

In every age and every generation God has His saints. When He watched the first martyr, the first witness to truth and righteousness, Abel, battered into death, by an arrogant, unbending, elder brother, what would the love of God do about Abel? When He looked at each of the centuries as they piled themselves one on another, each one marked by graves of witnesses to Truth and Righteousness, what did God do? As Paul draws a conclusion in Hebrews 11:38 and 39, he wrote, "Of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise." They are there in their graves—millions upon millions of saints in every age, in every country, still in their graves.

In Revelation 7:3,4, the servants of God were being sealed. The angels were about to loose the winds of strife when the voice from the throne sounded across the corridors of space, "Hold! We haven't finished!" "Hurt not the earth: neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. The servants of God are not yet sealed in their foreheads." The angels were anxious to gather together the elect. For six thousand years God has been restraining Himself. Now He pours out without restraint what is in Himself. If you were saintly tonight, and I were in sin, and God saw that I still had opportunity to repent, and He longed to come here in the fullness of His glory and glorify you, what would your glorification do to me? I would be destroyed by the brightness of His appearing. I couldn't survive. Who will dwell with Everlasting Burnings? Only the righteous will survive. Only those that have clean hands and a pure heart. They can dwell with Everlasting Burnings.

At the moment, when God sees that all decisions are made, He comes in shining splendor to be glorified in His saints who have built into their characters gold, silver and precious stones. But what of the rest who have built into their characters wood, hay and stubble? That day will reveal it by fire. It isn't that God comes with a specially heated up blowtorch to burn the wicked. That is not what He is wanting to do. He is coming to be glorified in His saints. (If, by our daily choice we

build into our characters wood, hay and stubble, then we burn up. Not because He is trying to burn us, but because we are combustible. We haven't put into our characters the right materials. The likeness of Jesus Christ is not in us. The Gold of faith and love, the Silver of obedience and the precious stones of good works are not in us. That exposition, by the way, is in PROPHETS AND KINGS, pages 409 and 410, in case you think I made it up. "As a wise master-builder, Jeremiah at the very beginning of his life-work sought to encourage the men of Judah to lay the foundations of their spiritual life broad and deep, by making thorough work of repentance. Long had they been building with material likened by the Apostle Paul to wood, hay, and stubble, and by Jeremiah himself, to dross. 'Refuse silver shall men call them,' he declared of the impenitent nation, 'because the Lord hath rejected them' (Jer 6:30, margin). Now they were urged to begin building wisely and for eternity, casting aside the rubbish of apostasy and unbelief, and using as foundation material the pure gold, the refined silver, the precious stones—faith and obedience and good works—which alone are acceptable in the sight of a holy God." The gold of faith and love, the silver of obedience, and the precious stones of good works are unaffected by the glory of God.

When Christ comes to be glorified in His saints, those who are not saints, as we saw in our last study are burned up. He will not restrain Himself any longer. He is going to pour out what is in Him. Those who are not susceptible to change will be burned up. I want to repeat, God does not turn the blowtorch of His anger at me, and not at you. He comes to be glorified in His Saints. He comes in all of His splendor and all of His power, in all His glory, and only those who can survive His presence, those who are like Him, will be able to survive. The rest are burned up. If I may say more tritely than I really feel about it, "That's too bad!" It is their choices now that makes them combustible then, or will enable them to become incandescent then. The same power that takes the filament in a light bulb and makes it incandescent, the same electric spark, coming with a bolt of lightning or anything else in tinder dry grassland will set it all aflame. As I have thought, this is the picture that I get of the time when God pours out without restraint what is in Him.

THE SEVEN ANGELS POUR OUT THEIR VIALS:

The First Angel

“And I heard a voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, go your ways, and pour your vials of the wrath of God upon the earth” (Rev 16:1). Revelation 16 is very difficult to understand. I will submit to you the way I feel it goes, and you can do with it what you want. It is still unfulfilled prophecy, and no one has ever been certain of unfulfilled prophecy. “The first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth” (Rev 16:2). “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth and he had two horns like a lamb, and spake like a dragon” (Rev 13:11). I submit that this lamb-like beast applies to the United States.

The Second And The Third Angels

“And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea: and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every living soul died in the sea” (Rev 16:3). “And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea” (Rev 13:1). One beast came out of the sea, and the other beast came out of the earth. One vial falls on the earth and the other vial falls on the sea. Think about this. “And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast and upon them which worshipped his image” (Rev 16:2). Sores. Hold that for a moment. The second angel poured his vial upon the sea. That is the Old World. It became as the blood of a dead man. What is that? All this is sign language. “The third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers, and fountains of water; and they became blood” (Rev 16:4). “And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given to him to scorch men with fire” (Rev 16:8).

The Fourth Angel

This fourth plague, and we need to go back and forth to see how it applies, is explained very interestingly by Ellen White. I will quote her, “In the plague that follows, power is given to the sun ‘to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat.’(Joel 1:10-12) The

prophets thus describe the condition of the earth at this fearful time: ‘The land mourneth; ... because the harvest of the field is perished.’ ‘All the trees of the field are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.’ ‘The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate.’ ‘How do the beasts groan! The herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture . . . The rivers of waters are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.’ ‘The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth with silence’” (Joel 1:10-12, 17-20; Amos 8:3). These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the Judgments upon men, prior to the Close of Probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy. In that day, multitudes will desire the shelter of God’s mercy which they have so long despised. ‘Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it’ (Amos 8:11, 12).” (GC p. 628, 629).

The Fifth Angel

We are getting clues. “And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds” (Rev 16:10, 11). I think that we must say that these are symbolic.

It is possible to get into problems in this area. Jesus Christ is spoken of as a Lamb, that is a symbol of one aspect of Christ. Christ is the Lamb of God. In Revelation 5:6 He is pictured as the Lamb in the very act of dying. However Christ is real. To call Him a Lamb does not spiritualize Him away from being a Supreme Being. He is just as real as He was