

Sunday February 17th 2013
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Seventy Five

1). Heb 12:25 *See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."*

a). The shaking of the earth and also heaven that we find in v26 is a quotation, we will remember, from the Book of Haggai, a prophet who was writing in the days following the end of Israel's Babylonian captivity – Hag 2:6 *"For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 7 'and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts.*

b). This promised shaking has to do with a future time, 'it is a little while' – this then is a time beyond the return of the remnant to the land of Haggai's day and as we see from v7 this future day has to do with the shaking of the Gentile nations.

c). And Haggai makes the purpose for this shaking clearer still towards the end of Chapter 2 - Hag 2:22 *I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms; I will destroy the strength of the Gentile kingdoms.*

d). We had seen last time that the Prophet Isaiah also speaks about this same event - Isa 24:21 *It shall come to pass in that day That the LORD will punish on high the host of exalted ones, And on the earth the kings of the earth.*

e). And having put these two together we realized that we are dealing with the complete overthrow of Gentile world power through the destruction of the 4th of the 4 Babylonian kingdoms seen in Daniel's image and the angelic principalities and powers that orchestrate that kingdom.

f). This shaking and eventual destruction precipitates a complete change in the government of the earth, which will no longer be subject to angels, and this will be the fulfillment of the prophetic foundation set out in - Ge 3:15 *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

g). This shaking and the overthrow of the present system of rulership we found presented to us through the use of metaphors in the 6th Chapter of the Revelation through the picture of the sun, moon and stars and every mountain and island - Re 6:12 *I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great [shaking] earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. 13 And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. 14 Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.*

h). As we had seen, the imagery of the sun, moon and stars denotes the full spectrum of power and authority within Antichrist's kingdom – from that which is the supreme authority pictured in the sun to those subordinate authorities that depend upon 'the sun', pictured in the moon and stars; with the mountains and islands depicting the kingdoms and centers of commerce and trade within those kingdoms that are an integral part of Antichrist's control of the earth.

i). And of course as we deal with the power and authority of Antichrist's worldwide kingdom we must of necessity also be dealing with the angelic powers behind that kingdom as the two are inseparable - Re 13:2 *Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.*

j). Now before we move on from this particular imagery there are two more references that draw from the sun, moon and stars that present additional information on the change in earth's government that it would be helpful for us to look at.

k). They are both found in the Revelation Chapter 12 and both speak in different ways of exactly the same thing.

2). Re 12:1 ¶ *Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland [crown – Greek 'stephanos'] of twelve stars. 2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. 6*

Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. 7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

a). Revelation chapter 12 takes us to events surrounding Israel during the time of the Tribulation, and although Israel at this point is in the grips of intense persecution for the purpose of bringing the nation to repentance the imagery that is provided for us at the beginning of the chapter confirms the hope and eventual victory for the nation that God has long promised – *Isa 28:5 In that day the LORD of hosts will be For a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty To the remnant of His people,*

b). The ‘woman’ seen in v1 of Revelation Chapter 12 is Israel and we see her ‘clothed with the sun’ denoting the nation’s future position as the preeminent nation in the earth, the supreme governing authority in that day, with all other nations subject to her.

c). The ‘moon under her feet’ would picture the Gentile nations who enter into the Millennial Kingdom in a subservient position to Israel, but, this subservience is not something that should be seen as a negative thing as this is also the place of blessing that God had promised – *Ge 22:18 "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

d). We see the Gentile nations then placed ‘under’ Israel – a place from which they are reliant upon the ‘sun’ for their ‘light’, and this will now of course be the light of righteousness as the ‘sun of righteousness’ will have risen with healing in His wings - *Isa 2:3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

e). The 12 stars that form the crown upon the woman’s head denote governmental completeness, 12 being the number of government; they also represent the delineation of governmental authority between the 12 tribes as well as the inseparable connection between the heavenly and earthly realms of the Kingdom.

f). The word used for crown in this instance is the Greek word ‘stephanos’ showing that although destined to rule, rulership is not yet taking place – nor can it of course in the time depicted here as Israel is yet to come to

repentance and Gentile world power is yet to be overthrown – we will note that we see this power pictured in Revelation 12:3 wearing 7 ‘diadems’ [Greek ‘diadema’ – crowns worn by those ruling] - however, the very ‘sign’ of the woman as we see her in this chapter signifies the certainty of God’s purpose for His chosen people – the certainty of the end of Gentile world power.

g). In one sense we could see Israel pictured after this fashion from the day when God announced that the nation was His son, His firstborn.

h). And again, the image of the woman given to us in revelation Chapter 12 can be taken back all the way to foundation in Genesis Chapter 37 – *Ge 37:9 Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."*

i). Here we see Joseph as a type of Christ in His glory where the sun, moon and stars picture the complete nation of Israel, Israel in rulership, is subject to Him.

j). And within the context of Joseph’s dream in Genesis Chapter 37, the sun in this instance would represent Jacob, the moon Joseph’s mother Rachel and the 11 stars Jacob’s 11 sons with their brother Joseph absent – so then the whole house of Jacob/Israel.

k). And so within this picture in Genesis Chapter 37 regality with regards to Christ and Israel is shown to us – Christ is seen ruling over the whole house of Israel, with the sun, moon and stars showing a structured delineation of governmental power within the nation, beginning with the highest, the sun.

3). So what we see from putting all this together then is that the sun, moon and stars are used to depict governing authority, but context will show us which authority we are looking at – in Revelation Chapter 6 we are clearly dealing with Antichrist and the Gentile nations; in Genesis Chapter 37 we are dealing with Christ and Israel and in Revelation Chapter 12 we are dealing with Israel and the Gentile nations.

a). Within which ever context we find it though, the picture should now be easily understood, particularly when we take into consideration that which God states in the first Chapter of all of scripture - *Ge 1:14 ¶ Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; 15 "and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. 16 Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and*

the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. 17 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, 18 and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. 19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

b). In v14 God clearly states that the lights in the firmament of the heavens which will mark the division between day and night are for 'signs' and their purpose is 'to give light on the earth'.

c). These lights in the firmament are then shown to be 'two great lights', where one is greater and one is lesser and both lights are seen in connection with rulership, 'the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night'. And then at the end of v16 the statement is made, 'He made the stars also'.

d). And of course all this is seen to happen on the 4th day.

e). So within our overall context the 'greater light' whose rulership has to do with 'the day' would be Christ - Re 1:16 *He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.*

f). And the 'lesser light' whose rulership has to do with the night would be Satan - Eph 6:12 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age,* And just as in the natural the moon only has light because of the sun so in the spiritual Satan only continues to rule under the authority of God.

g). Now, there were 2 days [2000 years] from Adam to Abraham and 2 days [2000 years] from Abraham to Christ which would give us 4 days; so the 4th day in Genesis Chapter 1 would take us to Christ's first advent and must of necessity include His death, burial, resurrection and ascension – and this is what the scriptures record concerning the Lord's advent - Isa 9:2 *The people who walked in darkness Have seen **a great light**; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.*

Joh 1:4 *In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 ¶ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.*

h). And this is what is recorded following His resurrection – Ac 22:6 *"Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me.*

i). You see, once the only begotten Son has proved His worthiness to hold the scepter, His Kingdom, associated with the day and with light, comes into existence, although not yet manifest, and exists alongside Satan's kingdom, which is manifest, which is associated with the night and with

darkness – David and Saul would provide another foundational picture for this.

j). And that which we see with David and Saul is replicated within our own dispensation - 1Sa 22:2 *And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.*

k). Joh 12:36 *"While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.*

l). Ro 13:12 *The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.*

m). Eph 5:8 *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light*

n). 1Th 5:5 *You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.*

o). Mt 13:43 *"Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

p). Pr 4:18 *But the path of the just is like the shining sun, That shines ever brighter unto the perfect day.*

q). And the stars? Well they are associated with both kingdoms. There are those angels associated with the kingdom of darkness – ‘the rulers of the darkness of this age’ and there are those who are associated with the Kingdom of light – ‘are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who will inherit salvation.’

r). And so every day that we see the night give way to the day should be a reminder to us of the coming glory of our glorious King – this is the ‘light’ it gives for those with eyes to see - Ps 19:1 ¶ <<To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.>> *The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.*

Ps 50:6 *Let the heavens declare His righteousness, For God Himself is Judge. Selah*

Ps 97:6 *The heavens declare His righteousness, And all the peoples see His glory.*

4). Anyway, back to Revelation Chapter 12 for a moment – the sign of the woman that we have been looking at clearly has to do with Israel’s future rule over the Gentile nations and this will be at the time when a complete change in the government of the earth will have taken place with respect to both the heavens and the earth.

a). Since before time, as we would understand it, began angels have ruled over the provinces within God's universe and with respect to this one province in the universe, the earth and the heavens associated with it, angelic rule is about to end and God's creation, Man, is to rule in the stead of angels.

b). The sign of the woman then signifies this coming change and the whole of the matter is then presented again from a slightly different perspective as we see 2 sets of angelic forces engaged in a 'war' in heaven – *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,*

c). Michael is the great prince over Israel, who with his angels constitute angelic rule with regards to Israel – although Israel does not hold the scepter of rulership at present Michael and his angels still reside in that part of 'heaven' where God is, separated from Satan and his angels and not part of their rebellion; as Israel has never been 'reckoned amongst the nations' angelic rule with regards to Israel has always been separated from that concerning the Gentile nations and we have seen the antagonism that exists between these 2 groups before, in the Book of Daniel - Da 10:13 *"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.....21 "But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince.*

d). And we also see Michael again with respect to Israel and the Tribulation in - Da 12:1 ¶ *"At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.*

e). Michael 'standing up' and Michael and his angels fighting with the dragon and his angels, may well be one and the same event.

f). Because angels are no longer to rule over the earth the heavens which they occupy must be vacated and it is the forceful removal of Satan and his angels that we see pictured in the victory of Michael and his angels - *So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

g). Michael the great prince of Israel defeats Satan the great prince of the Gentiles – In this Israel is pictured as preeminent, a further confirmation of the sign of the woman.

5). Now recall this that we see in - Job 38:7 *When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?*

And in - Isa 14:13 *For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;*

a). As we know from previous studies angels are pictured as 'stars' and so when we read in connection with the great shaking in – Rev. 6:13 *And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.*

b). When we read this we cannot help but see a connection with Satan and his angels being cast out of heaven in Revelation Chapter 12, but the connection we make here should only be in the sense that it relates to the destruction of the present system of rulership, we do not need to limit the stars of heaven 'falling' to just the casting out of Satan and his angels.

6). Heb 12:27 *Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire.*

a). Here in the verses that take us to the end of Chapter 12 we see the contrast between 'those things that are being shaken' in order to remove them and those things 'which cannot be shaken' which will remain - Col 1:16 *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.*

b). The all things being removed through shaking then, as we have seen, is the present system of rulership, the very 'all things' we see here in Colossians Chapter 1 and the things which cannot be shaken, which will remain is the Kingdom of Christ – the new order of rulers both in the heavens and on the earth with Christ as their Head and we are called to be a part of this.

c). And as we consider this new order of rulership let us remember that this is the fulfillment of God's purpose for Man with respect to the 7th Day – it is a purpose that has required the death and shed blood of God in the person

of the Son to make possible – it is that which God has spoken about in times past through the prophets and spoken in these last days by His Son – it is therefore the subject of all scripture and the precursor to the eternal ages and is therefore no small thing.

d). This is why we need to ‘have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear’ – and the grace we are to have is readily available to us if we will only appropriate it - Heb 4:16 *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

e). And all of this would be dependent upon our compliance with that which we saw in Hebrews 12:25 – ‘see that you do not refuse Him who speaks’.

f). And if we should have a tendency to want to forget this we are reminded - *For our God is a consuming fire.*

g). This is a phrase that we see used 3 times with respect to Israel; once in connection with the first generation to come out of Egypt and twice in connection with the second generation – Ex 24:17 *The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel.*

De 4:24 *"For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.*

De 9:3 *"Therefore understand today that the LORD your God is He who goes over before you as a consuming fire. He will destroy them and bring them down before you; so you shall drive them out and destroy them quickly, as the LORD has said to you.*

h). And in all instances here we see that God is a consuming fire with respect to sin – sin cannot exist in the presence of the Holy God and anything of the flesh that appears in His presence must be consumed – And this should remind us of the 4th warning that we found in Hebrews - Heb 10:26 *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.*

i). And should take us back to - 1Co 3:11 ¶ *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If*

anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

j). And should take us further back still to - Mt 13:41 *"The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*

k). In conclusion for today then let's be abundantly clear – the day is soon coming when we will stand before our Lord in Judgment and in that day Re 1:14b....*His eyes like a flame of fire;.....16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.*

l). Our account will be reckoned and we must at all costs make sure that when we are tried we are not found wanting – In that day we need to be like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego coming from the flames without a hint of burning and God has provided the grace by which we may do it.

m). Heb 12:25 *See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven, 26 whose voice then shook the earth; but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven."*

7). If the Lord is willing we will begin Chapter 13 next time.