are used in the chapter under discussion of the harlot in the Book of Revelation, presenting matters from two different vantage points in these two books.

Then, the other will show sharp distinctions between Israel at two different times, before and after the nation passes through the fire, as seen in an Old Testament passage from Judges, foreshadowing and shedding light upon that under discussion in Rev. 17:1-19:6.

When these sections from these three books are looked upon and studied in the light of one another, the word picture — *seen exactly as God has set it forth in His Word* — begins to take shape in a far clearer manner than if only two of these sections were used. And a grave problem can only arise if only one of the three sections is used and the person tries to figure matters out himself instead of letting Scripture do it for him.

Scripture must be compared with Scripture, allowing Scripture to interpret itself.

*1) Jeremiah and John*

Note that which is stated about Israel and the land of Israel in Jer. 25:10, 11:

“Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations [Israel, along with other surrounding nations, judged with Israel (v. 9)] shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.”

Then note that which is stated about the harlot in Rev. 18:22, 23:

“And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found anymore in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.”

Exactly the same thing is stated about Israel in Jer. 25:10 as is stated about the harlot in Rev. 18:22, 23.

In the Book of Jeremiah, the statement had to do with *the Jewish people in relation to the land of Israel at the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles.*

Israel had been removed from her own land and transported into the land of Shinar, *from a theocracy into the world kingdom of Babylon.* And in the land of Babylon *the Jewish people could no longer experience the things enumerated in Jer. 25:10 in their own land.*

Then, in the Book of Revelation, the whole of that seen in Jeremiah is turned around and used in a completely opposite respect *at the end of the Times of the Gentiles, over 2,600 years later.*

In this book the same statement has to do with *Israel playing the harlot among the nations in the Gentile lands where the nation had been dispersed throughout the Times of the Gentiles.* And the picture in the Book of Revelation, reversing the matter, has to do with Israel about to be cleansed of her harlotry, at which time the nation will be removed from these Gentile lands and transported back to her own land, with the theocracy restored to Israel.

Once restored to the land, Israel would no longer experience the things stated in both Jer. 25:10 and Rev. 18:22, 23 *in Gentile lands*, for God will have cleansed and removed the nation from these lands.

Then, at that time, God will *restore these things to her, in her own land, in connection with the restoration of the theocracy. That taken from the nation in Jer. 25:10, 11 will be restored to the Jewish people.*

*2) Judges and John*

The five books of Moses, the Pentateuch, end with the account of Moses’ death and Joshua assuming the mantle (Deut. 34:1-12).

The Book of Joshua then begins with a reference to Moses’ death and continues with a history of the Israelites entering and beginning to take possession of the land, slaying and/or driving out the inhabitants, under Joshua’s leadership. And the book ends about twenty-five years later with a reference to Joshua’s death and the Israelites burying the bones of Joseph, who had died about two centuries prior to that time in Egypt (Josh. 24:29ff; *cf.* Gen. 50:25, 26; Ex. 13:19).

The next book, the Book of Judges, continuing from Joshua, begins with a reference to Joshua’s death, beginning a period of time lasting over three centuries (some 320 or so years) when the Israelites resided in the land apart from leadership of a nature previously experienced — extending from the death of Joshua to Saul being anointed the nation’s first king.

*a) A Brief Summation of Judges*

Two things marked the period of the Judges:

1. *Disobedience on the part of the Jewish people.*
2. *God’s reaction to their disobedience* (which had to do with anger, followed by a chastisement of the Jewish people to bring about repentance; and their repentance was followed each time by God raising up one or more individuals [one or more judges] to deliver His people).

During Moses and Joshua’s day, God had commanded His people *to drive out all of the Gentile nations inhabiting the land.* But, following Joshua’s death, the Israelites gradually began *to cease* driving these nations out (*cf.* Deut. 7:1, 2, 16, 22-24; Josh. 23:1-5; Judg. 1:1, 19, 21, 27-33).

Then, *disobedience at this point resulted in other forms of disobedience* — something which the Lord had previously called to the people’s attention and had warned them about (*cf.* Ex. 23:33; Deut. 7:4, 16; 12:30).

God, through Moses, had laid down the rules and regulations (the Law, the Magna Charta for the kingdom) which His people were to follow within the theocracy. But, after failing to drive the Gentile nations out of the land, that which God had warned His people about *began to occur.*

The Jewish people, over time, found themselves gradually being influenced by and conforming more and more to the ways and practices of the pagan Gentile nations dwelling in the land with them. And, as a result, rather than the Jewish people following that which God had stated in His Word, this period is marked by *a departure from the Word.*

With the absence of the type leadership previously provided by Moses, and then Joshua, Scripture reveals *one central manner of living* on the part of God’s people during the time of the Judges, lasting for over three centuries:

“In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judg. 17:6; 21:25; *cf.* 18:1; 19:1).

And God reacted *accordingly.* God reacted *in exact accordance* with that which He had previously revealed in His Word through Moses.

There is a repeated sequence in the Book of Judges relative to the Jewish people’s disobedience and God’s reaction to their disobedience. In chapter two, this sequence is introduced (resulting from the people’s previous actions, seen in chapter one), setting the stage for that seen throughout the remainder of the book:

*1) Israel’s action:*

“And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim

.

And they forsook the God of their fathers…and followed other gods…” (vv. 11, 12a).

*2) The Lord’s reaction:*

“And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers…and he sold them into the hands of their enemies…

Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said, and as the Lord had sworn unto them…” (vv. 14a, 15a)

*3) Israel’s reaction:*

“…and they were greatly distressed [which would lead to repentance]” (v. 15b).

*4) That which the Lord then did:*

“Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hands of those that spoiled them” (v. 16).

When the Israelites fell into sin, God reacted through using that which had resulted from His people’s previous failure — Gentile nations remaining in the land, contrary to His command — as a means to bring about their repentance. He delivered the disobedient Israelites into the hands of the same pagan nations which they had previously failed to drive out (2:21-23).

And, following His people being brought to the place of repentance through a judgment of this nature, God then raised up one or more individuals to deliver them out of the hands of the Gentiles.

Beginning in chapter three, when God raised up the first judge to deliver His people, repentance on Israel’s part is seen first. That is, God delivered His people into the hands of the Gentiles, persecution at the hands of the nations followed, the people repented, and God then raised up an individual to deliver them out of the hands of the Gentiles. And this same order is continued through eleven of the fourteen judges whom God raised up (3:7-9, 12-15; 4:1-4; 6:1-14; 10:6-18; 11:1ff).

Then, following the death of the eleventh judge (12:15), though the same sequence is seen beginning again (with Israel’s disobedience), certain changes occurred in the complete cycle of events this time:

“And the children of Israel did evil again… and the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years” (13:1).

For the first time there was *a forty-year period* in which the Israelites found themselves in subjection to the Gentiles. “Forty” is one of several numbers used in Scripture to show *completeness,* and the number appears numerous times in Scripture in this respect (*e.g.,* Moses’ life is divided into three separate and distinct forty-year periods, Moses was on Mount Sinai forty days and nights, the disobedient Israelites under Moses wandered in the wilderness for forty years, each of Israel’s first three kings reigned for forty years, Christ was tempted by Satan for forty days and nights, and Christ had a forty-day post-resurrection ministry prior to His ascension).

In this respect, because of Israel’s disobedience, God gave His people into the hands of the Gentiles (the Philistines) for *a complete period of time.* And this complete period could only have followed *a completion of Israel’s disobedience* over the years. That is to say, Israel’s cup of iniquity had apparently become full (*cf.* Gen. 15:16), with God acting accordingly.

However, there is no record of the Israelites repenting and crying out for deliverance during these forty years. Nevertheless, God raised up Samson during this time as the twelfth judge, stating that he would “*begin* to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines” (13:5b). Full deliverance though could not occur *until after the Israelites had repented,* something not seen until the days of Samuel the prophet, the fourteenth and last judge (following Eli [I Sam. 7:3-15]).

The Book of Judges, in the preceding respect, sets forth the complete history of Israel — from the time of the inception of the nation during Moses’ day to modern times.

And the nation is nearing the end of the final period of their disobedience, with the Jewish people about to find themselves in the hands of Gentile nations which will render such intense persecution that repentance, after millenniums of time, will be forthcoming.

And God, true to His Word, will then send the Deliverer.

*b) The Epilogue to Judges (Chapters 17-21)*

Judges chapters seventeen through twenty-one form somewhat of an epilogue to the book, taking the reader back several centuries to near the beginning of the period of the judges (note the mention of Moses’ and Aaron’s grandsons in this section [18:30; 20:28], which would place events back during the early years of this period of time).

And this would account for the summary statement concerning *the absence of a king in Israel, with every man doing that which was right in his own eyes*, not being seen until the opening part of this epilogue (17:6). Then, part or all of this statement is seen several other subsequent times in this closing section (18:1; 19:1; 21:25).

As previously stated, this period covering the time of the judges follows the death of Joshua and ends with the inauguration of Israel’s first king (Saul). And the period between these two times, in one respect, is exactly where world Jewry finds itself today.

The names translated “Joshua” and “Jesus” in the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Old and New Testaments are *the same word* in their respective languages, both meaning “Salvation.” This is why the KJV translators misused “Jesus” instead of “Joshua” in both Acts 7:45 and Heb. 4:8. Rather than a mistranslation, there is a misuse of names, for, again, both are *the same word* in their respective languages.

(Note how the eight visions in Zech. 1:7-6:8 terminate in the verses immediately following the last vision — with the crowning of “Joshua” in connection with “the man whose name is the BRANCH,” Who will “build the temple of the Lord” [Zech. 6:11-13].

“The BRANCH” is a Messianic title, used of *Israel’s Messiah*, Whose name is *Joshua/Jesus* [*cf.* Zech. 2:8-10; 6:11-13]. Note the Messianic nature of both of the referenced passages, along with the name “Joshua” used with the title “the BRANCH” in both passages.)

The Jewish people are living today between these same two times — between *the death of Jesus* (rather than Joshua) and *the Jewish people possessing their King* (their great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek rather than Saul).

That is to say, *the Jewish people are living today between the time when they crucified their Messiah and the time when their Messiah will return as the great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek.*

As well, in the preceding respect, the Jewish people today are also living during *a time when they are not only without a King*, but *a time when everyone is doing that which is right in his own eyes.*

*1) Judges Chapter Nineteen*

But, as has been shown earlier in this chapter from Rev. 17:1ff, *things are about to change. The harlot is about to be destroyed.*

And exactly the same thing is seen toward the end of the Book of Judges, during the period of time between the death of Joshua/Jesus and the appearance of Israel’s King.

There is an account part way through the epilogue section of Judges which foreshadows exactly the same thing as seen by the harlot woman being burned with fire in Rev. 17:1-19:6.

In Judges chapter nineteen there is an account of a Levite and his concubine, his wife. The Levite had taken her as his wife and moved her from Bethlehem to a place some distance north, to his home on Mt. Ephraim. But, “his concubine played the whore against him” and returned to Bethlehem, to her father’s house (vv. 1-3).

This was followed four months later by the man taking a hired servant and traveling to Bethlehem to get his adulterous wife. And, after certain events in Bethlehem, a rather lengthy account follows of a journey which the man made with his concubine and the hired servant, traveling from Bethlehem back to Mt. Ephraim (vv. 5ff).

Enroute from Bethlehem to Mt. Ephraim, they entered the village of Gibeah, with a view to spending the night, which is where a main part of that seen in the account occurred.

After sitting in the streets of the city for awhile, waiting for someone in the city to befriend them and offer lodging for the night, an old man came in from his work in the fields, saw them, and offered them a place where both their animals (donkeys) and the three of them could spend the night (vv. 10-21).

Then, after all had been properly taken care of (the animals and the three travelers), “the men of the city, certain sons of Belial” (a reference to *worthless men of the city*), came to the house, and began to beat on the door, demanding that “the man” inside the house (evidently the husband of the adulterous concubine) be brought out so that they could have homosexual relations with him.

It is the same picture seen back in Genesis chapter nineteen after Lot had invited the two angels to spend the night in the safety of his home (vv. 2ff). And that which then occurred in Judges is also very similar to the account in Genesis.

In keeping with Eastern hospitality, protecting guests inside one’s home at all costs, in Genesis chapter nineteen, Lot had offered his two virgin daughters instead (v. 8); and the man in Judges chapter nineteen, did the same thing, offering his own virgin daughter, along with the man’s concubine.

The men of the city *took only the man’s concubine*, and they “abused her all the night until morning.” And, when they had finished with her and the night was almost over, they let her go.

She made her way back to the house where her husband resided, and, at the dawning of the day, fell at the door of the house and evidently died (vv. 22-26).

At this point in the story, there are *two women.* One was *a harlot* who had been sexually abused throughout the night by the men of the city; and the other was *a virgin* whom the men of the city had left at the house, untouched.

When the concubine’s husband came out and found his wife unresponsive, he loaded her upon one of the animals and continued the journey to his home on Mt. Ephraim.

Once there, he took a knife, cut the harlot into twelve pieces, and sent one piece to each of the twelve tribes of Israel (vv. 27-29).

And the account closes with this statement:

“And it was so that all that saw it [a piece of the dead harlot] said, There was no such deed done nor seen from that day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day…” (v. 30a).

*2) Parallel Accounts, Judges and Revelation*

Scripture presents exactly the same picture, from two different perspectives, in both Judg. 19:1-30 and Rev. 12:1-20:6. In both passages you have:

*1) Israel existing in the condition seen in Judges — without a King and every man doing that which is right in his own eyes.*

*2) An account of both a harlot and a virtuous woman.*

*In Judges*, the men of the city, seen as base men, took and abused the Levite’s wife, *a harlot*, throughout the night, bringing about her death as a new day dawned.

But the host’s *virgin daughter* remained untouched by the men of the city.

Then, the husband of *the dead harlot* cut her body into twelve parts, “together with her bones,” and sent one piece of the dead harlot’s body to each of the twelve tribes of Israel.

*The harlot was gone*, *the virtuous woman lived*, and the complete matter had to do with the entire nation.

*Now, note how this is presented in Rev. 12:1-20:6.* Two women are seen. In chapter twelve, *a woman in possession of regality is seen.* Then, beginning in chapter seventeen and continuing through the first six verses of chapter nineteen, *a harlot is seen* (the same woman from chapter twelve, though now presented as a harlot).

And, as in the account in Judges, the harlot is seen being abused throughout the night — throughout the time of “the darkness of this world,” prior to the time that “the Sun of righteousness” arises “with healing in his wings” (*cf.* Mal. 4:2; Eph. 6:12).

*The harlot has been, is being, and will be abused at the hands of those to whom she was given — the Gentile nations.*

God gave a nation already in the throws of harlotry over to the Gentile nations; He drove His people out among the nations, among her lovers, to effect repentance through persecution at the hands of her lovers.

Then, note how *the nations have abused the harlot throughout the night in Rev. 18:3*:

“For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.”

As Israel has continued to play the harlot, having illicit and forbidden relationships with the nations, the nations have become rich at Israel’s expense.

But all of this is about to change.

The men of the city *killed the harlot* in Judges. And the complete picture has to do with *a slain harlot subsequently cut into twelve pieces, with one piece sent to each of the twelve tribes of Israel.*

In Revelation, the corresponding picture has to do with God using the Gentile power of that coming day *to slay the harlot.* In this future instance, foreshadowed by events in Judges chapter nineteen, *the harlot will be burned with fire*, the smoke of her burning will ascend up throughout the endless ages (*i.e.*, *the harlot will never live again; Israel’s harlotry will forever be a thing of the past*), and this will have to do with the whole house of Israel, all twelve tribes (seen by pieces of the harlot sent to all twelve tribes in Judges, implicating the entire nation).

And, exactly as in the account in Judges, the Gentile nations, into whose hands the harlot has been delivered, *cannot touch the virtuous woman* (Israel’s status once the harlot has been destroyed and cleansing has occurred).

And in that coming day, because of that which will then ensue, Judg. 19:30 can only, once again, be seen applying to all throughout the twelve tribes who witness that to which these two sections of Scripture apply. That stated in this verse, projected out into that coming day, would read something like this:

“And all that see it in that day [the dissected harlot/the burned harlot — the destroyed harlot, with only the virtuous, untouched woman then existing] will only be able to say, *There has been no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day* [*throughout 3,500 years of Jewish history, with nothing like this ever seen during all that time; nor will it ever be seen again, for Israel’s harlotry will never exist again*].”