**REVELATION CHAPTERS 18 & 19**

**CHAPTER 18**

Our last lesson was on the 17th chapter of Revelation and the judgment of the great whore. Her name was: “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH”. She lived up to her name. This “woman” who committed fornication with the kings and inhabitants of the earth, was also pictured riding upon a scarlet colored beast which had 7 heads and 10 horns. We found her committing her abominable acts of (spiritual) harlotry in “the wilderness”, the same place (and same woman) which had fled into the (same) wilderness in chapter 12.

Her brazen acts of fornication and harlotry were proof of her lascivious life style whereby she openly forsook her espousal to Christ, who she claimed to be her “husband” and to whom she professed obedience and faithfulness, but flaunted every principal he stood for while worshipping at the feet of lovers who were in bed with her adulterous ambitions. In other words, as we demonstrated in the previous lesson, she gradually but totally forsook the clear teachings of the word of the Lord, in favor of her councils, her supreme pontiff and her organization, all of which she claimed were infallible at the exclusion and penalty of all doctrines but her own. We identified this woman and her own self-declared doctrines as the “Roman Catholic Orthodox Church, entrenched in centuries of tyrannical power and abuse from 529 to 1789 AD. Chapter 17:18, informed us that, “the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth”.

We come now to chapter eighteen and nineteen, which we believe are a continuation of the judgments pronounced on this woman called, among other things, “Babylon the Great”. Revelation 18:1, informs us of another angel (agency, or ministry) with great power and cried mightily, saying, (V2) Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. She has been judged by God for her spiritual whoredom against him, and has fallen from her throne of control, tyranny and abominable acts. In her fall, she has become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every fowl spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. In other words, she who made the world desolate has become desolate herself. She has become a hissing and a byword. Her glory, pomp and royal attire were stripped away, and she is reduced by divine judgments to a “burning pile of (spiritual) refuse. Her power is gone! Her glory is gone! Her position in the world is gone! Her territories are gone! Her lovers stand far off and bewail and lament her as they see the “smoke of her burning”.

In Isaiah 13:19-22, the prophet foretells the woes which would fall upon ancient Babylon, which carried Judah into captivity, and describes the judgments of God upon this ancient empire that desecrated and decimated the city and temple of God, with terms so prophetic and symbolic of this later (spiritual) Babylon the great, which is the object of our present study. Listen to some of his words and observe how portentous they are of Babylon the great of Rev. 18.

 *And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come and her days shall not be prolonged.*

V3. (Because) all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornications, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, etc., her judgments have come on her. She has made her bed of spiritual prostitution available, not just to kings and nations and people, but has lured them with her wanton promiscuity, and “trapped” them in her web of control, mystique and power.

V4. A voice from heaven calls out for people to “come out of her”, that ye be not partakers of her sins and receive not of her plagues. It is not enough to recognize her gross misdeeds; separation from her companionship is required, or the same guilt and judgments will fall upon all who continue to embrace her allurements (doctrines).

V7. She has glorified, exalted and indulged herself: she said in her heart, I sit a queen and am no widow and shall see no sorrow. I’m at the top of the world and nothing can bring me down.

V8. But her plagues and desolation will come so fast, and she will be utterly burned with the “fire” of divine judgment. Not a literal fire covering the land and country of her domain, but a symbolic fire depicting her utter and complete overthrow, leaving her as a (symbolic) ash pile.

V9-15. Kings and merchants of the earth, who had inebriated themselves in her favors and bowed at her feet with an unrestrained passion for her “merchandise”, now are bewailing her overthrow. Because she is put out of “business” insofar as her absolute control of the (spiritual) merchandise of the inhabitants of the earth are concerned. The world did “business” at her feet, on her terms, for her (religious) merchandise, and (13:16-17) no man might “buy or sell” unless you had her (doctrinal, religious) mark on your forehead and hands (mind and deeds). At one time she had a monopoly on religious merchandise by way of her control of civil powers, consciences, lives and freedoms of her world. To offer merchandise (other religious viewpoints and authority) than hers, immediately activated your excommunication, anathema, charges of heresy, and put you out of (spiritual) business by way of penalties, persecution and martyrdom.

Now the tables are turned. God has come down in judgment on her by the forces of the power of the beast out of the bottomless pit (infidel, godless France, where the incarcerated spirit of heathenism had been bound for centuries) and he brought an abrupt end to her power, domain, control, enthronement and abominable teachings. This does not mean that the Roman Church no longer existed or no longer believed and taught her unscriptural mysteries. It means that her bonds are broken, her control and dominion are cast off and she is humiliated before the world for the spiritual harlotries she has promoted.

V16-19. That great city, clothed in linen, purple, scarlet, gold, precious stones and pearls, in “one hour” her great (spiritual, pretended) riches have come to naught. The peoples of the earth who had all their “stock” in her empire, and their souls and future invested in her (unscriptural, religious) merchandise, watched as it all “went up in smoke”, and they bewailed their loss. They have one choice to keep from sinking with her and that is to come out of her and turn to the riches and freedom of the truth of the gospel of Christ.

V20. Rejoice over her, ye who truly serve the Lord, because her tyranny is broken, and the gospel is freely preached in the world again. This rejoicing is not over her calamity, but over the new freedom they now have to believe and preach the gospel of Christ from the Bible.

V21. Her downfall was like as if a great millstone was cast into the sea. A tidal wave of a religious psunami inundated the world. In fact, at the overthrow of the power of the Roman Catholic system at the end of the 18th century, both the religious and the political world were mightily convulsed and changed.

V22-24. The “sweet” sounds of joy are gone from her harpers, musicians and pipers. Her craft of religious tyranny, deception and fraudulent claims are not wanted now. The light of the (gospel) candle does not shine there. The voice of the bride (The church with its message of the gospel) and bridegroom (Christ) are not found there now. In the archives of her dark history are the records of the blood of martyred prophets and saints.

As of today, it has been over two hundred years since the time of her judgment and overthrow. The inhabitants of the world are free to forsake her ranks and denounce her views. Hundreds of thousands have done so. The pages of history have chronicled her down fall and the overthrow of her tyrannical power. From the standpoint of scripture, she who sat as a queen and could see no sorrow was overthrown as in a moment, like the casting of a great millstone into the sea, leaving in its wake the bewilderment of her hierarchy and of those who upheld her cause and craft. She is left with a spiritual emptiness that is unparalleled, like a waste, howling desert where no (spiritual) life grows. Because of her abominable harlotries, she will remain desolate of God and truth until Christ comes, or until she turns to his truth.

Before closing our comments on this 18th chapter of Revelation, it would be appropriate to offer some more thoughts about what is meant by these statements of the “merchandise” of this woman. You might ask what constituted her merchandise and why did it become as devalued as a Christmas tree in July? The primary answer to this question is that she trafficked in the souls of men. They were her “stock in trade”. To promote this merchandise of the souls of men, she employed her unscriptural doctrines, her hierarchy and her mysterious and lifeless worship. Her gross claims about the “**MASS**”, with its so-called literal transubstantiation of the body and blood of Christ; the “**CONFESSIONAL**” whereby mortal men presume the prerogative of forgiving or retaining sins; her **ADORATION, DEVOTION AND PRAYERS TO DEAD SAINTS**; a **PURGATORY** that logic, reason and scripture regards as pure fantasy; her craft of **INDULGENCES**; her claims of **INFALLIBILITY**; her **REJECTION OF SCRIPTURAL TRUTH** along with her blatant, abominable **DENIAL OF EVEY MAN THE RIGHT AND NEED TO READ, STUDY AND PROMOTE THE BIBLE** and **THE HEIRARCHY OF THE PAPACY AND PRIESTS,** were the tools of her trade in the merchandise of human souls. And there is much more. Add to all of the above, her basic doctrines or interpretations of the Bible, formulated with an imperious assumption of power and distributed to the kings and nations and inhabitants of the earth (by the power of the sword if need be). If you happened to live, say in the 15th century, you either had her stamp of (religious) approval in your mind and your actions (the mark of the beast) or you could not buy or sell any other (religious) merchandise or viewpoint. In other words, to openly believe and teach the free, uninhibited use of the Bible in your home and daily life, or to teach baptism in Jesus name, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, a resurrection only for the Christian, the oneness of God, praying to the Lord for blessings and forgiveness of sins rather than through a priest or a dead saint, and to teach the sovereign Lordship of Christ and denounce the papacy, your (spiritual) merchandise was anathema, you were excommunicated, and you would be forced to renounce as heresy these things or be in jeopardy of your life.

That is why the Bible uses such harsh and judgmental language, names of identification and complete desolation and ruin against this system so abominable in the sight of God. Like Sodom and Gomorrah in their wickedness were destroyed; Judah for forsaking God was sent into the Babylon captivity; the antedeluvians perished in the flood for their wicked imaginations, and like Israel’s house was left unto her desolate for her hypocrisy and rejection of Christ, so also the Roman church-state system of the dark ages met its divine overthrow. Whether or not you wish to assign this harsh judgment to the Roman Catholic church, yet the facts of history abundantly show two irrefutable things: (1) That this church used her power, abuse and tyranny to rule the whole (Christian) religious arena throughout the dark ages; and, (2) that she distinctly, powerfully and abruptly met her overthrow at the end of the 18th century. Where else will theologians place this scriptural mold and what else can be brought forth from the pages of history to so completely fulfill that mold?

**CHAPTER 19**

We indicated at the beginning of this lesson that chapters 18 and 19 were a continuation of the vision of chapter 17 and the judgment of the “great whore” and her fall. In chapter 18:2, the vision is specifically identified with the fall of “Babylon the Great”. As we begin chapter 19, in verse 2, we are again reminded of this “great whore” and her judgment.

When you talk about “judgment”, it seems that all that theologians focus on is some perceived event when Jesus returns the second time. This completely ignores the many judgments visited upon people, cities, nations and even the world in the case of the flood, for their atrocious sins and incorrigible conditions. When considering judgment in the book of Revelation, it is imperative to take into account those manifestations of divine wrath visited in response and retribution upon conditions **during** the age of the church and not at the final end of the church age. There is such an overwhelming body of evidence in both Daniel and Revelation, which sets out a grossly aggravating abomination, that with its very presence on the scene of God’s people it both foretells and demands a time of rectitude. If this were not so, it would mean that the church could never have anticipated any relief from dark age tyranny that it endured, which would mean that it would still be upon us today. It would also mean that there had not come a new day of gospel freedom in the early 19th century, and we would still to this day be under the blight of the dark-age system of spiritual corruption and control.

When ancient Babylon took Judah captive, God had prophesied, long before the captivity, that Babylon would meet her judgment. The record is clear that she did. Thus, it is no less true of spiritual “Babylon the Great”, of Revelation, that she also had judgments pronounced on her before she ever came to power, and with a time frame in which they would occur.

It will not hurt for us to be reminded again of the symbolic nature of these visions in Revelation, as we apply the judgments visited upon her. Already, in chapter 18, this judgment has been described in terms of “merchandise”, which Babylon the Great trafficked in, being made to become worthless, empty and desolate. And there is more of this to come in chapter 19.

Chapter 19:1 begins on a “hallelujah” chorus, for the salvation, glory, honor and power due unto God. This spirit of praise continues in unabated crescendos in verses 2-6.

 a. V2. True and righteous are his (God’s) judgments;

 b. V3. Again they shout “alleluia”;

 c. V4. The 24 elders and 4 beasts (first introduced in chapter 4) fell down and worshipped;

 d. V5. And a voice said, praise our God all ye his servants;

 e. V6. Then a great multitude and the voice of many “waters”, like great thundering, proclaiming, “Alleluia for the Lord God omnipotent reigns”.

Before going on to verse 7, which also declares “be glad and rejoice”, let us reflect on the cause of this unbridled rejoicing and praise being lifted up to God.

 a. Recall the 1260 years of religious tyranny and abominations from 529 to 1789;

 b. Look again at the phenomenal events from 1789 to about 1795, that overthrew the power of papal tyranny and set at liberty the whole world from this system of spiritual bondage and oppression;

 c. Then we are amazed, when, in the first few years of the 19th century, the freedom of the Bible, its message and its power simply exploded upon the world, resulting in revival and restoration unparalleled in church history.

 d. Then recall the centuries of power of the Roman church-state system which was broken; judged if you will, for her years of being “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH”.

 e. Now people are rejoicing, praising God and the universe, as it were, is filled with a mighty chorus of jubilation, for “the Lord God omnipotent reigns”.

*(There is a sad and troubling observation that I would make here, as we read in these scriptures of this chapter of such a universal scene of praises and rejoicing before God. That observation is that today’s “Christian community, in general, is woefully ignorant or grossly indifferent as to the reason for this glorious scene where heaven and earth join together in a world-wide “alleluia chorus”. This is not just some Sunday morning worship service at the first church on Main St., USA, nor is it some incidental celebration “in the sky”, routinely praising God. This is a world-wide congregation of “prisoners of hope” who have been gloriously, providentially set free from centuries of imprisonment in the abyss of Roman bondage. And today’s Christian, not having a clue, and even worse, not caring about the history of the Christian church, and how that history impacts us today, gives not a passing thought as to why these scriptures prophetically foretold this day of “jubilee”. This is not a mundane, routine, ordinary outburst of contemporary worship and praise. This is* ***the*** *long awaited deliverance from centuries of oppression, into the glorious sunlight of the gospel. Let all the earth rejoice! God reigns! And an indifferent, unknowing Christian community is unmoved by the event of the ages; an event that single-handedly brought about (at great cost) the religious freedom we hold so dear today. Will God hold us accountable for being oblivious to this great day of deliverance in the history of the church?)*

Verse 7 continues this exhortation to “be glad and rejoice”, and adds this reason: “FOR THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB IS COME, AND HIS WIFE HATH MADE HERSELF READY”. Immediately, upon reading about the “marriage of the Lamb”, theologians begin planning for a wedding ceremony in the sky. But not so fast with the wedding cake until we can look into this passage of scripture to see what it “really” is talking about and who is invited to this occasion and what the menu will be. This is all clearly spelled out in the scripture and we need to listen to it and not be swayed by ancient tradition.

Before we answer those questions it would be a good idea to explore the plans of matrimony on the part of the Lamb. Orthodox theology teaches us that when Jesus returns again that there will be a great wedding ceremony, where Christ will form a loving union with his bride. As orthodoxy goes, this will be one more lavish wedding reception, with delicacies that only the bridegroom could afford or provide. It is supposed to take place “in the sky”. Other pertinent details do not seem to be available as of yet, nor just how the “wedding ceremony” (nuptials, that is) is to be carried out. It could be (I think) that one reason these details are not known, is that we have this entire matter confused with too much fantasy. Let us take a look at 2 things: (1) What is meant by the idea of Jesus Christ being married? And, (2) Getting a clear understanding of this symbolic marriage of the Lamb.

There is probably no real disagreement among Bible students as to who is meant by these two terms: bride and bridegroom. Likewise there is most likely agreement that the use being made of these terms in this study is spiritual as opposed to natural. The Bible portrays for us the Lord Jesus Christ as the bridegroom. Therefore there is only one choice as to who the bride is: the church. Bible commentators usually portray the story of “my beloved” in the Song of Solomon, as a vivid description of the love between Christ and the church. In II Cor. 11:2, Paul tells the Corinthians that he had espoused them as a chaste virgin unto Christ. In the 5th chapter of Ephesians, Paul gives strong counsel regarding the relationship between a husband and a wife. In verse 25, he admonishes husbands to love their wives “as Christ also loved the church”. After all of this counsel, he provides this reference point in verse 32: “This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church”. The union (marriage) of Christ and the church is everywhere confirmed and illustrated in the Bible. The marriage of Isaac and Rebekah is a type of it. John the Baptist is said to be the “friend of the bridegroom”. The great plan of salvation is gloriously portrayed as a union between God and man. At calvary Christ displayed his love for those he would be united to. By his blood he bought the hand of his beloved. By his resurrection he is endowed with the power and right to her hand in marriage. The death burial and resurrection of Christ made him the only acceptable bridegroom of all history.

Then he ascended from this earth. Orthodox theology teaches that he ascended to make ready a (future) wedding ceremony in the sky. There are serious problems with that theology. Instead of planning a wedding supper in the sky in the future, I would point you to the day of Pentecost, in Jerusalem, where Christ poured out His Holy Spirit upon 120 disciples gathered in the upper room, as the day and time of the union of God with man. Calvary and the empty tomb made it possible and it was sealed on the day of Pentecost. If a union with God and man did not begin there, then when did it ever begin? And if Christ was not “married” to his church on the day of Pentecost, the day the church began, then where in all history did he marry her. And if he must wait until his future return for a union to be consummated with his bride, then he has no legitimate children. They would all be born out of wedlock which would be absurd. But he is already and forever joined to his church which he purchased with the shedding of his blood on the cross. He did not ascend to heaven to begin the process and plans for a future wedding, it was transacted here on earth by his death, burial and resurrection and the out pouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. He is not coming back to get married, he is coming back to take the one he has already married to be with him for eternity. Maybe we should ask ourselves this question: Which is the more glorious and blessed and beautiful; a spiritual union with Christ in our hearts or a wedding ceremony in the sky that indulges and gratifies the senses? The answer should be obvious.

Returning now to the “marriage supper of the Lamb” of Rev. 19:7, we will seek to apply the full text connected to this event as they are found here. We are told again to “be glad and rejoice”. When you understand that all of these proclamations of glory, honor, alleluia, gladness and rejoicing, prescribed in verses 1-7, are a part of the prophetic vision, and that they identify a specific prophetic event which is particularly marked by this joyous praise, you realize that the spirit of prophecy is outlining something very significant among God’s people at the time of its occurrence. “The marriage of the Lamb” identifies that event. It is essential to keep this very symbolic expression, “marriage of the Lamb”, in perfect harmony with the scripture text about it and not subject it to fantasy and tradition.

Let me call attention to the way the last part of verse 7 is worded, which says: “his **wife** hath made herself ready”. This wording strongly suggests that she is already his wife. And that, as we have described, is precisely true, having been (spiritually) united with Christ in (holy) matrimony at Pentecost. For many centuries following this glorious union, the “bride of Christ” (which was described as that woman clothed with the sun, moon and stars in ch. 12) was humiliated in the debauchery and rags of the dark-age wilderness, having been denied the loving relationship with the bridegroom by the adoption of other lovers. That time of debauchery, rags and denial of “conjugal relations with her true bridegroom” has ended. The system of religion that led the church into beds of fornication and rejection of her “husband”, has been broken, and the “sanctuary has been cleansed” (Dan. 8:14) of its “abominations of the earth”.

V8. And to her (the wife) was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, **clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteous of the saints.** “RESTORATION”, “RE-UNION”, back to full (marital) relations is brought back to the church, the loving bride of Christ. And that re-union is why verses 1-7, are bursting with praise, alleluias, honor and gladness. Well they should! The night of religious tyranny has passed; the prison doors of Roman oppression have been opened by divine edict, and the enslaved inhabitants of the earth, like ancient Israel in Egypt, are FREE! The most magnificent and phenomenal proof of this freedom is found in the amazing stories of the world-wide spread of the gospel of Christ in the 19th century, resulting in world-wide revival. What a glorious cause for “heavenly celebration”.

V9. Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. How blessed indeed are those, who, being freed from enslavement to Romanism, are now invited to relish the “gourmet” table of this “supper” laden with “message after message” from the pages of God’s holy word. (I find it extremely hard to comprehend a kind of Christianity that cannot hunger and rejoice at every “delicacy” of **divinely revealed truth).**

We are not finished with the scenes of this “wedding feast”, but we are called aside in the midst of this glorious reunion, as John himself is overwhelmed with his own praises for this magnificent re-union of the bride with her groom.

V11-16. And another scene (still within the time of the glorious celebration of the marriage supper) appears unto John.

 V11. a. Heaven opened and behold a white horse;

 b. Him that sat on him was called faithful and true;

 V12. c. His eyes were like fire, and he wore many crowns;

 d. he had a secret name;

 V13. e. His name is called the WORD OF GOD;

 V14. f. The armies ----- which were in heaven (?) --- rode white horses also.

 V15. g. Out of his mouth --- goes a two-edged sword;

 V16. h. A name written, **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS!**

What is to be seen in all of this? It is the Lord Jesus coming forth in all his power; His righteous armies are with him and a sword (His preached gospel) is coming out of his mouth. He is treading out the wine press, crushing the grapes that they should give off their essence. It is a picture of him who is true and faithful, whose name is the word of God (Jn. 1:1-14), leading the army of his saints, armed with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; II Thess. 2:8; Rev. 1:16), taking the world back from centuries of abominations and giving them hope in the faith of God again. We have declared over and over, that the mighty army of the living God went forth, armed with the newly sharpened sword of the word of the Lord, in a victorious battle cry, shouting praises to God as they advance, carrying hope to a lost world. Oh, church, will you not read and seek and understand what a mighty work God wrought with this sword during the 19th century?

With this picture of a great army, led by him whose name is the “word of God”, poised to “smite the nations”, we are now called back to the scene of the “supper of the great God”.

V17. An angel is seen standing in the sun (the night is passed, the day shines brightly) crying with a loud voice. This angel sends forth a great call to **“all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven”,** come to the great supper of God! Verse 9 says blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. Then verse 17 issues a loud call to all the fowls of heaven to come to the supper of the great God. Amazing! But it does not end there. Listen carefully to the words of verses 18-21, quoted here.

*That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth:* ***and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.***

At this great supper of the Lamb:

 a. The fowls were to eat the flesh of kings, captains, mighty men, horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men. (See examples of this symbolism in Eze. 39:17-20; Is. 18:3-6).

 b. Then this army of white horses and their leader were arrayed in battle against the beast and kings of the earth.

 c. The beast and the false prophet were taken. Both of these, it says, were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. (See separate treatise on: THE LAKE OF FIRE)

 d. The rest were slain with the sword that proceeded out of his mouth.

 e. **And all the fowls were filled with their flesh.**

And **THAT** is the supper of the great God??? Maybe our collective religious minds have been so programmed with ideas of a “pie in the sky” kind of mentality, that we cannot comprehend the picture these verses present, which does not fit the mold of orthodoxy on the great supper. I would suggest that the likely truth is that orthodoxy does not square with the wording of the scripture, no matter how different it sounds to us. Perhaps this story “really” is about a great event in the age of the church; as we have been declaring from the beginning that all of Revelation fits within the age of the church and not within the eternal age. Consider the following application of this great story.

 a. Date-line late 18th century and much of the 19th century.

 b. The 1260 years of Roman power are ended.

 c. The “beast” (Holy Roman Empire) has been dissolved.

 d. The power of the papacy was overthrown.

 e. People were freed from Roman religious tyranny.

 f. The word of God, for centuries denied, unknown, not printed, not distributed and not openly taught, now has a complete about face and the world is filled with its message and power.

 g. God is restored back in the church, (generally, across the world), re-united with his precious wife who spent the last 1260 years in the dark-age wilderness away from Him.

 h. Joy, glory, praise, alleluias and honor ascend to God for this grand reunion.

 i. The beast (Holy Roman Empire) is belittled, humiliated, cast out, tormented and terminated. During the time of Napoleon it was said that the Holy Roman Empire was no longer “holy”, no longer “Roman” and no longer an “empire”.

 j. The false prophet (papacy) has his dominion, power, control and glory snatched from him and he writhes in anguish over the loss of his “merchandise” of the souls of men.

 k. And God’s great army marches to (spiritual) victory, making mighty conquests of sin-laden humanity, by the message of the sword of His mouth.

A great celebration for truth, righteousness and for the reunion of the bride of Christ with her loving Lord is certainly in order. At the same time the fowls of the heavens feasted (symbolically speaking) upon the slain flesh of kings, mighty men, and men of all levels, who had the mark of the beast. For the world-wide church of God, it was a time of celebration, joy, praise and glorious reunion in the covenant graces of her Lord. This celebration is not because of the calamity of the powers of darkness, but because of the power of God and his truth which they now had received from him.

In closing, maybe this example will illustrate what we have been trying to say to you.

***If you had been living in, say, 1775, all that you would have ever known religiously would have been Roman dogma. You would never have owned or read a Bible, nor ever been on your knees in prayer directly with God, because your prayers would have been recited over a string of beads, a Rosary, and your contact with God would have been through the priest and the confessional.***

***Then, about 1810, you were given a Bible and you started reading it. Soon your eyes were opened; your heart was deeply touched; you began to seek God and his will was revealed to you directly through his word, that the just shall live by faith and not by religious adorations of relics. You attend a different kind of preaching; you were convicted of your need of the Lord and you surrender your life to God. The Lord does a miraculous work of conversion in your heart, and for the first time in your life, you were marvelously united by faith and the power of the Holy Spirit to the Lord Jesus. You did not have a new religion; you have found a new relationship: you were wonderfully saved. And praises, honor, glory and alleluias spontaneously burst forth from your soul to God!***

***And you were just one of multiplied thousands who would have come to this saving experience, through the teaching of the word of God, apart from ancient, abominable Roman dogma. And the world of the 19th century was rejoicing with you for what God had wrought!***