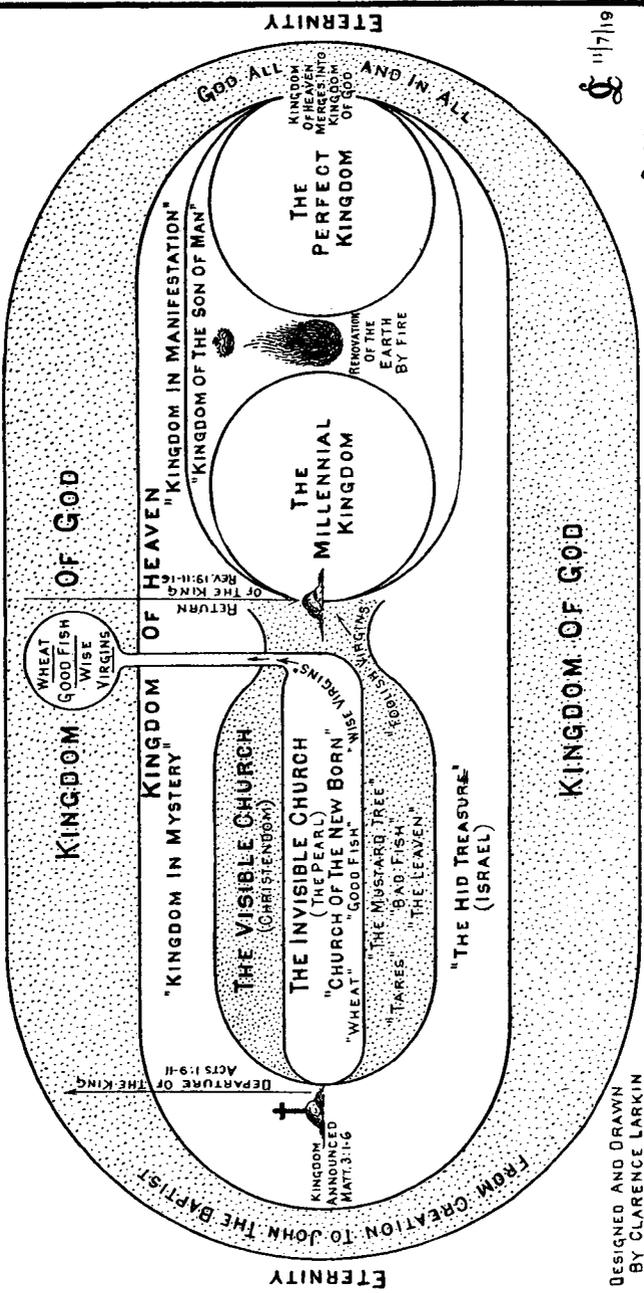


The Church Versus The Kingdom

The "Church" and the "Kingdom" are not identical. They are never confounded in the Scriptures. The Church is compared to a "House" (I Tim. 3:15), to a "Temple" (I Cor. 3:16-17), to a "Body" (I Cor. 12:12-31), but never to a "Kingdom." Christ is the "HEAD" of the Church (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18), but He is never spoken of as its "KING." His relation to the Church is that of "LORD" (Master). I Tim. 6:13-14. The saints are not His "subjects" or His "servants," they are fellow "HEIRS." Rom. 8:17. The Church is not to be ruled over by Christ, but to rule with Him. The Church is here, the Kingdom is TO COME. The Church is being "built up," a gradual process, the Kingdom is to be "SET UP," a sudden event. The Church is an invisible and Heavenly "SPIRITUAL ORGANISM," entered by the "New Birth," and is to be "caught out," while the Kingdom is an outward, visible, and earthly "POLITICAL ORGANIZATION" that is to be "set up" on the EARTH, of which the Jewish Nation will be the "Head" (Deu. 28:11-13), and will have a King, a Throne, and a Capital City—Jerusalem. The Kingdom is characterized by a "Throne," the Church by a "Table." Thus we see that the Church and the Kingdom have different "spheres" of work, and different "time periods" in which to do that work. Therefore what God has separated let no man join together.

There is much confusion as to the difference between the "Kingdom of God," the "Kingdom of Heaven," and the "Church." No amount of sophistical argument can make them synonymous. The "KINGDOM OF GOD" is the all inclusive Kingdom, or rule of the Triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) over the whole Universe, especially over all moral intelligences, angelic or human, and includes "Time" and "Eternity," "Heaven" and "Hell." It is SPIRITUAL, and "cometh not with observation" (outward show). Luke 17:20-21. It is entered by the "New Birth" (John 3:5), and is not "meat" and "drink," but "Righteousness" and "Peace," and "Joy" in the HOLY GHOST. Rom. 14:17. See Chart page 48. The "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" is a New Testament term, and is found in Matthew's Gospel only, where it is mentioned 27 times. It is the earthly sphere of the "Kingdom of God," and is outward and visible. Its character is described in the 12 "Kingdom of Heaven Parables" given in Matt. 13:1-50; 18:23-35; 20:1-16; 22:1-14; 25:1-30. From these Parables we see that the "Kingdom of Heaven" is limited as to its "Time" and "Sphere." Its "Time" is from the First to the Second Coming of Christ, and its "Sphere" is over that part of the world that we call Christendom. In it there is a mixture of "Good" and "Evil," of "Wheat" and "Tares," of "Wise Virgins" and "Foolish Virgins," of "Good Fish" and "Bad Fish." Entrance into it may be obtained by a righteousness that barely exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. Dropping the Kingdom, let us now look at the Church.

"KINGDOM OF GOD" - "KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" - "THE CHURCH"



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ETERNITY

ETERNITY

I. WHAT THE CHURCH IS

1. The Church is a **MYSTERY**.

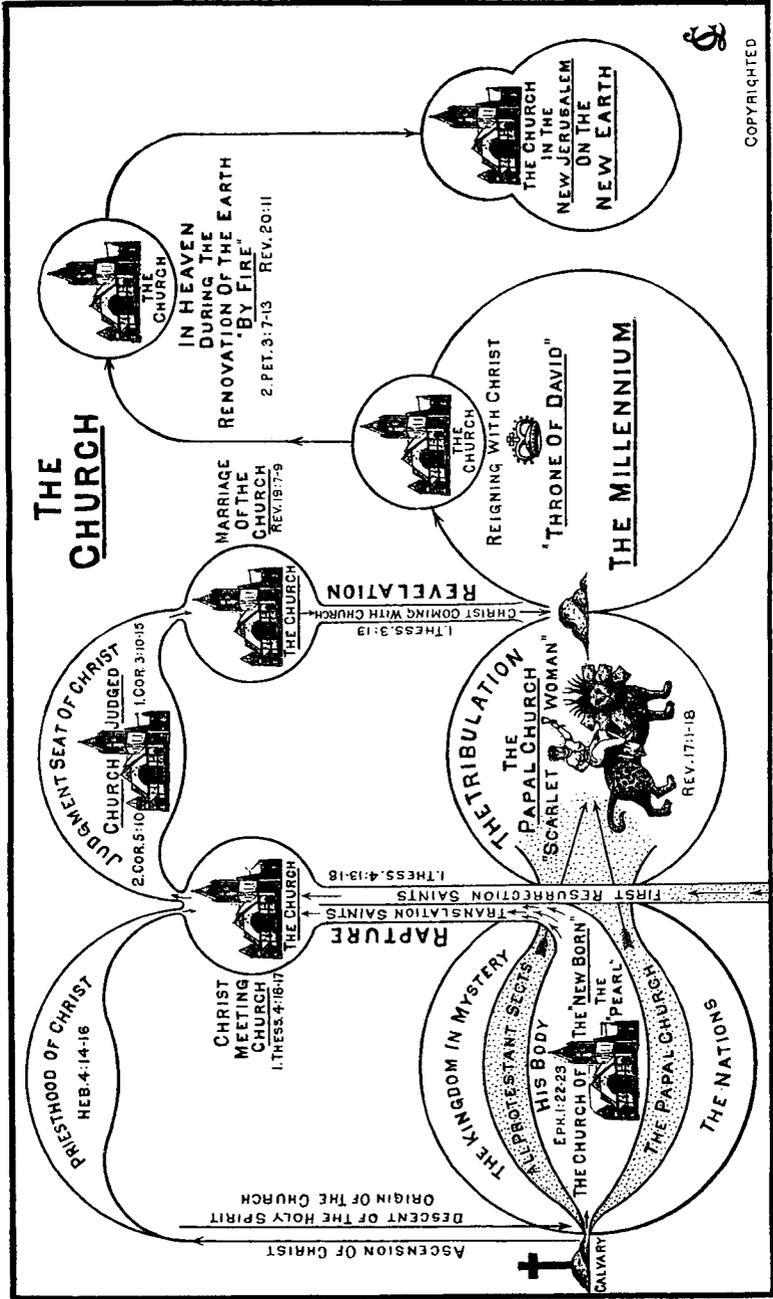
To the Old Testament Prophets the Kingdom was no "Mystery," neither was the fact that the Gentiles were to be saved. Rom. 9:25-26 (Hosea 2:23). The "Mystery" was what was to come in between the "**SUFFERINGS**" (Isa. 53:1-12) and the "**GLORY**" of Christ (Psa. 72:1-20. Dan. 7:13-14), that is, between the "**CROSS**" and the "**CROWN**." I Pet. 1:7-11. This "Mystery" was revealed to the Apostle Paul. Eph. 3:1-11. It was that God was going to form an entirely "**NEW THING**," composed of both **Jew** and **Gentile**, to be called the Church. The purpose then of this Dispensation is not the bringing in of the "Kingdom," or the conversion of the world, but the "out gathering" of an "**Elect Body**."—**THE CHURCH**. Acts 15:14-18.

2. The Church is a **BODY**.

The Church is not only an "Elect Body," it is the "**BODY OF CHRIST**." Eph. 1:22-23. As its "**HEAD**," there could be no Church until Christ had been raised from the dead and seated at the Right Hand of God, for God does not make **headless bodies**. In I Cor. 12:12-13 we are told how this "Body" is formed. It is formed by "**Spirit Baptism**." The Church then could not have existed until the "**Gift**" of the Holy Spirit on the "Day of Pentecost." Therefore the Church is composed only of those who are baptized into it by the Holy Spirit, that is by the "New Birth," and when the Holy Spirit ceases His work of "Baptism" the formation of the Church as Christ's "**BODY**" will cease, and the Church will be complete, and be taken out of the world. The Church then is not an "**Organization**," but an "**ORGANISM**"—a **LIVING BODY**.

3. The Church is a **BUILDING**.

In I Cor. 3:9 the Church is spoken of as "**God's BUILDING**," and in verse 16 as the "**TEMPLE OF GOD**." In Eph. 2:20-22, as a building in process of construction, it is spoken of as being "**fitly framed together**" and **growing into a "HOLY TEMPLE"** for the "**HABITATION OF GOD**" in the Person of the **HOLY SPIRIT**. As God's Presence was manifested in the Tabernacle by the "**Shekinah Glory**," so now in this Dispensation, when Israel, nationally, is out of fellowship with God, and there is no Temple at Jerusalem, the Church is the "**Habitation of God**" on earth, where He manifests Himself through the "Third Person" of the Godhead—the **HOLY SPIRIT**. Matt. 18:20; 28:20. The "Spiritual Temple" of the Church could not be erected until Christ became the "**ROCK**." Matt. 16:18. I Cor. 3:9-11. Then upon Christ the "Rock," the "Foundation of the Apostles and New Testament Prophets" was laid (Eph. 2:20-22), and the first layer of the superstructure of 3000 "Living Stones" (I Pet. 2:5) was laid on the "Day of Pentecost" (Acts 2:41), and a few days later the second layer of 5000 was added (Acts 4:4), and so on, down the centuries, the Church has been growing as a "**HOLY TEMPLE**."



4. The Church is to be the **BRIDE OF CHRIST.**

At present the Church is a "**VIRGIN**," but a Virgin espoused. II Cor. 11:2. The first Adam had his bride and so must the "Last Adam." Some hold that the Church cannot be both the "**Body**" and "**Bride**" of Christ, and that the "Bride" must be Israel. But we must not forget that there are "**Two Brides**" mentioned in the Scriptures, one in the Old Testament and the other in the New. The one in the Old Testament is "Israel," the Bride of Jehovah, the one in the New Testament is the "Church," the Bride of Christ. Because of her whoredoms Israel is at the present time a "**cast off WIFE.**" When she ceases from her adulteries she will be taken back. Jer. 3:1-18; Ezek. 16:1-63; Hosea 2:1-23, 3:1-5. She will not be taken back as a "Virgin," but as a "**Wife.**" But it is a "**VIRGIN**" that the Lamb (Christ) is to marry. So the "Wife" of the Old Testament cannot be the "Bride" (Virgin) of the New Testament. Again, the "Wife" (Israel) is to reside in the earthly Jerusalem during the Millennium, while the "Bride" (the Church) will reside in the New Jerusalem. These distinctions make it clear that Israel cannot be the "Bride" of Christ. Where the word "Wife" is used in Rev. 19:7-9; 21:9-10, it signifies the relation of the Bride to Christ **after** marriage, when she is no longer "Bride" but "Wife." As to the Church being both the "Body" and "Bride" of Christ, we have the type of Eve, who was **of the body of Adam** before she became his bride.

II. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

As we have seen, the Church is not an "Organization," but an "**Organism.**" Therefore it is not a "**Social Club**" organized and supported for the benefit of its members. Neither is it a "**Place of Amusement**" to pander to the carnal nature of man. Nor is it a "**House of Merchandise**" for the sale of "Indulgences," or other commodities, whereby the money of the ungodly can be secured to save the penurious church member a little self sacrifice. Neither is it a "**Reform Bureau**" to save the "**bodies**" of men. The reformation of men is very commendable, as are all forms of "Social Service," but that is not the work of the Church. All the great philanthropic and civilizing agencies of the world are "**By-Products**" of Christianity, but the "Mission" of the Church is her "**COMMISSION**" to "**Evangelize**" the world. Mark 16:15-16. Acts 1:7-8. The "**Kingdom Idea**" has robbed the Church of her "**UPWARD LOOK,**" and of the "**BLESSED HOPE.**" There cannot be any "**Imminent Coming**" to those who are seeking to "**Set up the Kingdom.**" The "Kingdom Idea" has robbed the Church of the "Pilgrim" and "Martyr Spirit," and caused it to go down into Egypt for help. When the Church enters into an "**Alliance with the World,**" and seeks the help of Parliaments, Congresses, Legislatures, Federations and Reform Societies, largely made up of ungodly men and women, she loses her "**SPIRITUAL POWER**" and becomes helpless as a redeeming force. The end of such an "Alliance" will be a "Religious Political Regime" that will pave the way for the revelation of Satan's great "**Religious Political Leader**" and "**Superman**"—the **ANTICHRIST.**

III. THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

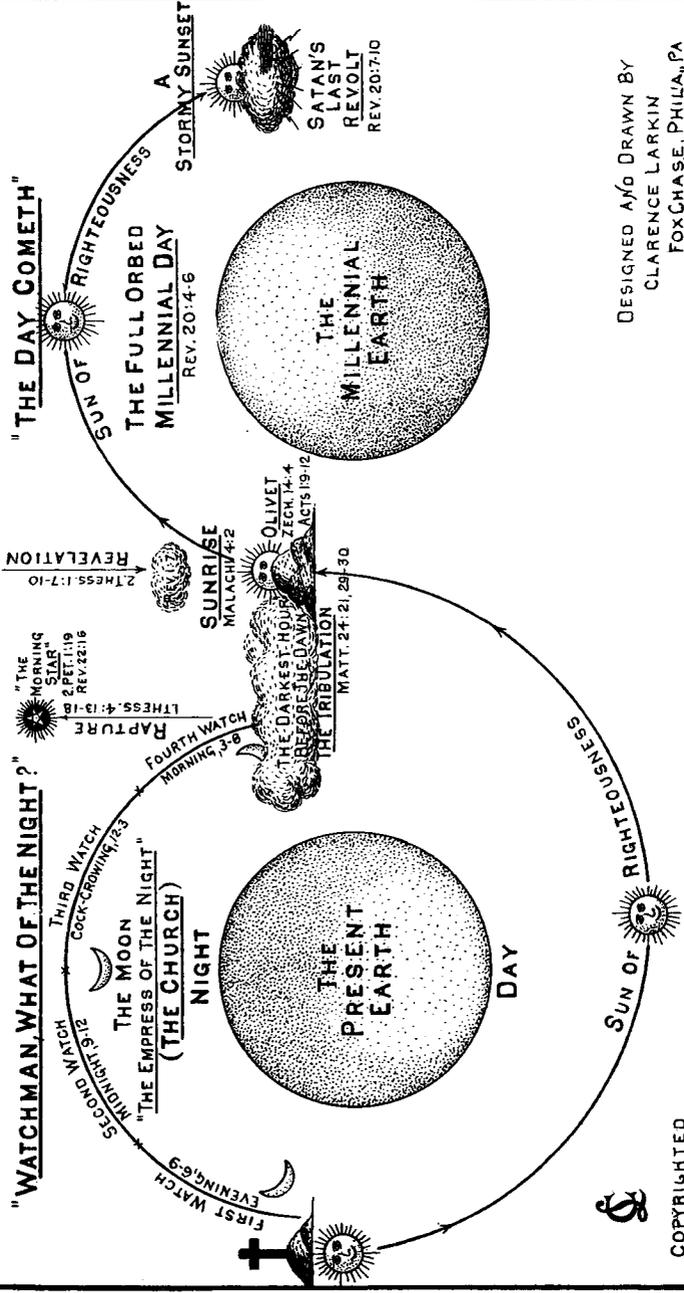
It is the Divine way to give, at the beginning of some new thing which God is going to do in the earth, a "Prophetic Foreview" of its history. The "Prophetic Foreview" of Israel's history is given in Deuteronomy, chapters 27 to 30, and of the Gentiles in Daniel, chapters 2 and 7. Both of these down to date have been literally fulfilled. It follows therefore that we should find somewhere in the Scriptures a "Prophetic Foreview" of the History of the Christian Church. This History we find in the Book of Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, in the "Messages to the Seven Churches of Asia." These were typical churches and are descriptive of "**Seven Church Periods.**" The Prophetic meaning of these "Messages" was hidden to the early Church because time was required for Church History to develop and be written so a comparison could be made to reveal the correspondence. For a full description of this correspondence see the author's work on the Book of Revelation. An outline is shown on the accompanying Chart. We are now living in the "Laodicean" or "Last Stage" of the Church's History in this Dispensation, which reveals the fact that the next "Event" is the "Return of the Lord," who will "**SPUE**" the "**Lukewarm**" Church out of His mouth. Rev. 3: 14-16.

IV. THE PRESENT LOCATION OF THE CHURCH IN THE SPIRITUAL HEAVENS

What is true of the "Physical Heavens" is true of the "Spiritual Heavens." In the last book of the Old Testament Jesus is called the "**Sun of Righteousness.**" Mal. 4:2. When He was on the earth He declared Himself to be the "**LIGHT OF THE WORLD**" (John 9: 5), but that "**LIGHT**" was eclipsed by Calvary. From this we see that earth's "Spiritual Day" or "Night" is dependent on whether Jesus as the "Sun of Righteousness" is visible or invisible, and is determined by His presence or absence. See the Chart, "Night and Day." Page 54. As Jesus is not now visibly present on the earth the period in which we are living is **NIGHT**, and we should expect only such illumination as the night can furnish, which in the physical heavens is the Moon and Stars, and on the earth artificial light. This is "**MAN'S DAY**" (I Cor. 4: 3 margin), a day of intellectual light, and as we have improved our artificial lights, and now use electricity where once we used candles, so men are boasting of the improvements they have made in intellectual lights, such as scientific discoveries and the various new religious cults, and have replaced "Divine Revelation" by the "Light of Reason," and reject the illumination of the Holy Spirit for the "**ignis fatuus**" of "**SEDUCING SPIRITS.**" I Tim. 4: 1. II Pet. 2: 1-2.

If this is the "**Night**" of this Dispensation what luminary in the "Spiritual Firmament" are we to look to for light? What luminary gives light in the physical heavens at night? The Moon. Then we must look to the "**MOON**" of the "Spiritual Firmament" for light, and that is the Church. The Moon shines by reflected light from the Sun, so the Church shines by reflected light from the "Sun of Right-

NIGHT AND DAY



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eousness." The Moon is only visible in the night, so the Church is only visible in the night of this Dispensation. When the "Sun of Righteousness" arises, and the "Day of the Lord," or "**Millennial Day**," dawns, the Church will become invisible, not because she will cease to exist, but because her light will pale before the greater light of the "Sun of Righteousness."

What time is it then on the Dial of God's Timepiece? It is **NIGHT**. But what time of the Night? Let the Apostle Paul answer. "The night is **far spent**, the day **IS AT HAND**." Rom. 13: 12. Jesus divided the night into "**Four Watches**."

"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the 'Master of the House' cometh, at **EVEN**, or at **MIDNIGHT**, or at the **COCK-CROWING**, or in the **MORNING**." Mark 13: 35.

The "Four Watches" are—

FIRST WATCH:—"Evening." From 6-9 P. M. Corresponding to "Apostolic Times."

SECOND WATCH:—"Midnight." From 9-12 P. M. Corresponding to the "Dark Ages."

THIRD WATCH:—"Cock-crowing." From 12-3 A. M. Corresponding to the "Period of the Reformation."

FOURTH WATCH:—"Morning." From 3-6 A. M. We are living in the "**MORNING WATCH**."

How beautifully this is pictured prophetically in the experience of the Disciples on that night on the Sea of Galilee when the winds were **contrary**. Matt. 14: 22-33. After the miracle of feeding the 5000 Jesus constrained His Disciples to embark in their boat for the Galilean side of the Lake while He sent the multitude away, and then went into a mountain apart to pray. When the Disciples were halfway across the Sea they were caught in one of those sudden and severe storms that sweep over the Sea of Galilee, and, because the winds were "**contrary**," they "**toiled in rowing**," and could make no progress. Then it was that Jesus came to their rescue walking on the sea, that became a liquid floor, smooth and level, beneath His Holy Feet. The Disciples did not dare to turn back, for that would have been to fail in duty, but Jesus saw their faithfulness and was on His way to their rescue. They did not know it, but Jesus was **COMING**, and we are told the time, that it was the "**FOURTH WATCH**" of the night—the "**MORNING WATCH**."

That tempest tossed boat on the Sea of Galilee is a type of the Christian Church breasting the waves of sin and worldliness and false doctrine of this Dispensation. It is long past midnight, and it seems as if all the available forces of evil are associating themselves together, to, by one cyclonic effort, swamp the frail bark of the Church, and cause it to be engulfed in the waves of sin and unbelief. Over against it blow the "**CONTRARY WINDS**" of **Atheism, Scepticism, Infidelity, Ritualism, Formalism, Unitarianism, Rationalism, Spiritualism** and the "**False Cults**." To many it is a dark hour. **Sabbath Desecra-**

tion, Lukewarmness, Indifference, and Worldliness are sapping the strength of the toilers in the boat. The clouds thicken and blacken, and the sky becomes more overcast as the "Falling Away" advances. II Thess. 2:3. Many are pessimistic. But amid the deepening gloom we must not forget that the "darkest hour" of the night is just before the dawn. Jesus has not forgotten His Disciples. He sees them "toiling in rowing." Soon He will leave the "Place of Intercession" and come to their rescue. Soon above the clouds that are now beginning to hide the "Empress of the Night"—the Church, as she sinks toward the horizon, will be seen—

"THE MORNING STAR."

The "Morning Star" is the herald of the coming day. It is seen only by the "Watchers" or the early risers. In the "Spiritual Heavens" Christ is also the "BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR." Rev. 22:16. II Pet. 1:19. He is the "Morning Star" when He comes and takes out His Church at the "Rapture," He is the "Sun of Righteousness" when He comes back with His Church at the "Revelation" to reign on the earth. The appearance of the "Morning Star" only intensifies the darkness of the night. So between the appearing of Christ as the "Morning Star," and His coming as the "Sun of Righteousness," there will be a period of great darkness, known as "The Great Tribulation." Matt. 24:21, 29-31. We are living in the "Fourth Watch," soon the "Morning Star" will appear, and the Church will be "Caught Out." Then will follow the "Great Tribulation," and after it will come the "SUNRISE" of that bright "Millennial Day," when Christ, as the "SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS," shall shine in full orb'd splendor in the "Spiritual Heavens" of a "DAY" that is to be 1000 years long.



The Drag Net. Matt. 13:47-50.