

The Prophetic Outlook Today – The Seventh Vial



Continued from [The Prophetic Outlook Today – The Vial Poured Out Upon The Air; And The Three Unclean Spirits Like Frogs.](#)

(Rev. xvi. 17-21)

This, the last Vial of Judgment, is poured out “*upon the air*” or atmosphere of the Apocalyptic world. As the natural atmosphere is the region of storms, the medium through which the heavenly luminaries shine on us, and the element we breathe, a great physical disturbance in the air must affect it in each of these functions; and if it be thus in the symbol, so must it be likewise in what is symbolised.

The symbol has been used before, under the Fifth Trumpet (Rev. ix. 1, 2), of the smoke from the pit darkening the air, this smoke being the false Mohammedan religion, out of which came the Saracen locusts. When the political atmosphere was darkened by the smoke of Mohammedanism, there resulted agitation and moral taint in Greek Christendom, as well as a darkening of the ruling authorities in the political heaven. The symbolic sun, moon, and stars communicate to us their influences, their light and heat, through the medium of the political constitutions of the states to which they belong. This, then, would be the air or atmosphere upon which the Vial is poured. The action of the Vial signifies the vitiation of the very elements of thought and principle, religious, moral, and political, within the affected area.

We are now dealing with much that is still future, though perhaps nearer at hand than we think, for the Seventh Vial has begun to be poured out (see below). We cannot tread as firmly as if we had the guidance of accomplished facts, as we have had hitherto, to aid us in the explanation of the symbols. But these Visions, no less than the others, are intended to be understood, and we may not ignore or neglect their teaching, even though some of it may still be obscure.

On the Air

The Vision of the Seventh Vial teaches that after a certain progress of the three unclean spirits now abroad, so as to marshal their strength in Western Christendom and its colonial dependencies against Christ’s cause and Church, and after a cry of Christ’s coming as near at hand, such as seems now surely

begun, there is to arise all suddenly some extra ordinarily fearful vitiation and darkening of the political atmosphere, the permitted effect perhaps in God's righteous judgment of the work ing to a crisis of those evil principles.

Doubtless the vitiation of the political atmosphere in Western Europe, especially among what are known as the Latin nations, will be unprecedentedly awful. The very elements of thought and feeling, of social affection and moral principle, by which society is in God's wonderful wisdom constituted and preserved, may be so affected as very much to intercept all genial influences of the ruling authorities; to minister disease instead of health to the body politic; and perhaps, with terrible convulsions, to resolve society for a while into its primary elements.

The Great Earthquake

See now how the sequel is described. Politically a revolution (symbolised by an earthquake) follows, more mighty, more subversive and awful, than any previously described, and ending in the Tripartition of the constituency of the Ten Kingdoms of Western Europe.

The "*lightnings, voices, and thunders*" are the well-known symbols of wars and tumults. Then follows the mighty earthquake, greater than any before; that is, greater than that on the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity (Rev. vi. 12), at the Gothic Invasions (Rev. viii. 5), at the Reformation (Rev. xi. 13), and at the French Revolution (Rev. xi. 19). This tremendous upheaval of the fabric of human society, this greatest of all revolutions, affects especially "*the great city*," that is, the area of the Ten Kingdoms (compare Rev. xi. 8).

The chief nations of the old Roman earth—that is, of Western professing Christendom—are now in marked political ascendancy before the whole world, Heathen, Mohammedan, and Jewish. The eyes of all nations are forced on this same Roman earth, as being the very focus of commerce, science, and political power. A great moral and political disturbance here, therefore, must mightily affect the whole world.

The Tripartition

"*The great city was divided into three parts.*" As the result of this earthquake, a most remarkable change is foreshown as destined to befall the European Commonwealth; nothing less than the final breaking up of that decem-regal form of the Papal Empire which has characterised it for now nearly thirteen centuries, and its change into a new and Tripartite form. This Tripartition may probably be, like the earlier separation of the Tenth Part of the great city, both religious and political. Territorial Tripartition certainly seems included, and it may be supposed that the predicted threefold division will have a threefold purpose.

It is plain that the expected tenfold division of the old Roman Empire which some are looking for is not to be. A tenfold division of Western Rome has existed for many centuries, but it is to pass into a threefold division at

the end.

[Many points in these Visions are more fully explained in the author's larger work, *Present-Day Papers on Prophecy*.]

"The cities of the nations fell." In Rev. vii. 9, x. 11, xiv. 6, etc., the term "nations" may have a meaning extending beyond the Roman world, but in Rev. xi. 2, 9 it seems restricted to the Latinised Christians of the Popedom. The cities "fell." In Rev. xi.13 it is said that "the tenth part of the city fell," referring to England breaking away from under the Papacy. But here, having regard to the connection and to what is revealed in Rev. xvii. (which see), the expression may mean that they fell away from their allegiance to Babylon or the Romish Church; for it does not appear that they fell away from allegiance to the Papal Power, the Beast and the kings being together to the end (Rev. xix. 19).



Babylon Remembered

The Tripartition of the European Commonwealth is to be the very alarm bell for the long-delayed judgment on Babylon the Great. Now at length she comes

up in remembrance before God, and receives her own final and appalling doom.

Babylon is not the Popedom, but the Romish Church and city, and what is here briefly summarised is presently expanded in full detail. It is here implied that she has already had a long and triumphant career, and that that career has been so evil as to call for a specially awful judgment from God. Her character, career, and doom are forthwith described (Rev. xvii., xviii.). She has been engaged in a savage warfare against Christ's saints, so much so that she is now seen drunken with their blood. During all that long time she has been apparently forgotten by God, but now at last she is "remembered" for judgment (see Rev. xviii. 5).

Islands and Mountains Flee

After the judgment on Babylon, the great earthquake still further extends its effects, and develops into a complete levelling of everything in the social fabric. All social bonds are annulled and disappear; all governing powers are put an end to. *"Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found."* The earthquake affects the sea, or maritime parts, as well as the mainland. In the earthquake of the Sixth Seal (Rev. vi. 14), the mountains and islands were only *"moved out of their places,"* in the change from Heathen supremacy to Christian. But here they no longer appear when looked for; all the prospect has been reduced to one dead level, mountains and islands having been levelled down to earth and sea.

Former revolutions have implied only a change from one form of government to another; but this one seems to involve the disorganisation of government itself, and of the social fabric altogether—in fact, anarchy absolute and complete. If the waters and the plains or valleys lying level or low represent the people at large, then hills and mountains that rise above them represent those who are above the rest in authority or social position (see Ps. xxii. 3); and the islands represent institutions or organisations in some social way marked off from the rest and rising above them, though standing in their midst. All these have now disappeared.

Anarchy

The purpose of the Anarchists has been declared plainly enough: they aim at the subversion of the present state of society

"Obviously, if the Divine Government of the world is wholly denied, there is nothing illogical in the ultimate refusal of the individual to render obedience to any authority whatever. The Anarchist says, in effect: "There is no God, and therefore there is no source of authority, and no justification for the claim of any one man to control the conduct of any other man.' On this view each man is a law to himself and a bitter opponent to any system of government, human or Divine. The whole theory was effectively summed up long ago in the words, '*Ni Dieu, ni maitre*' (Neither God, nor master)."

Here are two pronouncements made during 1901:

"No more laws. No more judges. Burn the guillotines; demolish the prisons;

drive away the judges, policemen, and informers, the impurest race upon the earth; treat as a brother the man who has been led by passion to do ill to his brother."

"Free work. Free use of things. Communal possession of all the means of social wealth, and the machinery of production, of ways and communication, of land, of mines, of water, etc. The abolition of all private property. The doing away with government, with class, with militarism, with judges, with the nobility and bureaucracy. Social emancipation. Anarchy."

In short, ignore the terrible facts that man is a fallen and sinful being, and that he has an evil heart within and a powerful tempter without; and abolish all the safeguards and restraints that God has provided and that social order has devised. What an awful prospect!

The Great Hail

This mention of the hail comes after, not before, the Tripartition. If the analogy of the First Trumpet be followed, the hail would seem to indicate a judgment from the North. There may be that also which shall literally answer to the prediction, but the Apocalyptic figures generally require first a symbolic explanation.

To resist the spread of the great French Revolution of 1789, there was ultimately founded a coalition of the European Powers against France, and fearful warfare and carnage ensued, and a plague of leaden hail. The "great hail" may be of the same kind, but on a much larger scale, and with the latest developments of modern lethal weapons (see below).

The Seventh Vial has begun

The importance of England in the Prophetic programme, and the significance of what happens there, have already been pointed out. Now, shortly after the passing of the Parliament Act in August 1911, by which a heavy blow was struck at the British Constitution in the overthrow of the Lords' Veto, disabling the House of Lords, there followed an extraordinary and inexplicable outburst of unrest, in Britain and her colonies as well as in other countries. The newspapers were full of it, and tried to account for it in a variety of ways.

Unreasoning strikes on a vast scale, with revolutionary spirit and violence, and not seldom against the will of the leaders of the working classes, broke out in many parts of the world, and had to be put down with a firm hand, if society was to be preserved. All these upheaval movements showed a spirit ominously like what is foretold under the Seventh Vial; and even if these doings were only preliminaries, they were most significant, and conveyed a grave warning. No wonder that that date, followed as it was by what has just been described, as well as by most terrific warfare, should have arrested the attention of prophetic students at home and abroad, and should have suggested itself as the commencement of the Seventh Vial, the last of the series, the closing section of the Seventh Trumpet.

Warfare on a Gigantic Scale

During the subsequent years, in accordance with what is foretold, there has followed warfare on a gigantic scale, "*lightnings, voices and thunders*," as never before in the history of mankind. First, in the regions of the Balkans against Turkey, and then between the Powers that had been righting Turkey. The result was the thrusting away of Turkey from her European territories towards Asia Minor, leaving her only Constantinople and a narrow strip along the Sea of Marmora. Next, there broke out the most terrible warfare, begun by Germany and Austria against Belgium and France, but presently spreading over the whole of Europe, including our own country, and drawing in our Colonies, India, and the United States of America. Turkey joined with Germany against us and our Allies, and in consequence lost Egypt, Cyprus, and parts of Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and of Palestine.

Two New Features

In the tremendous warfare of the present time two new and notable features have appeared that fit in as auxiliary illustrations of what is foreshown under this Vial—the Vial that is poured out "*upon the air*," and one of the judgments of which is "*a great hail*." The emblems used in these Visions are generally to be understood as symbols, but in some instances there is literal fulfilment as well, by which attention is the more forcibly drawn to the deeper meaning intended.

We are now seeing an immense development of warfare in the air by aircraft of various kinds, these being used not for scouting only but also as fighting units, as well as for dropping bombs like hail out of the sky. Never before in history has there been any thing like this. Add thereto the use of poisonous gases poured out into the air to asphyxiate the opposing fighters, and of liquid fire.

There is also a tremendous increase in the power and use of artillery, with high-explosive shells and rapid and far-ranging fire. Guns are now made that throw shells of a ton weight to a distance of twenty miles. The middle of their trajectory being several miles high, these huge missiles may well seem to come straight down out of the sky like "*hail about the weight of a talent*." This also was unknown till the present war broke out. It may foretell also a great development in bomb-dropping by large aeroplanes.

It is surely significant that these two new features should be appearing together, at the present time. Still, too much importance should not be attached to the merely literal, as though it fulfilled all that was signified.

The Great Earthquake

The next great event to look for in sequence to the thunderstorm of warfare is the mighty European Revolution foretold as the "*great earthquake*," greater than any before, resulting in the Tripartition of the Great City, and followed by the destruction of the Roman Catholic Church. Already revolution has begun in Russia; the ancient dynasty of the Tsars has been dethroned, and

an entirely new constitution is in course of formation. Is this the first premonitory shock?

This great earthquake is no doubt the mighty disturbance and darkening of the symbolic luminaries referred to by our Lord in His prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives (Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24, 25; Luke xxi. 25, 26). The firmamental heaven, with its luminaries, is the well-known symbol of the governing department and of its authorities; and what is here foretold is in much plainer language than that in the Gospels. For it is a mistake to try to explain the Revelation Visions by means of the Gospel prophecy. The reverse is the correct process; the earlier and more obscure statements are illuminated by this latest and fullest of the prophecies given by our Lord.

A SOLEMN WARNING

THE THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS CONTINUE UNDER THE SEVENTH VIAL

We have seen that the time when the Three Unclean Spirits like Frogs first issued forth was after the Euphratean flood had begun to dry up— that is, after 1820. We have looked into History subsequent to that date, and have discerned the fulfilment of this part of the Vision in the operations of the three Satanic principles here described. But we must remember that their influence and operations continue and increase under the Seventh Vial, and lead up to the final conflict of Armageddon; indeed, wider and more strenuous effort may be expected under the Seventh than under the Sixth Vial.

St. John had beheld all three personages,—Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet,—for they had long been on the scene, and he could be in no uncertainty as to the character and aims of the three spirits that issued from three such mouths. He “saw” them, as a representative man; that is, those (represented by him) who in these present times hold the Apostolical doctrine and are fellow-disciples of the Apostle will be able to recognise these three evil influences and their outgoing and progress. While others are endeavouring, on principles of mere human wisdom, to explain and account for what is now taking place, the wiser ones, Spirit-taught from these Visions, will perceive and understand the source, character, influence, aims, and success of these three spirits, and like wise their coming doom and that of their dupes.

These three are spirits, not flesh and blood, though acting through human instrumentality and making use of flesh and blood and brain for their purpose. Unclean spirits, for they are the spirits of demons, all three from an impure source, and themselves impure; possessing to a certain extent supernatural powers, working signs, and impressing the minds of the ignorant and unwary; themselves invisible to the human eye, but revealing their presence and influence by the results of their operations. He must be blind indeed who fails to discern their doings in the world around. Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, and these evil spirits likewise may fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; wherefore it needs Spirit-enlightened sight to penetrate the disguise.

The spirit from the mouth of the Dragon shows the characteristics of the Old

Serpent, the Devil, Satan. He was a liar, a murderer, a tempter, a deceiver, from the beginning, and a proud rebel against all authority. Murder and every kind of horrible brutality in warfare are his work, as also private and public lying, and every form of ignorant and of learned superstition. Germany of today supplies many an illustration of the pernicious results of his influence there.

Attached to the Sixth Vial, and forming a part of it, are four verses of immense significance, predicting the war of Armageddon. The fearful outbreak which began in 1914 has directed the attention of all who believe in the Bible to those verses. Three evil spirits are seen to go out into the world to do Satan's work. Their particular purpose is to involve the world in war...today the prophecy stands revealed, though the completion of its fulfilment may for a time be delayed. The causes which led to the present war are exactly those indicated. They account for all that the Germans have done—their long hostile preparations in time of peace; their false pretext for war; their murderous onslaught on peaceful neighbours; their breach of solemn compacts; and their methods of savagery.

The Germans have abandoned Christianity. It stood in the way of their ambitions. It reproved their covetousness. It taught a "slave morality" of kindness, contentment, and unselfishness. For more than a generation the spirit of Infidelity has been at work in Germany, and it has demoralised the people. Higher Criticism is German in name and in origin. It begins by rejecting on a priori grounds all definite inspiration, miracle, and prediction. It has applied to the Bible critical methods which would produce absurd results if applied to any of the classical authors. It has treated Scripture as if it were a dead body handed over for dissection. As a consequence, the German people have gradually lost their faith in a Divine and living Christ, and have taken instead a god peculiar to Germany, who is almost a revival of the Pagan god of War...Nothing can be wrong which helps on Germany's desire to rule the world. Everything is justified by "military necessity." It is the worship of expediency in its most hateful form; a compromise with any crime so long as it promotes success... It is being adopted on a national scale in the present war, in the attempt to gain for the nations over whom Rome still rules a world dominion.—Rev. E. H. Home.

Of the Beast, i.e. the Papacy, it is said in Rev. xiii. 5,6: *"There was given to him (by the Devil) a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies...And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven."*

The Pope puts forth the claim to be the Vicar of Christ on earth, and therefore above all kings and peoples, also head of the Christian Church. He insists on all these claims being universally acknowledged, on his Church being the only true Church, and on union with him being essential to salvation.

The spirit of Priestcraft, from the mouth of the False Prophet, speaks like the Dragon. It claims to be the intermediary between the soul and the Saviour, and to be the dispenser of God's favour through the Sacraments. It teaches Romish and semi-Romish doctrines, and encourages Romish forms of

worship, practices, and superstitions. It aims at restoring the Mass in place of the Holy Communion. The False Prophet being subordinate to the Beast, his function is to aid the Beast and to promote his interests; that is, to play into the hands of the Papacy.

So these three unclean spirits are no new creation, but a fresh and formidable outburst of activity and effort, under the Sixth and Seventh Vials, with a view to the great final conflict that is drawing near. Their assault is threefold. It is not enough to discern and to fight with one; there are other two leagued with that one, and we must be on threefold guard. The final efforts of evil are not of one type only—as of atheism or infidelity—but of three types, Popery and Priestcraft as well.

These unclean spirits *“go forth unto the kings of the whole world.”* Their chief aim, of course, is to seduce especially “kings,” i.e. those in positions of authority, poisoning and corrupting their minds by instilling as much as they can of their accursed principles. Some minds, thank God, will not admit them at all; they have been better taught. But alas, many others do; and if they are in positions of influence and authority, they are able to taint and to seduce multitudes of unwary souls.

The energies of these spirits are world-wide. One may expect to find traces of their operations anywhere on the whole earth, following up and thwarting the efforts of the messengers of truth, often with only too much success, as well as spreading their own pestilential teachings.

Their object is to gather together these kings *“unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.”* And they meet with considerable success, for it is said that *“they (the evil spirits) gathered them (the kings) together into the place which is called in the Hebrew Har-Magedon.”* There the final battle takes place, the climax of the “war.” So these kings yield to the temptation to rise up against the Almighty. They are under a strong delusion, a seductive mirage floats before their eyes to lure them on, and it leads them to certain destruction. They are so infatuated as to expect victory, whereas they are hurrying on to utter defeat.

“Now therefore be wise, O ye kings:
Be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish in the way,
For His wrath will soon be kindled.
Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.”
(Ps. ii. 10-12.)

Conclusion

Now here is something greater and far more momentous than any sagacious forecasts of statesmen and politicians, or the newspaper explanations of present troubles. We are nearing the end of this dispensation, and are seeing the spiritual preparations for the last great conflict. We have to war not against flesh and blood or human brain alone, but against wicked spirits, against the prince of the power of the air and his evil demons and

subordinates. They have gone forth, and are now hard at work; and it is imperative that we recognise this, and put on the whole armour of God in which to encounter them.

Let us be warned. Let us be quick to recognise these foes. Let those in any position of authority be specially on their guard, for they are the chief mark for the most subtle assaults and the most poisonous influences of these evil spirits. This is the last portentous effort of these demoniac powers to gain the mastery over the world, and their great aim at present is the ruin of England. They are steadily working to carry out their unholy purposes, in the light and in the dark, in the palace and in the cottage. When manifestations of their activities are seen, let them not be minimised or underrated, or treated as unimportant and negligible. However common like evils may have been in other days, they are especially prominent now, and are being urged on by evil spirits with untiring energy and relentless malice.

Above all, let their action be firmly resisted, even in its beginnings. These are not matters of indifference, nor are they to be disposed of by ridicule; it is all most tremendously real and grave. Every effort is made to keep people in ignorance of this mighty campaign, to delude them into believing that nothing abnormal is taking place. Attention is diverted into other channels, perhaps against fictitious foes; whereas all the while most strenuous exertions and preparations are being made for attaining their own ends. *"Whom resist, steadfast in the faith."*

Continued in [The Judgment Of The Great Harlot](#)

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