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READINGS ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION.\*

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PART II.

The Gospel of the second Advent is contained in Revelation, chapters iv. to xix., both included. The four parallel narratives are—

1. Rev. iv. to xi. 2. Rev. xii., xiii., xiv. 3. Rev. xv., xvi. 4. Rev. xvii.—xix.

If these parallels are taken out and pasted side by side in a book, it will be found best to keep the first three chapters of the first parallel, at least to vi. 9, by themselves.

The first parallel is much the longest of the four; and extends over the whole period from OUR LORD'S ASCENSION TO THE BEGINNING OF HIS MILLENNIAL KINGDOM. But I would not recommend any one to attempt putting the parallel narratives into a book side by side, until they have carefully studied the two first, so as to see exactly where the great Week of Revelation *begins*; and, if possible, where it divides also. Both these points are beset with difficulty, and require considerable attention.

Briefly, we may say that the *first* parallel contains the account of our Lord's kingdom in its progress throughout the opening of the seven seals and the sounding of the seven trumpets, to the last trumpet, which proclaims Him King.

The *second* records the opposition of Satan, and the attempt at a rival kingdom, which culminates in the empire of the Beast, and the worship of Satan, till Christ comes to earth.

The *third* records the outpouring of the seven vials of God's wrath, by which the kingdom is wasted and destroyed.

The *fourth* connects the empire of the Beast with the list of the world-empires given in Daniel; shews their complete number, eight; and specially describes the downfall of the last of them, and of the great Babylon, its harlot Queen.

Each of these four portions carries its point of greatest fulness, and interest, somewhat further forward than the one before. There are many points of resemblance to the four Gospels, but these must be reserved for another time.