

27 The Judgment

Then, after all these things, the heavens will not give their dew, the clouds will not give their rain, the earth will refuse to yield its fruits, the sea shall be filled with stench, the rivers shall be dried up, the fish of the sea shall die, men shall perish of hunger and thirst; and father embracing son, and mother embracing daughter, will die together, and there will be none to bury them. But the whole earth will be filled with the stench arising from the dead bodies cast forth. And the sea, not receiving the floods of the rivers, will become like mire, and will be filled with an unlimited smell and stench. Then there will be a mighty pestilence upon the whole earth, and then, too, inconsolable lamentation, and measureless weeping, and unceasing mourning. Then men will deem those happy who are dead before them, and will say to them, "Open your sepulchers, and take us miserable beings in; open your receptacles for the reception of your wretched kinsmen and acquaintances. Happy are ye, in that ye have not seen our days. Happy are ye, in that ye have not had to witness this painful life of ours, nor this irremediable pestilence, nor these straits that possess our souls."

28 The Mark

Then that abominable one will send his commands throughout every government by the hand at once of demons and of visible men, who shall say,

"A mighty king has arisen upon the earth; come ye all to worship him; come ye all to see the strength of his kingdom: for, behold, he will give



you corn; and he will bestow upon you wine, and great riches, and lofty honors. For the whole earth and sea obeys his command. Come ye all to him."

And by reason of the scarcity of food, all will go to him and worship him; and he will put his mark on their right hand and on their forehead, that no one may put the sign of the honorable cross upon his forehead with his right hand; but his hand is bound. And from that time he shall not have power to seal any one of his members, but he shall be attached to the deceiver, and shall serve him; and in him there is no repentance. But such an one is lost at once to God and to men, and the deceiver will give them scanty food by reason of his abominable seal. And his seal upon the forehead and upon the right hand is the number,

"Six hundred threescore and six."

Revelation 13:18

And I have an opinion as to this number, though I do not know the matter for certain; for many names have been found in this number when it is expressed in writing. Still we say that perhaps the inscription of this same seal will give us the word "I deny." For even in recent days, by means of his ministers - that is to say, the idolaters - that bitter adversary took up the word *deny*, when the lawless pressed upon the witnesses of Christ, with the adjuration, "Deny thy God, the crucified One."



29-30 Antichrist and the Two Witnesses

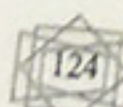
Of such kind, in the time of that hater of all good, will be the seal, the tenor of which will be this:

"I deny the Maker of heaven and earth, I deny the baptism, I deny my former service, and attach myself to you, and I believe in you."

For this is what the prophets Enoch and Elias will preach:

"Believe not the enemy who is to come and be seen; for he is an adversary, a corrupter, and son of perdition, and deceives you; and for this reason he will kill you, and smite them with the sword. Behold the deceit of the enemy, know the deception of the beguiler, how he seeks to darken the mind of men utterly."

For he will show forth his demons brilliant like angels, and he will bring in hosts of the incorporeal without number. And in the presence of all he exhibits himself as taken up into heaven with trumpets and sounds, and the mighty shouting of those who hail him with indescribable hymns; the heir of darkness himself shining like light, and at one time soaring to the heavens, and at another descending to the earth with great glory, and again charging the demons, like angels, to execute his behests with much fear and trembling. Then will he send the cohorts of the demons among mountains and caves and dens of the earth, to track out those who have been concealed from his eyes, and to bring them forward to



worship him. And those who yield to him he will seal with his seal; but those who refuse to submit to him he will consume with incomparable pains and bitterest torments and machinations, such as never have been, nor have reached the ear of man, nor have been seen by the eye of mortals.

30 Blessed shall they be who overcome the tyrant then. For they shall be set forth as more illustrious and loftier than the first witnesses; for the former witnesses overcame his minions only, but these overthrow and conquer the accuser himself, the son of perdition. With what eulogies and crowns, therefore, will they not be adorned by our King, Jesus Christ!

31 The Minions of the Beast

But let us revert to the matter in hand. When men have received the seal, then, and find neither food nor water, they will approach him with a voice of anguish, saying, "Give us to eat and drink, for we all faint with hunger and all manner of straits; and bid the heavens yield us water, and drive off from us the beasts that devour men." Then will that crafty one make answer, mocking them with absolute inhumanity, and saying, "The heavens refuse to give rain, the earth yields not again its fruits; whence then can I give you food?" Then, on hearing the words of this deceiver, these miserable men will perceive that this is the wicked accuser, and will mourn in anguish, and weep vehemently, and beat their face with their hands, and tear their hair, and lacerate their cheeks with their nails, while they say to each other: "Woe for the calamity! woe for the

