

## The Messenger To The Laodicea Church Age

### CHAPTER ONE

#### FIXING THE CHURCH AGES HISTORICALLY

**The Bible very clearly** sets forth that God has **appointed a limited time** wherein He deals with faithfully unto Salvation with the Gentiles. In it He calls out **a people for His Name**. To do this **He (temporarily) turns from** Israel as a nation, **and calls to repentance individually** the Gentiles whom He foreknew of every kindred, tribe and nation. These statements are correct in every detail.

It is written:

*Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts 11:18); "It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken unto you: But seeing ye (the Jews) put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. (Acts 13:46)*

*Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written, after this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down: and I will build again the ruins thereof and will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my Name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth these things. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world. (Acts 15:13-18)*

**This Period** (wherein God is calling out from among the Gentiles) is known as the **"Fullness of the Gentiles."** Again the Bible says, *"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this Mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits: That blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."* (Romans 11:25). This period will end when the last elected Gentile member of the Body of Christ is brought in.

Romans 11:7-12 says,

*What then? Israel has not obtained that which He seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded, (according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear) unto this day. And David saith, let their table be made a snare, and a trap and a stumbling block,*

*and a recompense unto them; let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back always.*

*I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid, but rather through their fall Salvation us come unto the Gentiles to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them be the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness?*

"**The Fullness of the Gentiles**" is itself the larger part of another well known period of time which is ending right now and is called the "**Times of the Gentiles**". Luke in his Gospel writes, "*And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be **led away captive** into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, **until** the 'Times of the Gentiles be **fulfilled**.'*" It should be noted immediately that these **two periods** run concurrently, But one is **political** and the other is **spiritual** in connotation.

### **The Times Of The Gentiles**

The "**TIMES**" of the Gentiles is the political period of time referring to Gentile Dominion over Israel. It began when Nebuchadnezzar carried Israel away captive, and ends when God restores Israel to world dominion.

It is written...

*In that day, saith the Lord, I will smite every house with astonishment, and his rider with madness. And I will open mine eyes upon the house of Judah and will smite every horse of the people with blindness. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, The inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength in the Lord of hosts their God.*

*In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. The Lord also shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.*

*In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as an Angel of the Lord before them. And it shall*

*come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.*

*I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of Grace and supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

**This restoration** (prophesied by Zechariah) **ushers in the millennium.**

### **The Fullness Of The Gentiles**

The "Fullness of the Gentiles" is **the spiritual era** of the Gentiles wherein we noted that Israel is blinded while Light appears to the Gentiles. **This period will end** when Christ comes for His Gentile Bride.

The "**Fullness of the Gentiles**" as set forth by Paul in Romans is identified in the Book of Revelation as "**The Seven Church ages.**" They are one and the same. The proof of this is found in Revelation, chapters two and three.

Therein is the Spirit speaking to the Messengers of the Seven Church Ages in Asia Minor? He **begins** with the Messenger to the Ephesians Church (Age) and **ends** with the Messenger to the Laodicea Church (Age). These are all Gentile Churches. At no time does the Spirit speak to the church which is at Jerusalem which is a Jewish Church.

If He were addressing both the Gentile and the Israeli Churches He must of necessity speak to the Church at Jerusalem, but not so? The original church group is left out. This is exactly as it ought to be. **During this time**, (Fullness of the Gentiles and The Seven Church Ages) God has left off dealing with the Jews. **A few Jews**, through election, will come in, but not many. These will belong to the Gentile era.

**See the perfection of this premise in the type of Joseph meeting with His brethren** in Egypt. Joseph (perfect type of Christ) has been **betrayed by his brethren**. Now in Egypt they stand before him. They are very fearful; but in love he greets them. However, Joseph's Gentile Bride is not there when his brethren meet with him. She is hidden away in the palace. **So it is** when Christ comes before His brethren - they see His wounds and are full of fear. He treats them in love. But **His Gentile Bride** is not with Him. She is in the palace, for at that time God will have finished dealing with the

Gentiles.

Now, it is not an easy or commonplace task to fix with certainty the Seven Church Ages as to their dates, duration, messengers and other pertinent characteristics. Who would arbitrarily announce himself the authority to do so? Certainly not this writer. Yet any Bible student knows that **a certain combination** would most effectively accomplish this work. **That combination** is a Scriptural study of history plus Divine Revelation.

**No one can deny** that certain of these Ages have passed into history. But since Christ has not yet taken His Bride home, it is evident that we are in one of the Ages still extant. The Ages that are gone can and will be verified **by the study of the Scriptures in the light of history**. (This is how we have ascertained much concerning the prophecies of Daniel).

**The immediate Age** and its characteristics will be revealed by Divine Revelation. This is a **MUST** in order for the Church to know exactly where it is at. One can hardly expect the Church to be helped if all her information were historical. She would not know what was happening to her. Thus with the perfect combination of **history, Scripture and Divine Revelation** (Spiritual understanding, by the Spirit) we can assuredly know the Truth of the Seven Ages.

Our course, at this time, is to **review the Ages** in the light of history and to ascertain where we are and then implore God to send His Prophet to reveal the Scripture relative to this age in order that the Church know and perform the whole counsel of God.

But to begin with, we most certainly know from Scripture, itself, what **the First Church Age** was and who its Messenger was. The Age was **the Ephesians Age** and **the messenger was Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles**. It was *through Paul* that the complete revelation from God came to the Gentiles. His revelation was actually more abundant than that received by Peter and the other apostles relative to the Gentiles.

Paul, in Galatians 2:6b-8 stated, *"For they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me, but contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the un-circumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter, for he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles."*

Paul was both the Messenger to the Ephesians' Age and also the Pastor to the Church at Ephesus for he both founded it and cared for it. We cannot set an exact date as to when this age ended. There is no need for an exact

date, as the Ages, like all other of **God's eras of time** seem to **overlap**. But it did not last too long for the power of God had abated through unbelief even in the early years. Judging by the actual wane of power this age was not longer than about 170 A.D.

**Continuing to fix the Church Ages** by referring to Scripture and history, examine Rev. 3:1-6. This is spoken to the Church at Sardis and is **the Fifth Age**. The key herein is found in verse two. "*Be watchful; strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die.*" There was no strength in the Dark Ages. Except for a tiny flock, and that widely scattered, there was no strong evidence of True Christianity. But now in **this Fifth Age** (Sardis), **Martin Luther appears** and successfully nurtures the doctrine of Justification and the Light begins to glow again.

The first show of strength in hundreds of years appears, showing definitely that this is **the Age of the Reformation** of which Luther was the Messenger without a doubt. It was said of him in Sauer's history, "Dr. Martin Luther was a prophet, evangelist, speaker in tongues, interpreter, in one person. Endowed with all the gifts of the Spirit." This Age is well known to have existed from about 1550 to around 1750.

With the fifth age fixed, it is not difficult to go on and place **the sixth or Philadelphian Age**. Rev. 3:7-13, the Messenger to that golden age of brotherly love was no doubt **John Wesley**. This was **the Age of the open door**, missions, great teachers, tremendous revivals. The Holy Spirit was even more manifested herein than in the Fifth Age. God was truly giving Light, Life and Blessing. This Age lasted from about 1750 to the turn of the twentieth century.

Turning backward and leaving the Seventh Age to consider at a later time, it is certainly easy to establish in time **the Fourth Age**. This found in Rev. 2:18-29. Here is **the Age that knew the depth of Satan** (verse 24). The darkest of all the Ages to this date - little Word - little power. Man had usurped the position and authority of God. The greed of Rome had dammed countless souls and in the Name of God they blasphemed the very Name and Word of God. This age lasted from about the turn of the sixth century to the middle of the sixteenth. It was **the Thyatira Age**, and its Messenger was pronounced to be **Columba**, for he showed forth in his life that which most closely resembled the power and glory of God in the first century Believers. That is always the criterion.

The next Age that we can easily affix is **the Third Age**. Rev. 2:12-17 speaks to the Messenger to **the Church at Pergamos**. But Pergamos is where Satan's seat is. This is when **Satan's own religion** (ancient Babylonian religion) came out to the forefront. This religion that goes

against the Word of God from the time of **Cain**, now, after the Nicean council, **invades the nominal church and introduces pagan rites, and holidays, etc.** It is no problem to fix the dates here, for this is the aftermath of the Nicean Council of about 325 A.D., and before the Dark Ages which of necessity must follow such perfidy. It last from the turn of the fourth century to the beginning of the seventh. **Its Messenger** on the same basis we try the various believers, was without doubt, **Martin**.

By the process of elimination, one readily sees that **the Second Age**, Rev. 2:8-11 which is called **the Smyrna Age** lasted from 200 to 300 A.D. No man defended the Truth more ably or believed God more firmly and thus manifested the Spirit of God more abundantly than **Irenaeus**. He was well qualified to be **the Messenger** to that Age.

This finally brings us to the Age that we have reserved for the last because it is, indeed, **the last**. This Age also brings us a Messenger, as set forth in the Scripture. That we are now in **the Laodicea Age** is indisputable. **It is at the end of this Age that Israel must become a nation and no longer be trodden down of the Gentiles.**

Today, Israel is a nation. She has her own government and all that pertains to being a full-fledged nation. The **"Times of the Gentiles"** is all but over. Thus the **"Fullness of the Gentiles"** is all but over. God's timepiece (Israel) has struck the Gentile midnight hour, when the Bridegroom cometh. This is the Laodicea Age and according to the Word of god, **this Age** has both **a Messenger and a Message** before it expires.