

## ...WITH A ROD OF IRON

GOD'S THREE FIRSTBORN SONS, TO EXERCISE REGALTY

By Arlen L. Chirwood

"Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion...

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen [the Gentiles] for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps. 2:6, 8, 9).

"...he shall smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. 19:15b).

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father" (Rev. 2:26, 27).

"And there appeared a great wonder [sign] in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered...

And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne" (Rev. 12:1, 2, 5).

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God presently has *two firstborn Sons* (*Christ and Israel* [Ex. 4:22, 23; Heb. 1:5, 6]), and He will one day have a *third firstborn son* (*the Church, following the adoption* [Rom. 8:14-19, 29; Heb. 12:23]).

"Sonship," as seen in Scripture, implies first and foremost *rulership*. Scripture, essentially, is a *regal book*. Scripture, throughout, has to do with *salvation*; but *salvation is for a revealed purpose, which has to do with regality*.

The earth upon which man resides is a *province in the kingdom of God*. The earth is a *province among other provinces*, evidently multiplied billions of other provinces in multiplied billions of galaxies forming the physical universe, which is *the kingdom of God seen in its complete scope*.

And these provinces are governed and ruled by Divinely appointed angels who rule under fixed laws, allowing their actions to be viewed as God's actions.

This is the manner in which God, in a very personal manner — *i.e., God Himself, personally* — rules the universe which He, in time past, brought into existence. And these angelic rulers, relative to this rule, are referred to as "the sons of God" (referenced in this manner because of *creation* — each angel forming a separate and individual creation [Job 1:6; 2:1; 28:7; Ezek. 28:13, 14]).

*Sons alone* occupy regal positions in God's kingdom — past, present, and/or future.

*Angels alone* are seen holding these regal positions over provinces during past and present time. But, this is about to change, *first relative to this earth, then relative to the universe at large*.

Man is about to take the earth's sceptre, ruling the earth instead of angels (Satan and his angels) for 1,000 years.

Then, beyond this time, Man is seen moving out into the physical universe, out into our galaxy and undoubtedly the numerous other galaxies, occupying regal positions out in the universe itself.

However, when the matter is projected out into the future, something beyond just the thought of "sonship" is seen. When Man is brought into the picture, not just "sons" are in view (as seen in the present angelic world) but "firstborn Sons" come into view.

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That is to say, *all of God's rulers in the angelic world*, at any point in time, at any place in the universe (including Satan and his angels presently ruling the earth), are referred to as "*sons of God*," *ruling under God* (Satan and his angels in a rebel capacity).

But, when Man is brought into the picture in this regal respect, *only firstborn Sons* are seen, for *only firstborn Sons can rule in the human realm in the kingdom* (as seen with Israel in the O.T. theocracy).

In the preceding respect, *firstborn Sons* are about to replace the present order of sons ruling over this earth.

And beyond that, when the universe is in view, *firstborn Sons* will rule in the realm beyond this earth, evidently among the present sons of God already ruling throughout the universe and possibly under God over these sons of God.

(Scripture provides very little information regarding *regality beyond the Millennium*, only enough so that man can see where God is apparently going to take matters during the eternal ages which follow.

Scripture deals centrally with events during 7,000 years of time [Gen. 1:1-2:3], *NOT* with the ages beyond.)

### Firstborn Sons in the Millennial Kingdom

There will be a triad of Rulers, a triad of firstborn Sons, during the Messianic Era.

1) *God's firstborn son, the Church*, will rule from the heavens (Gen. 22:17, 18; Eph. 1:3-14; 3:9-11; 6:10-18).

2) *God's firstborn son, Israel*, will rule on the earth (Gen. 22:17, 18; Ezek. 37:21-28).

3) *And God's firstborn Son, Jesus*, will rule both in the midst of his people Israel here on earth (*seated on David's throne* [II Sam. 7:4-17; Joel 2:27; Luke 1:31-33]) and with His bride in the heavens (*seated on His Own throne* [Gen. 24:2ff; Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21]).

And the rule from each of these firstborn Sons will be after exactly *the same authoritarian fashion*—

*ruling with a rod of iron.* And not only is this stated in so many words in Scripture concerning each of these three Sons, but it would be untenable to think of one Son not exercising the same authoritarian power as the other Sons, though the exact function of each of the three Sons will be different.

A *converted Israeli nation*, under a new covenant — the cleansed and restored wife of Jehovah — will dwell in a healed land, the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And in this land, with the nation's Messiah in their midst, they will not only rule all of the Gentile nations but these same nations will be blessed through the nation ruling over them.

The Church, seen in that day as *the bride of Christ*, will also dwell in a healed land. The bride will dwell in *that heavenly land presently occupied by Satan and his angels*. And this land will evidently have to be *cleansed/restored*, exactly as the land of Israel on earth, which is seemingly what Job 15:15; 25:5 alludes to.

Then, as Israel rules the nations after one fashion *on earth*, the Church will rule the nations after another fashion *from the heavens*.

And Christ in that day will exercise a dual reign — *seated on David's throne in the midst of His people on earth, and seated on His Own throne with His bride in the heavens*.

Thus, the entire rule will be *authoritarian* — *a rule with a rod of iron*. This is stated concerning Christ in Rev. 19:15; this is stated concerning Christ's bride in Rev. 2:26, 27; and this is stated concerning Israel in Rev. 12:1, 5.

(Little needs to be said about the first two in the preceding paragraph [Christ and His bride, ruling in this manner from the heavens], but, because of the prevalence of all the false teaching throughout Christendom concerning the man-child in Rev. 12:5, time needs to be spent on this facet of the matter.

Revelation 12:5 has to do with the regal-clad woman [Israel] in verse one bringing forth "a man child, who was [*lit.*, 'who is about to'] rule all nations with a rod of iron." The entire scene is a metaphorical depiction having to do with *Israel during the Tribulation, in relation to regality and the earth*.

The regal-clad woman in verse one is presented as an individual [metaphorically depicting Israel] in possession of kingly authority but not yet reigning [seen by the use of *stephanos* rather than *diadema* (as in v. 3)], two different words used for "crown" in the Greek text], which is completely in line with Israel's position dating back 3,500 years to the days of Moses in Ex. 4:22, 23.

And after 3,500 years [including some 2,600 years during which the Gentiles have held the sceptre], *Daniel's full Seventy Weeks are about to be fulfilled, with Israel then seen occupying the regal position which the nation has held throughout all these centuries of time*.

[The woman in Rev. 12:1 is "clothed with the sun," depicting *supreme regal authority*, with "the moon under her feet" (cf. Ps. 110:1; Isa. 2:2-4), which would depict *lesser regal authority and could only refer to the Gentile nations*.

The picture is that of *Israel about to hold what is rightfully hers — the sceptre — and rule the nations*].

This is how Revelation chapter twelve opens, announcing who is at hand and what is about to occur. *And this woman brings forth "a man child," contextually, immediately before the middle of the Tribulation*.

The woman gives birth following Satan and his angels being cast out of their place in the heavens [which has yet to occur and is seen occurring near, but before, the middle of the Tribulation] and immediately before the woman flees into the wilderness [which occurs in the middle of the Tribulation].

The man-child is clearly identified, both textually and contextually [*ref.* the author's book, "The Time of the End," Chs. XXI, XXVI]. But, regardless of this clear identification, the man-child is often misidentified by Bible students as either a select group of Christians being raptured yet future or as Christ being born 2,000 years before the events in this chapter occur [the position held by most, mainly on the basis of the man-child about to rule all nations with a rod of iron].

But, to hold either of the preceding views of the matter only serves to destroy that which the text is actually dealing with. Such will only serve to close this part of the Book of Revelation to one's understanding, which closes the part relating how Israel will rule during the Messianic Era — "with a rod of iron."

The man-child has to do with a *first fruit of the nation* — *144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each of twelve tribes, who will carry the gospel of the kingdom to Gentiles worldwide during the last half of the Tribulation* — [Rev. 7:1ff; 12:17; 14:1-7]. And this first fruit of the nation depicts *the position and activities of the entire nation during the Messianic Era*, carrying the message of the one true and living God to all of the Gentile nations and, at the same time, ruling these nations "with a rod of iron."

Israel's Messiah, in that day, will rule in the midst of the Jewish people, *allowing for both of God's firstborn Sons, Christ and Israel, to rule the Gentile nations after the same fashion* — "with a rod of iron" [*as His rule with His bride in the heavens allows the same*].)

## Thus, the Resulting change in the Government

In that coming day, the present unrest in the Middle East and the world at large will not exist.

The political sphere will be totally void of any type corruption. *Perfect justice and righteousness* will, instead, exist throughout the earth's government.

There will no longer be an LGBT segment of society, for there will be no homosexuals, lesbians, same-sex marriages, or individuals seemingly questioning their own sexual identity.

There will be no more crime, drugs, or need for the type law enforcement that we have today.

And the preceding is to name only some of the central things presently plaguing our society which will no longer exist.

*Everything is about to change. The world as we know it is about to end, with a new world dawning. And this new world will see God's firstborn Sons taking the sceptre and ruling the nations in perfect justice and righteousness.*

In that day:

"...kings shall shut their mouths at Him [at the presence of Israel's Messiah]: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider" (Isa. 52:15b).

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