

Revelation

INTRODUCTION

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand.” (Rev. 1:3) “Behold, I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” (Rev. 22:7)

The author of the book of the Revelation is Jesus Christ (Rev. 22:16). The Lord intended that this book should be read and studied especially by his people (Rev. 1:3). It is not a sealed book, as many suppose, but one which is open and able to be understood (Rev. 22:10). The title of the book itself proves that Revelation is not a dark book and impossible of understanding. Revelation is the translation of the Greek word “apokalypsis,” meaning “unveiling.” God also promises a special blessing to those who will read and study it (Rev. 1:3); however Satan would like to rob people of this unusual and great blessing.

This book also is a prophecy of things to come. Man, searching through fortune-tellers, ouija boards and charlatans of all kinds, has always longed to look into the future. However the Bible is the only book that tells the future without fail. Prophecies of the future are found throughout all the scriptures, but this book is actually called prophetic, for it deals with the events in God’s program beginning with the time when John recorded it nearly 2000 years ago on the isle of Patmos, where he was banished as a prisoner for his faith by the Roman Emperor.

Christ is the subject of the book, the center and the consummation. He is preeminent throughout, and it ends with the final revelation of Jesus Christ at the end of the Tribulation period and the setting up of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ is divided into three well-defined parts given by the Holy Spirit (Rev. 1:19): “Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.” Past, present and future.

“The things which thou hast seen,” are chapter 1, the vision of the glorious Christ.

Chapters 2 and 3 are “the things which are,” covering the present Church Age, ending in apostasy, war and destruction, and possibly the coming of Christ for His Church.

The third part, “the things which shall be hereafter” (after this present age), covers the remainder of the book.

Revelation 1:1-8

This book gives a view of the Lord Jesus Christ as He is now in the heavenly world and on the throne. In the other books of the Bible, except the epistles, we see Him either coming or already present in the world; but here we behold Him in His glory as our Prophet, Priest and King, administering the government of the age, representing His people at God's right hand and preparing for His coming. Would we see Jesus as God's enthroned Lamb? Would we see Him in His almightiness and gentleness? Would we see Him as our Great High Priest presenting the incense of our prayers before the Father? Would we see Him in His victorious power silencing our accusers and pleading our cause? Would we see Him making all His enemies His footstool and coming in His glory soon to reign? Let us read this prophecy and hear the words that are written in it, and in its sublime visions behold the Lamb of God, to whom it is specially dedicated in the opening paragraph, "To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen" (Revelation 1:5-6).

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

The Revelation or unveiling of Jesus Christ, His person and His purpose is addressed to the seven churches (v. 4), and is the final message of God to man. **From what is said here and using the scriptures about Jesus, please tell what we can gather about (a) His position, (b) His life and (c) His authority.**

Isa. 41:4 Isa. 44:6 Isa. 48:12 John 3:16 John 3:35, 36 John 4:14, 24-26 John 5:21-27 John 6:18, 35, 36, 40, 54 Acts 5:31 Heb. 1:2 Rev. 3:7 Rev. 5:9 Rev. 7:17 Rev. 19:16 Rev. 22:5

Who are the "seven spirits who are before His throne?" (v.4)

Isa. 11:2,3 Rev. 3:1 Rev. 4:5 Rev. 5:6

Is the term "first begotten of the dead" (v.5) synonymous with "firstborn of every creature" in Col. 1:15? Explain what these statements mean.

John 18:37 Acts 26:23 Rom. 8:29 1Cor. 15:20, 21 Phil. 3:10, 11 Heb. 1:6 Rev. 3:14 Rev. 20:5, 6 Rev. 20:12, 13

Jesus "hath made us a kingdom of priests unto God and His Father" (v. 6). **Are we priests now, or will it be when Jesus reigns supreme? What are or what will be our duties and privileges?**

1 Pet. 2:5, 9 Rev. 20:6 Heb. 10:19-22 Heb. 13:15 Rom. 12:1

What does Rev. 1:5-8 say about the deity of Jesus Christ?

Isa.9:6 John 1:14, 18 John 20:28 Rom. 9:5

Revelation 1:9-10

The exile of John to the Isle of Patmos is in itself a moving story of devotion to Christ crowned with suffering. This small island, rocky and forbidding in its terrain, about ten miles long and six miles wide, is located in the Aegean Sea, southwest of Ephesus, just beyond the Island of Samos. Early church fathers such as Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Eusebius state that John was sent to this island as an exile under the ruler Domitian. According to Victorinus, John, though aged, was forced to labor in the mines located at Patmos. Early sources also indicate that about A.D. 96, at Domitian's death, John was allowed to return to Ephesus when the Emperor Nerva was in power.

It was in these bleak circumstances, shut off from friends and human fellowship, that John was given the most extensive revelation of future things shown to any writer of the New Testament. Though men could circumscribe his human activities, they could not bind the Spirit of God nor the testimony of Jesus Christ. John's experiences paralleled those of the Old Testament prophets. Moses wrote the Pentateuch in the wilderness. David wrote many psalms while being pursued by Saul. Isaiah lived in difficult days and died a martyr's death. Ezekiel wrote in exile. Jeremiah's life was of trial and persecution. Peter wrote his two letters shortly before martyrdom. Thus in the will of God the final written revelation was given to John while suffering for Christ and the gospel.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

Elaborate on John's statement in Rev. 1:9a; "I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ".

Revelation 1:11-20

We behold our blessed Redeemer all through this apocalyptic vision in the glory of the Son of God. "His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance" (Revelation 1:16). "His voice was like the sound of rushing waters" (1:15). From His face the earth and heaven flee away. He sits upon the judgment throne and the kings of the earth call upon the rocks and the mountains to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. He is in the midst of the throne of deity and all the universe worships Him jointly with the Father ascribing "to him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power" (5:13). He is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the divine and eternal Word of God.

But nonetheless do we see Him as the Son of man. It is the same Jesus who lived and loved, suffered and died on earth. He uses the same old phrase in speaking to John the beloved that He used once on the Sea of Galilee to calm the disciples' fears. When John fell at His feet as dead He gently lifted him by the hand and said in the old sweet phrase, "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive" (1:17-18). Amid all the glories of heaven, could you look through the open door which John saw, you would behold a Man in the midst of the throne and in control of all the governments of the universe and all the destinies of men.

Oh, how heart-searching His flaming eye and His consuming Word! He is walking among the churches. He is sitting in every audience and listening to the preacher, and He is passing through every prayer meeting and feeling its pulse; He is present at every business council and general assembly and judging of the faithfulness or worldliness of His people. He will accept but gold tried in the fire, and when His people meet Him their works shall be tried with fire, and only that which is divine and God-touched can pass the solemn scrutiny of the judgment seat of Christ. Let us deeply realize the solemn significance of Christ's presence and sovereignty over His Church and His own people.

He reveals Himself as the One who walks amid the seven golden lampstands which are the seven churches. He claims the supreme authority and control over His Church. Very searching is the light of His omniscience and omnipresence; very high is the standard of holiness, faithfulness and watchfulness which He claims from her; very solemn are the warnings and rebukes which He addresses to the unfaithful, the lukewarm and the lifeless. "I know your deeds" (3:15), He is saying over and over again. He is quick to perceive the declension of the life of Ephesus and to warn her of her impending judgment. His searching glance instantly detects the depths of Satan in Thyatira. He cannot be deceived by Laodicea's riches and pretensions. He knows that her heart is lukewarm and He is ready to spew her out of His mouth because she is neither cold nor hot. He is as quick to appreciate the faithfulness of Smyrna and Philadelphia and the "few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes" (3:4).

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

Explain the meaning of the following:

Seven golden candlesticks

Zech. 4:2, 11 Rev. 1:12, 13, 20 Rev. 2:1, 5

Garment, (showing dignity and honor)

Ex. 28:2 Mark. 9:3

His head and His hair were white like wool (He is the ancient of days)

Dan. 7:9-13

Eyes were like a flame of fire (intelligence, bringing hidden things to light)

Ps. 32:8 Ps. 33:18 Amos 9:8 Hab. 1:13

Feet like fine bronze (bronze altar in the temple was related to sacrifice and judgement)

Ex. 3:5 Rom. 16:20

Voice like a sound of many waters (power and majesty)

Josh. 24:24, 25 John 4:10-15 Isa. 43:1-3 Isa. 55:1

Seven stars

Isa. 40:26

Two-edged sword

Eph. 6:17 Heb. 4:12 Rev. 19:15

His countenance as the sun shineth in his strength

Ps. 148:3 Jer. 31:35

Revelation 2:1-3:22 Overview

There is something very touching and solemn about the personal aspect of the Lord's last messages to the churches. It is very much the same as if your pastor should arise in the pulpit some Sunday morning and say, "I have a letter from the Lord Jesus, which He sent an Angel to deliver to me during the night, addressed particularly to this congregation, and which He has commissioned me to read to you as His personal and final message."

Such a message would produce a profound impression and thrill every hearer with a deep concern and holy earnestness.

Each of these epistles is really a letter from the Lord Jesus to a particular church, and the fact that they were addressed to the seven churches of Asia does not make them the less personal and appropriate for us, for the very fact of the number seven being used shows that it is symbolic and designed to represent every church in the whole body of Christ to the end of the age.

The order in which these churches are named represents an exact geographical line, so that a messenger starting out with seven letters to deliver would naturally begin at Ephesus, then go to Smyrna, and thence in turn to Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and end at Laodicea. They were selected from the great body of the churches at the time, to represent every particular congregation and the whole Church of Jesus Christ throughout the Christian age.

We have already seen that the Apocalypse begins with the vision of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in His ascended glory as our Prophet, Priest and King. It next proceeds to the vision of the churches and then passes on to the providential dealings of God with the world, as Christ cannot deal with the world in judgment till He has first dealt with His Church. He is Head over all things in the realm of nature and providence; but He is the Head of the Church which is His body, and He governs the world with sole reference to His own people. Therefore the vision of the Church must precede the vision of the world.

He searches and inspects His churches with eyes like a flame of fire. He is looking at us through and through, and He is ever saying: "I know your deeds"; for He judges. How heart-thrilling are the words in which He speaks of His discipline toward His unfaithful people. "Repent," He cries to Ephesus, or "I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place" (2:5). "Repent," He cries to Pergamum, or "I will soon come to you and will fight against (you) with the sword of my mouth" (2:16). "Repent," He cries to Thyatira, or "I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of their ways. I will strike her children dead" (2:22-23). "Repent," He cries to Sardis, or "I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you" (3:3). And to Laodicea he cries "Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent" (3:19). "Repent or I will spit you out of my mouth" (see 3:16).

This is no weak and effeminate Christ. This is no sentimental and indulgent Being against whom we can sin with impunity, but this is the stern heart-searching and mighty God who will render unto everyone according to his works.

We must also notice the names and titles under which He reveals Himself to these churches. They correspond exactly with the state of the church. To Ephesus, He is the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand and walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands (2:1). To suffering and martyred Smyrna, He is the One "who died and came to life again" (2:8), and for whom death has no terrors. To compromising Pergamum who needed the separating sword, He is the One that has the sharp sword (2:12). To Thyatira with her subtle deceitfulness, He is the One whose eyes are a flame of fire and whose glance no imposture can deceive (2:18). To dead Sardis, He is the One that has the seven spirits of life (3:1), able to give life even to her. To Philadelphia, He is the One with the key of David (3:7) about to open the door of return to Israel and to establish His kingdom on earth. And to Laodicea, the last of the seven, He is the "Amen," (3:14) God's last word.

But in contrast with this it is blessed to observe that He not only comes to judge, but to reward. How blessed the promises that He gives in these letters to the conquering ones! How rich and heavenly the exquisite symbolism by which our hearts are tempted to turn from earth's delusions and win the crown He brings! "To him who overcomes," He says, "I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God" (2:7). "Be faithful, even to the point of death," He cries to Smyrna, "and I will give you the crown of life" (2:10). Let go the forbidden bread, and the forbidden love of earth and sin, He says to Pergamum, and I will give you "the hidden manna" (2:17) of heaven, and the white stone of the palace of the King, My card, with My own new name of love written on it for you alone to understand. Let go the false and fascinating promise which the devil holds out to Thyatira—false power, false light—and I will give you, at My coming, power over the nations, and the true light of the morning star and the eternal glory. And to the faithful ones in Sardis where all was so corrupt and dead, He offers the white robe and the public acclamation of their names before the Father and the holy angels. To little Philadelphia almost the richest promises of all are held out; namely, that her enemies will be brought to worship at her feet and to know that He has loved her, and that she will be saved from the hour of tribulation which is coming upon the whole earth, that she will receive the crown that He is to bring and will become a pillar in the temple of God with the name of God and Christ and the New Jerusalem upon her brow. But to Laodicea, the most faithless, He offers the most tender and magnificent promises of all. It would seem as if her very unworthiness drew out His tenderest compassion and challenged the most magnificent inducements which He could offer her to turn away from

her folly and her sin. Instead of denouncing, condemning and commanding, He falls upon His knees at her very door, He knocks at her closed gates, He beseeches her to let Him in. He cries with locks wet with the dew of the morning: "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me" (3:20). And then He crowns it all with that grandest of all His promises. Just about to come in all His glory and fear His millennial throne over the great world, He cries: "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne" (3:21). Oh, matchless condescension! Oh, marvelous and glorious grace! How will we escape if we neglect or despise that pleading tenderness, that precious promise?

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

Revelation 2:1-7 Ephesus - church of the first love; Apostolic church.

The church at Ephesus was now in its second generation of Christians, those who had come into the church in the 30 years since Paul had ministered in their midst. Though they continued to labor faithfully as those who had preceded them, the love of God which characterized the first generation was missing. This cooling of heart which had overtaken them in relationship to God was a dangerous forerunner of spiritual apathy which later was to erase all Christian testimony in this important center of Christian influence. Thus it has ever been in the history of the church: first a cooling of spiritual love, then the love of God replaced by a love for the things of the world, with resulting compromise and spiritual corruption. This is followed by departure from the faith and loss of effective spiritual testimony.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

If we were to attempt to put this type of church into a time period in history we could say it was a second generation apostolic church. Though they had not departed completely from love for God, their love no longer had the fervency, depth, or meaning it once had. **What checks should we place on ourselves and our churches in order to test if we are losing our first love?**

Isa. 62:5 Eph. 5:15-21 Phil. 4:6, 7 Col. 3:22 1 Kings 14:8, 9 1 Chron. 12:33 Ps. 139:23 Heb. 10:22, 23 Prov. 4:23

Revelation 2:8-11 Smyrna - the persecuted church; 10 Roman emper-ors–Diocletian to Constantine.

To this suffering church Christ addresses two exhortations which are His watchword to all in similar circumstances. First, in 2:10 He writes them, "Fear none of those things," which literally translated is "Stop being afraid." They had nothing really to fear in this persecution because it could not rob them of their priceless eternal blessings in Christ. In any case they were in the hands of God. Whatever was permitted was by His wise design. Second, Christ exhorts them, "Be thou faithful unto death," which translated literally is "Become faithful even unto death." Up to this time apparently none of their number had died. They were exhorted to be faithful to the Lord when the test would come, even if it resulted in their death. Though their own lives might be sacrificed, their real riches were as far removed from this world as the heavens are above the earth. Being faithful unto death, they would be all the more sure that they would receive the crown of life.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

From Diocletian to Constantine, Christians were under severe persecutions and made a spectacle in the Roman arenas. **Why does God allow those faithful to Him to suffer? Can suffering prove to be a rich blessing not only for the sufferer, but also for God?**

Acts 9:15, 16 Rom. 5:3-5 1 Cor.11:30-32 2 Cor. 12:7-9 Heb. 5:8 Heb. 12:3-13

Rev 2:12-17 Pergamos - Greek "high tower" or "fortified" church under imperial favor under Constantine.

To the church at Pergamos, or Pergamum, one of the most prominent cities of Asia, the third message of Christ was directed. Located in the western part of Asia Minor, north of Smyrna and about 20 miles from the Mediterranean Sea, it was a wealthy city with many temples devoted to idol worship and full of statues, altars, and sacred groves. It was an important religious center where the pagan cults of Athena, Asclepius, Dionysus, and Zeus were prominent. In the atmosphere completely adverse to Christian testimony was situated the little church to which Christ addressed this letter. As in the messages to the other churches, Christ is introduced in special character: here as the One who "hath the sharp sword with two edges," a description given to Him earlier, in 1:16.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

In Hebrews 4:9-13, the sword (Word of God) was used to dissect (or discern) the thoughts and intents of the heart of the believer, separating the soulish from the spiritual. **How is the two-edged sword applied to the church at Pergamos and why would it be so important to use that sword if this church represented the church during the Constantine reign, who made Christianity the religion of the empire? Why is the sword so important in the church today?**

Col. 3:5-11 Heb. 5:12-14 Heb. 6:10-12

Rev 2:18-29 Thyatira - the Papal church era-during the Dark Ages.

It is significant that having brought into judgment those who were evil in the church of Thyatira, a special word is given to the godly remnant in this church. Here for the first time in the messages to the seven churches a group is singled out within a local church as being the continuing true testimony of the Lord. The godly remnant is described as not having or holding the doctrine of Jezebel, and as not knowing “the depths” or the deep things of Satan. Here reference is made to the satanic system often seen in great detail on false cults which compete with the true Christian faith. Just as there are the deep things of God (1 Cor. 2:10) which are taught by the Spirit, so there are the deep things of Satan which result from his work.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

This church fits into the time period of the dark ages when the Catholic Church authorized crusades to convert the people to conform to their so called Christianity. **What will be given to those who do not follow the doctrine of Jezebel (or other forms of corrupted Christianity), but are overcomers, staying true to their Lord?**

1 Kings 16:31 Matt. 25:31-46 John 5:25-29 Rev. 1:6,7

Rev 3:1-6 Sardis - the Reformation church; Protestantism in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Swete (H. B. Swete, The Apocalypse of John) suggests that white apparel in scripture denotes (1) festivity; (2) victory; (3) purity; (4) the heavenly state. The thought seems to be that the righteousness of the saints bestowed in the form of a garment is a token of their acceptability to God and the divine recognition of their office and ministry as the priests of God. They have not defiled their garments as others have done in Sardis, and now they are promised that in the future they will have the heavenly white garment and will walk with Christ because they are judged as “worthy.” Further it is promised, “I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels.”

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

This church coincides with the reformation period. Out of the gloom of the Dark Ages came the beginning of the Renaissance followed by the 16th century Reformation in Europe. This was largely due to the invention of the printing press by Johann Gutenberg of Germany, which, for the first time, brought the Bible to the common people. Great reformation movements began under leaders like Luther, Zwingli, Knox and John Calvin. However, the Reformation fell short of accomplishing that which might have been achieved. **From your knowledge of this history, to what extreme did the Reformation go in moving away from the restraints placed upon them by the “Absolute Vicar and Controller of the Catholic Church?”**

Gal. 2:11-21 Gal. 3:1-11 2 Tim. 3:1-8, 13

Rev 3:7-13 Philadelphia - the missionary church; this period was ushered in by the Puritan movement.

To the Christians of Philadelphia promise is also given as it is in the earlier letters that salvation and blessing and eternity to come will be their portion. They are not only promised the implication of verse 11 that they will have a crown of reward if they are faithful but they are promised in verse 12, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God.” This is of course a figure of speech. The entire heavenly city is considered a temple. In keeping with the symbolism, the Philadelphian Christians will be permanent like a pillar in the temple and, speaking figuratively, they will stand when all else has fallen. This perhaps had peculiar significance to those who were in Philadelphia because of their historic experiences with earthquakes which frequently had ruined their buildings and left only the pillars standing. They are assured of continuance throughout eternity because of their faith in Christ as the One who enables them to overcome the world.

Further, the promise is given, “He shall go no more out.” This seems to mean that they will no longer be exposed to the temptations and trials of this present life and will have their permanent residence in the very presence of God. In addition to this promise Christ gives them a threefold assurance that they will be identified with God, because (1) they will

have the name of God, (2) they will have the name of the city of God, the new Jerusalem, and (3) they will have a new name belonging to Christ. The expression "new Jerusalem" is a reference to the future eternal city described in Revelation 21 and 22.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

God rebukes the dead orthodoxy of the Church of the Sardis and is now dealing with the faithful remnant of the missionary Church of the Revival of the 19th century. This was the century that gave us names such as Whitefield, Wesley, Edwards, Moody, Darby, Spurgeon, and later Livingstone and Hudson Taylor. **From verses 7 and 8, please state your definition of the true Church of God, the body of Christ. What does it consist of?**

Jer. 23:3-8 Micah 7:18, 19 Rom. 9:25-27

Rev 3:14-22 Laodicea - the rejected church, church of final apostasy; applying in many areas today where there has not yet been revival.

It is apparent that there is something about the intermediate state of being lukewarm that is utterly obnoxious to God. Far more hopeful is the state of one who has been untouched by the gospel and makes no pretense of putting his trust in Christ than the one who makes some profession but by his life illustrates that he has not really honored the Christ whose gospel he has heard and professed. There is no one farther from the truth in Christ than the one who makes an idle profession without real faith. The church at Laodicea constitutes a sad picture of much of the professing church in the world throughout the history of the Christian era and serves as an illustration of those who participate in the outer religious worship without the inner reality. How many have outwardly conformed to requirements of the church without a true state of being born again into the family of God? How many church members are far from God yet by their membership in the professing church have satisfied their own hearts and have been lulled into a sense of false security?

In the history of the human race no one has been harder to reach for Christ than the religionist, the one who is quite satisfied with the measure of his devotion to God and with the items which to him represent religion. Far easier to win are the harlots and publicans than the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Especially sad is the fact that in the church at Laodicea the minister or angel of the church is here described as lukewarm.

The indifference embodied in the term "lukewarm" in this passage seems to extend to their conviction respecting the central doctrines of the Christian faith, such as the necessity of the new birth and the need for a dramatic change in life and perspective required of a true Christian. If those who are shepherds of the flock never make clear the necessity of the new birth and do not proclaim accurately the depravity and sin of the human heart and the divine remedy provided alone in the salvation offered by the crucified Christ, one can hardly expect the church itself to be better than those who lead it. The result is churchianity, membership in an organization without biblical Christianity and without membership in the Body of Christ accompanied by the miracle of the new birth.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

It is sad to say but we may be now living in the Laodician period. It is the church rejected by God and spit out; the church of final apostasy. Just like the other periods in church history Satan tries to throw a veil over the church so they miss the truth. The deception appears to have worked but the Lord has given the church a chance to repent (Rev 3:19) and overcome (Rev 3:21). **What is the difference between the professing church and the true church? Is this the same truth that Jesus taught in His parable of the wheat and tares (Matt 13:24-30)? Does the true remnant run like a thread throughout the entire history of the church?**

Isa. 37:31, 32 Jer. 31:7-9 Mic. 5:7, 8 Zeph. 3:12, 13 Rom. 11:5

Revelation 4:1-11

As if anticipating the ultimate consummation where all will recognize the exalted name of Jesus, whether in heaven or hell, Revelation 4 reveals this intimate glimpse of heaven where all created join in a symphony of praise and give their honor and worship to the Almighty God. The worthiness of God to receive such praise is related to His sovereign right to rule as the One who sits upon the throne. The 24 elders bear witness to His majesty and glory, His holiness and power, and the eternity of the One "which was, and is, and is to come." All creatures owe their very existence to Him as their Creator, "for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Chapter 4 is a fitting introduction to that which follows in the next chapter, where the glory of Christ as Redeemer, as the "lamb that was slain," is an added reason for praise. Wise is the soul who finds in the Scriptures the revelation of such a God and who bows now in this day of grace in faith and worship before the God whom he will serve in eternity.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

Who is the One sitting on the throne?

Isa. 6:1-3 John 14:9 Phil. 2:9-11 Rev. 3:21 Rev. 4:5 Rev. 5:7 Rev. 6:16 Rev. 7:10 Rev. 4:10, 11
Rev. 5:13

In Rev 4:10-11, why do the elders cast their crowns before the throne?

1 Cor. 3:13-15 1 Cor. 9:25 (victor's crown) Phil. 2:9-11 1 Thess. 2:19, 20 (soulwinner's crown) 2
Tim. 4:8 (righteousness crown) Rev. 2:10 (martyr's crown)

Revelation 5:1-14

What contrasts presented themselves! The apostle looked for a lion, and behold, a Lamb; for one who had overcome, and instead, One who had the appearance of having been slain; for One who had the majesty of a king, and instead, the emblem of humility. But in the Lamb were the seven horns of perfect power, seven eyes of perfect wisdom, and seven spirits traversing the world, denoting omnipresence. What homage can be afforded worthy of this combination of Redeemer and Creator?

(Through the Bible Day by Day, F.B. Meyer)

Explain the following terms:

Lion of the Tribe of Judah - Gen. 49:9, 10

Root of David - Isa. 11:1, 11

Lamb having seven horns and seven eyes (Rev. 5:6) -
Zech. 3:9 Zech 4:10

Four living creatures (Seraphim) - Isa. 6:1-3

Elders - Rev. 4:10

Seven spirits of God – Isa. 11:2 Zech. 4:10 Rev. 1:4 Rev. 4:5

Revelation 6:1-8

Just as at the beginning of the New Testament the Holy Spirit has given us a fourfold delineation of Christ in the Gospels, so at the commencement of His description of the judgments of God on the earth He has furnished us with a fourfold picture of Christ's great opponent. We believe that the contents of the first four of the "seals" describe four aspects of the Antichrist's character, and also outline four stages in his career. First, he is seen aping the Christ of God as the Righteous One. The "*white* horse" on which he is seated, is intended to speak of righteousness. Just as we are told in 2 Cor. 11:14 that "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light," and "therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of *righteousness*," so the Antichrist will pose as the friend of law and order. Second, he is seen mimicking the Christ of God as the mighty Warrior. Just as the Lord Jesus at His return will make a footstool of His enemies and trample in fury all who defy Him (Isa. 63:3), so the Man of Sin shall slay all who dare to oppose him. Third, he is seen imitating Christ as the Bread of Life, for the third seal views him as the Food-controller. Fourth, he is seen with his mask off, depicted as one whose name is Death and Hades, that is, as the Destroyer of men's bodies and souls.

(The Antichrist, A.W. Pink)

Give more detail of each rider on the different colored horses in Revelation 6:1-8. Do these details speak toward the fulfillment of the evil one's plans?

White horse – Ps. 55:21 Dan. 11:21, 23 2 Cor. 11:14 1 Thess. 5:3 Rev. 13

Red horse – Jer. 4:7 Jer. 25:15-33 Rev. 13:7

Black horse – Jer. 14:1-2 Lam. 5:10 Hos. 12:7 Amos 8:4-6 Rev. 13:17

Pale horse – Isa. 28:18 Rev. 19:20, 21

Revelation 6:9-17

There is a remarkable similarity between the progress of chapter 6 as a whole and the description given by our Lord of the end of the age in Matthew 24:3, 4. In both passages the order is (1) war (Matt. 24:6,7; Rev. 6:3,4), (2) famine (Matt. 24:7; Rev. 6:5,6), (3) death (Matt. 24:7-9; Rev. 6:7,8), (4) martyrdom (Matt. 24:9,10,16-22; Rev. 6:9-11), (5) the sun darkened, the moon darkened, and the stars falling (Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:12-14), (6) a time of divine judgment (Matt. 24:32-25:26; Rev. 6:15-17). The general features of Matthew 24 are obviously quite parallel to the events of the book of Revelation beginning in chapter 6 (J. Dwight Pentecost).

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

Provide background information to help explain the meaning of Revelation 6:9 which says; “I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God”?

Who are those in white robes (Rev 6:11)?

Who are those who hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains (Rev 6:15)?

Matt. 24:13 Rev. 7:13-14 Rev. 13:15

Revelation 7:1-8

In the order of the vision as given to John, he sees in the opening verses of chapter 7 four angels controlling the four winds of the earth. An angel which is described as ascending from the east and possessing the seal of the living God commands the four angels not to hurt the earth and the sea until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. The implication is that the judgment of God is impending and that prior to its infliction on the earth, God wants to set apart and protect His servants. In the verses which follow, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel are protected by the angelic seal. It is implied that these who are thus sealed have been saved in the time of trouble pictured in the book of Revelation and by this means are being set apart as a special divine remnant to be a testimony to God's grace and mercy during this time of judgment. There are many precedents in Scripture for such a protection of God's own. When God sent the flood upon the earth, He separated Noah and his family from the rest of the human race and the flood did not hurt them. When God destroyed Jericho, He protected Rahab and her household. Wicked though she was, she had put her trust in God, and God protected her from the judgment that fell on Jericho. In a similar way in the time of great tribulation, protection will be given to this group of 144,000 Israelites. The matter is so significant to God that the names of the tribes and the number to be saved from each are given in detail.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

Why is it that the tribe of Dan is not in this listing of the twelve tribes?

Gen. 49:16, 17 Deut. 33:22 Josh. 19:40-47 Jud. 1:34, 35
Jud. 18:1-31

Revelation 7:9-17

One of the twenty-four elders is quoted in verse 13 as asking the questions “What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and from where did they come?” It is clear from these questions that the twenty-four elders are representative of a group different from those who are here pictured as the great multitude in white robes. If the elders represent the church, the multitude represents a different body of saints. In answer to the elder, John confesses that he does not know; whereupon John is informed, “These are they which came out of great tribulation.” In the Greek the expression is far more specific. Literally it could be translated, “These are those who came out of the tribulation, the great one.” It is undoubtedly a reference to the specific period of the great tribulation of which Christ spoke (Matt. 24:21).

The common tendency to ignore the definite terminology of the prophecies in the book of Revelation is illustrated in the interpretation which would make this throng refer to all the elect of all ages and the great tribulation as “the whole sum of the trials of the saints of God, viewed by the Elder as now complete.” One must not read into a passage something that is foreign to its expression statement. The group here described is a particular group coming from a particular time.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

What did these saints go through to receive such honor?

Revelation 8:1-13

This chapter opens with the announcement that the seventh seal is opened. This is the last of the seven seals marking the prophetic judgments of God. With the opening of the seventh seal the narrative is resumed from the close of chapter 6. Though simply introduced, the seventh seal is obviously the most important development up to this point.

Contained in the seventh seal are all the subsequent developments leading to the second coming of Christ, including the seven trumpets and the seven bowls of the wrath of God.

Blanchard believes that the seven trumpets are included in the seventh seal and that the seven bowls are included in the seventh trumpet:

It is interesting to note that the series of three sevens are really included in one series of seven, that is, the seven trumpets are included under the seventh seal and the seven bowls are included under the seventh trumpet, so that we have in fact a single series in three movements—the first six seals opened, then the seventh seal which includes the seven trumpets blown, and then the last trumpet sounding, introducing the seven bowls and concluding the opening of the seven seals.

In verse 2, John records his vision of the seven trumpets given to the seven angels standing before God. Though there has been some speculation as to the character of these angels, the best interpretation is to take the revelation in its ordinary sense, that is, that these are indeed seven angels appointed by God to direct the series of judgments symbolized by the seven trumpets. These angels are to be distinguished from those who pour out the seven vials and are not to be confused with the seven spirits of God in Revelation 5:6. The number seven is in harmony with the seven seals and the seven vials. The fact that these angels stand before God indicates a place of prominence such as is given to the angel Gabriel (cf. Luke 1:19).

The use of trumpets by the angels has considerable background in the Scriptures. Trumpets were used in various phases of Israel's economy. They were sounded at times of public assembly, used to direct soldiers in war and to signal important events on the calendar. Trumpets were used on the occasion of the giving law, were sounded on the first of the month, and served to announce almost every important occasion (cf. Exodus 19:19; Lev. 23:24; Num. 10:2-10; Joel 2:1).

So dramatic are the judgments and so unmistakably an evidence of the power and sovereignty of God that blaspheming men on earth can no longer ignore the fact that God is dealing with them. Fearful as these judgments are, they are only the beginning of God's dealing with the earth; and as indicated in a special announcement, three great woes are still to fall. Though it is difficult in this day of grace to imagine such catastrophic judgments, the Word of God is plain, and men are called everywhere to avail themselves of grace before it is too late.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

In relation to the seals when do the trumpet and bowl events occur?

Explain the value of the prayers of the saints in Revelation 8:3-4:

Dan. 4:34, 35 Phil. 4:6 1Tim. 2:1-3 Jas. 5:15 1 John 1:9

Revelation 9:1-21

A "star" (9:1) is seen falling from heaven unto the earth, unto whom is given the key of the Bottomless Pit. This we believe refers to Lucifer, or "Day-star" (see Isa. 14:12). The reference, we think, is not to his original fall, but to what is described in Rev. 12:9. The fact that the key of the Abyss is given to *him* is in keeping with the fact that during the Tribulation period God allows him free rein and suffers him to do his worst. The R.V. correctly renders verses 1 and 2 as follows "And there was given to him the key of *the Pit of the Abyss*. And he opened *the Pit of the Abyss*," etc., or, as it may be literally rendered, "*the well of the Bottomless Pit*." The well is not mentioned again. The "well of the Bottomless Pit" is to be distinguished from the Bottomless Pit itself, mentioned in 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:3. What the distinction is we shall presently suggest.

Out of *the well of the Bottomless Pit* issued a smoke, so great that the sun and the air were darkened (v. 2), and out of the smoke came "locusts upon the earth." We regard these "locusts" as identical with the creatures referred to in the prophecy of Joel (2:1-11). By noticing what is said of them, in Joel 2 and Rev. 9 it is at once apparent that they are no ordinary locusts. Joel says of them, "A great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it" (2:2). It is said, "When they fall upon the sword they shall not be wounded" (2:8). The fact that they issue from the Pit also denotes that they are supernatural beings. In the description furnished in Rev. 9, they seem to be kind of

infernal cherubim, for “the horse” (v. 7), the “man” (v. 7), the “lion” (v. 8), and “the scorpion” (v. 19) are combined in them. Their number is given as two hundred thousand thousand.

Who, then, are these infernal beings? No commentator that we are acquainted with has attempted an answer. It is therefore with diffidence that we suggest, without being dogmatic, that they are, most likely, fallen angels now imprisoned in Tartarus.

The Antichrist is here termed the “King over” the locusts. Let the reader pay careful attention to what is predicted of these infernal beings in Joel 2 and here in Rev. 9, and let him remember they number no less than two hundred millions, and then see if it does not throw new light on Rev. 13:4, where concerning the Antichrist the question is asked, “Who is able to make *war* with *him*?” !! How utterly futile to engage in conflict one who commands an “army” of two hundred millions, none of whom are subject to death! In the second place, he is here termed “the Angel of the Bottomless Pit,” a title peculiarly appropriate as the leader of the fallen angels: and, as well, a title which denotes the superhuman nature of the Son of Perdition. In the third place, we are told that his name “in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.” This title serves to establish beyond a shadow of doubt the identity of this “King” of the infernal “locusts,” this “Angel of the Bottomless Pit.” The Hebrew and the Greek names signify the same thing in English—the Destroyer. It is “the Destroyer of the Gentiles” of Jer. 4:7, translated “Spoiler” in Isa. 16:4 and Jer. 6:24. Suitable name is this for the one who is the great opponent of the *Savior*. “Destroyer” is close akin to “Death” in Rev. 6:8. The reason why his name is given here in both Hebrew and Greek is because he will be connected with and be the destroyer of *both* Jews and Gentiles! But why give the Hebrew name first? Because the order in judgment, as in grace, is “the Jew first”—see Rom. 2:9 and 1:16 for each, respectively.

(The Antichrist, A. W. Pink)

Satan has powers to enter into and control creatures of this world for his evil purposes. **Yet, notwithstanding all his God-defying destruction, cannot our holy, transcendent God overrule and use Satan’s intended destructive power for His glorious purposes?**

Gen. 45:4-8 Gen. 50:20 Job 1:12 Acts 28:3-6 Luke 22:31, 32 Rom. 8:28

“And the rest of the men who were not killed by these plagues yet repented not.” (Rev 9:20a) **After such a show of might and power, explain why they did not repent “of the works of their hands ... murders, nor their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts” (Rev 9:20, 21).**

Matt. 15:18-20

Revelation 10:1-11

The Word of God which is sweet to John’s soul also has its bitter aspects. John is experiencing this in his exile on the Isle of Patmos and is enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, separated from friends, afflicted by age and discomfort, and tasting somewhat of the suffering of Christ. More particularly, however, the Word of God is bitter in that it not only contains promises of grace but, as the book of Revelation itself abundantly illustrates, it reveals the divine judgments which will be poured out on the earth as God deals in wrath with the wicked world. God who created heaven also prepared the lake of fire for the devil and his angels. It is probable that the little book in chapter 10 of Revelation is the Word of God itself. Though John as a child of God will never know the bitterness of being lost, or the afflictions of eternal punishment, he knows what it is to be like his Master, despised and rejected of men.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

The phrase in verse 5, “raised up his hand to heaven,” represents a solemn oath, and then in verse 6, “that there should be delay no longer” refers to the fulfillment of God’s purpose. **What is meant by the phrase in verse 7, “the mystery of God would be finished”?**

Rom. 16:25, 26 Eph. 1:9, 10 Eph. 3:1-12 Rev. 11:15-18

Revelation 11:1-2

The Temple here is apparently that which will be in existence during the great tribulation. Originally constructed for the worship of the Jews and the renewal of their ancient sacrifices, during the great tribulation it is desecrated and becomes the home of an idol of the world ruler (cf. 2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:14,15; Dan. 9:27; 12:11). For this reason it is most significant that John is instructed to measure not only the Temple and the altar but also the worshipers. It is saying in effect that God is the judge of man’s worship and man’s character and that all must give an account to Him. It also implies, inasmuch as the reed is ten feet long, that man comes far short of the divine standard. Even a person very tall would fall short of the ten-foot measuring rod. God is therefore not only claiming ownership by this measurement of the

Temple and the altar, but demonstrating the shortcomings of the worshipers who do not measure up to His standard. The second verse adds further light to the situation in that instruction is given not to measure the outer court because it is given to the Gentiles along with the holy city for a period of 42 months. Here again is the familiar 3½-year period or half of the 7-year period predicted by Daniel the prophet (Dan. 9:27) in which Israel's history will be consummated with Christ's returning at its close.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

Explain where and when the Temple will be rebuilt, and when the 42 month period will occur.

Ezekiel chapters 40 through 43

The measuring rod means either protection (a setting apart for God) or destruction, with this particular measuring implying a sense of judgment (Ps. 89:32; Prov. 10:13; Ezek. 40:3). **During this final seventieth week of years spoken by Daniel, will all prophecy concerning national Israel and Jerusalem be fulfilled literally?** This last week of years is to be divided into two distinct 3½-year periods, each 42 months. **In which period will the Great Tribulation occur?**

Hos. 14:1-9

Revelation 11:3-6

The use of the article with the expression "two witnesses" in verse 3 seems to signify that they are specific persons. The actions are those of people; and their resultant death and resurrection, including their bodies lying in the streets of Jerusalem for 3½ days, can hardly refer to Israel, the church, or the Word of God. There are also difficulties, however, in defining them as any two characters such as Elijah and Moses or, as some would have it, Enoch and Elijah. Govett identifies the two witnesses as Enoch and Elijah and cites in support of early tradition and apocryphal writing. The fact that Enoch and Elijah did not die but were translated has been seized upon by some as a violation of the general rule of Hebrews 9:27, "It is appointed unto men once to die." But this argument is nullified by the fact that the entire living church at the time of the rapture will go to heaven without dying. If Moses is included as one of the two witnesses, there is an added difficulty in that he once died. Could he die a second time? It seems far preferable to regard these two witnesses as two prophets who will be raised up from among those who turn to Christ in the time following the rapture. Ainslie identifies the two witnesses as "two strange men" whose identity cannot now be determined who will literally have prophetic ministry for 1260 days and then be slain. Many other conservative expositors agree with Easton who takes these two witnesses "to be two men, not two companies of men, nor yet a mere symbol of 'adequate testimonies.'" He finds this confirmed in verse 10 in the expression "these two prophets." He adds, "Who they may be, can be but conjecture, and is best left in the obscurity in which God has surrounded them." (William Easton)

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

We are told in Scripture that these two witnesses will be clothed in sackcloth (representing bitterness) and they will be preaching judgment. **Although they preach judgment, will their aim also be toward soul saving?**

Rev. 11:4 says that these two witnesses are two olive trees and two lamp stands. **What is the significance of the:**

Olive trees: Gen. 8:11 Jud. 9:8, 9 Isa. 17:6 Jer. 11:16 Ps. 52:8

Lamp stands: 2 Sam. 22:29 Ps. 119:105 Prov. 6:23

Show how the witness's power is similar to that of Moses.

Ex. 7:17-19

Revelation 11:7

"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the Bottomless Pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them" (Rev 11:7). This is the first time in the Revelation that the Antichrist is seen in his character of "the Beast." The last Scripture which we have examined serves at once to identify him. He is termed "the Angel of the Bottomless Pit," because in a peculiar sense the Abyss is his home. There he has been during all the centuries of the Christian era. Here the Beast is shown ascending out of the Bottomless Pit. What, then, is the Abyss? It appears to be the special abode of infernal creatures. As we have seen, out of its "well" issue the fallen angels. From it comes the Beast. And in it Satan himself is incarcerated for the thousand years (Rev 20:3). The "Abyss" is quite distinct from "Hades" in which the souls of lost *human* beings are now being tormented; as it must also be distinguished from "Gehenna" or "the Lake of Fire" in which *all* the lost shall suffer for ever and ever.

(The Antichrist, A.W. Pink)

Where are the saved human beings who have died?

John 14:2, 3 Phil. 1:23 Luke 16:19-31 Luke 23:43 2 Cor. 12:1-4 Eph. 4:8-10

Revelation 11:8-14

A righteous prophet is always a torment to a wicked generation. The two witnesses are an obstacle to wickedness, unbelief, and satanic power prevalent in that time. If their ministry is in the time of great tribulation, it is all the more a thorn in the side of the world rulers of that day; and their death symbolizes the silencing of the prophets who announce the doom of those who will not believe in God. The Word of God makes it clear that it is often possible to silence a witness to the truth by death, but such action does not destroy the truth that has been announced. The power of God will be ultimately revealed.

The merrymaking of those who rejoice in the death of the two witnesses is cut short after three and one-half days by the witnesses' restoration to life. As they stand on their feet before the startled gaze of those who watch, it is recorded that great fear falls upon those who see them. Their amazement increases as they hear a voice from heaven saying to the witnesses, "Come up hither." As they watch, the two witnesses ascend up into heaven.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

How do the people respond to all that is going on with the two witnesses? Do they appear to have come to a point of repentance and of faith in Christ?

Revelation 11:15-19

When the seventh trumpet sounds, John hears great voices in heaven announcing that the great kingdoms have become the kingdoms of Christ and that henceforth He shall reign forever and ever. In contrast to previous instances where a single voice makes the announcement, here there is a great symphony of voices chanting the triumph of Christ. The expression "the kingdoms of this world" in the best manuscripts is in the singular, but the meaning is much the same. The fact that earthly rule will pass into the hands of God is frequently mentioned in Old Testament prophecy (cf. Ezek 21:26-27; Dan 2:35, 44; 4:3; 6:26; 7:14, 26-27; Zech 14:9). The question that remains, however, is how can the kingdoms of the world become at this point the kingdoms of Christ when, as a matter of fact, the seven vials seemingly are still to be poured out? The answer as indicated previously seems to be just as the seven trumpets are comprehended in the seventh seal so the seven vials are comprehended in the seventh trumpet. The process of destruction of earthly power is therefore already under way.

A further problem is presented in the fact that Christ is declared to reign "for ever and ever." This is more than simply announcing His kingdom over the earth. The millennial reign, while it extends for only one thousand years, is in some sense continued in the new heaven and the new earth. Never again will the earth be under the control and overlordship of man. Even the brief rebellion recorded in Revelation 20 at the close of the millennium is unsuccessful.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

What does the seventh trumpet announce?

Explain how the seven trumpets are included under the seventh seal and the seven bowls are included under the seventh trumpet.

Revelation 12:1-17

The first of the seven personages to be introduced in this section of Revelation is described as a great wonder in heaven, or, better translated, a great "sign" in heaven. Though what John beholds excites his wonder, he does not use the Greek word for wonder (*teras*), a word which does not occur in the Revelation. The main point is that it is a sign or symbol of important truth rather than merely a wonder. Subsequently, six other signs or miracles (cf. Greek) are mentioned (12:3; 13:13-14; 15:1; 16:14; 19:20). This sign in verse 1 is distinguished by being called "great." Though the sign is seen in heaven, it apparently portrays a reality on the earth, for subsequently the woman pictured is persecuted by Satan in the great tribulation. The woman is described as clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. Further, she is with child and waiting the imminent birth of her son.

Many explanations have been offered for the identity of this woman. The woman does not represent Christ, nor the church in general, but rather Israel as the matrix from which Christ came. By contrast, other representative women are

mentioned in the Apocalypse such as Jezebel (2:20), representative of false religion as a system; the harlot (17:1-7, 15-18), the apostate church of the future; and the bride, the Lamb's wife (19:7), the church joined to Christ in glory. In the Old Testament, Israel frequently is presented as the wife of Jehovah, often in her character as being unfaithful to her husband. Here is the godly remnant of Israel standing true to God in the time of the great tribulation.

The description of the woman as clothed with the sun and the moon is an allusion to Genesis 37:9-11, where these heavenly bodies represent Jacob and Rachel, thereby identifying the woman with the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. In the same context, the stars represent the patriarchs, the sons of Jacob. The symbolism may extend beyond this to represent in some sense the glory of Israel and her ultimate triumph over her enemies. This identification of the woman as Israel seems to be supported by the evidence from this chapter. Israel is obviously the source from which have come many of the blessings of God including the Bible, Christ, and the apostles. The twelve stars seem to refer to the twelve tribes. The persecution of the woman coincides with the persecution of Israel.

The woman as the nation of Israel is seen travailing in birth and awaiting delivery of her child. Frequently in Scripture the nation Israel is pictured in the tribulation time as going through great trial and affliction. Though, historically, the nation gave birth to Christ through the Virgin Mary, the implication of verse 2 is that the references are to the sufferings of Israel as a nation rather than to the historic birth of Christ. It may refer to the sufferings of the nation in general over its entire troublesome history. If strictly interpreted, it may signify the travail of Israel at the time of the first coming of Christ as borne out by verses 3 and 4.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

Who are the woman and child that are persecuted by the red dragon?

Gen. 3:15 Gen. 37:9-11 Ps. 2:7-12 Isa. 54:1 Isa. 60:1-3
Isa. 66:7-9 Mic. 4:9, 10 Matt. 2:13-16

How would you link the red dragon to the personage of the devil or Satan?

Job 1 Dan. 12:1 Matt. 10:16 John 3:14 Rev. 14-15 Rev. 20:2

The time element of Israel's suffering is described as "a time, and times, and half a time". **What does this have reference to?**

Dan. 7:25 Dan. 9:27 Dan. 12:7 Rev. 11:2 Rev. 12:6, 14, 15 Rev. 13:5

Can you recognize in this record that God is giving us a picture of the great final battle, the age-long war between Satan and Christ, which here is revealed through a sign which John witnessed?

When and where did this battle between God and Satan begin?

Gen. 3:15 Isa. 14:12-15 Ezek. 28:13-19

Revelation 13:1-18

The contents of this chapter center around two "Beasts." As to which of them represent the Antichrist, there is a difference of opinion. The majority of those who have written upon the subject regard the first Beast as the Man of Sin, and with them we are in hearty accord.

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy" (v. 1). There is here, as frequently in Scripture, a *double* reference. Two objects quite distinct though intimately connected are in view. We believe that this "Beast" which arises from "the sea" points to the Roman Empire revived and in its final form, that is, resuscitated and confederated under the form of ten kingdoms. In Dan. 7:3 we read, "And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another." These "four great beasts" are interpreted in the verses which follow as four kingdoms. In v. 7 we are told this fourth Beast (the Roman Empire) "had ten horns." So the Beast of Rev. 13:1 also has "ten horns." Each of the successive Beasts or kingdoms of Dan. 7 retained the territory of the previous one, though enlarging on it. In the symbolic description there furnished, the first Beast is likened unto "a lion" (v. 4); the second to "a bear" (v. 5); the third to "a leopard" (v. 6). So also in Rev. 13 the Beast there is "like unto a leopard," has feet like "a bear," and has the mouth of "a lion" (v. 2). Thus we learn that the Roman Empire in its final form will include within its borders the territory controlled by the earlier Empires and will also perpetuate the dominant characteristics of the ancient Babylonians, Medo-Persians, and Grecians.

But it is very clear from what follows in Rev. 13 that there is something more than the Empire here in view. In vv. 3-8 it is a *person* that is before us. We are satisfied that this same person is also described, symbolically, in the opening verses. As is frequently the case in the prophetic Scriptures, the king and his kingdom are here inseparably united. Rev. 13:1, 2 portrays both the Empire and its last Emperor. One of the proofs for this is found in Dan. 9:26, 27, where the

Antichrist is denominated "the prince" of that people who destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70. We shall therefore interpret here according to this principle.

"And I saw ... a Beast rise up out of the sea." In Scripture, the troubled "sea" is frequently a figure of restless humanity away from God. The Antichrist will come upon the scene at a time of unprecedented social disturbance and governmental upheaval. He will appear at a crisis in the history of the world. From other prophetic Scriptures we gather that, following the removal of the Church from this earth and some time before Daniel's seventieth week begins, there will be a complete overthrow of law and order, both civil and political. All divine restraint being removed, lawlessness will prevail. We have no doubt that Satan will designedly bring this about. It will create a situation beyond the diplomatic skill of earth's statesmen. This will provide the desired opportunity for the coming Superman, who will be a diplomatic genius. Just as many leaders today are satisfied that a League of Nations (or United Nations) would be the best device for preserving peace, so in the day to come the Man of Sin will satisfy the world that this is the only solution to the baffling problems then confronting the Powers of earth. Thus will the Antichrist resurrect the old Roman Empire at a time of universal confusion and tumult. He will himself be the acknowledged head or Emperor, the last of the Caesars. Hence the *double* significance of this figure—"a Beast rising out of *the sea*" out of a state of anarchy will come forth this mighty Despot, who will speedily arrogate to himself *all* authority, both Divine and human; and in the end it will be seen that he embodies a lawlessness even worse and more fatal than that out of which he sprang. A *Beast* indeed will he soon appear to be. Pregnant with meaning is this title. Having rejected God's "Lamb," a "Beast" shall be the world's ruler. *This* will be God's reply to the satanic teaching of "Evolution" now so popular almost everywhere. The leaders of modern thought insist on the *beastial* origin of man, and so a Beast shall yet lead the majority of his generation to Perdition!

"Having seven heads and ten horns." It is most significant that identically the same features are attributed to the Dragon in 12:3. He, too, is there said to have "seven heads and ten horns." This clearly implies his satanic origin: he will be a human replica of the Devil himself. As wrote the late G. H. Pember (from whom we have borrowed a number of valuable points), the beast will be "the effulgence of the Antigod's glory, and the very image of his substance". We take it that the "seven heads" are symbolic of full intelligence, and the "ten horns" speak of imperial dominion.

"And the Beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion" (v. 2). Like the "Beast rising up out of the sea" of the previous verse, we believe the terms of this second verse have a *double* significance. First, as intimated above, they denote that the Empire will include the territory and preserve the dominant features of the earlier Empires. Second, they supply a figurative description of the Emperor himself. The Antichrist will combine in his personality the characteristics of the leopard (beauty and subtlety), of the bear (strength and cruelty), and of the lion (boldness and ferocity).

"And the Dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority" (v. 2). This is the Devil's travesty of what God the Father will yet do to His Son—"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was *given Him* dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him" (Dan. 7:13, 14).

"And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the Beast" (v. 3). It is clear from a number of Scriptures that during the early part of the second half of Daniel's seventieth "week" the Antichrist will be slain by the sword—cf. Isa. 14:18, 19; 37:7; Ezek. 21:25 RV; Zech. 11:17. It is equally clear that this "wound of death" will be "healed" (Rev. 13:14). Satan will be permitted to bring his son from the dead. This is no wild speculation of ours but a view which has been propounded by quite a number of devout students. In his "Coming Prince," Sir Robert Anderson said, "The language of Rev. 13:3, 12 suggests that there will be some impious travesty of the resurrection of our Lord." It is useless to reason about it; we simply believe the record of Scripture upon it. The raising of the Beast from the dead will remove whatever doubt men may have entertained concerning his supernatural character. "*All the world* wondered after him" is the statement which immediately follows the reference to the healing of his wound of death.

"And they worshipped the Dragon which gave power unto the Beast; and they worshipped the Beast, saying, "Who is like unto the Beast? Who is able to make war with him?" (v. 4). This cry of the world, "Who is like unto the Beast?" is a travesty of the song of Moses. When celebrating Jehovah's overthrow of their enemies at the Red Sea, Israel sang, "Who, is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the Gods! Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders!" (Ex. 15:11). The additional exclamation, "Who is able to make war with him?" is evoked by the vast army of infernal creatures at his command, and by his own triumph over death in battle.

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies" (v. 5). This is the one great distinguishing mark of the Antichrist—cf. Ps. 52:1-4; Isa. 14:13,14; Dan. 7:11,20; 11:36; 2Thess. 2:4, etc. But not for long will he be suffered to continue his God-defying course. Another "forty-two months" and his career shall be ended. This number—here designedly used by the Holy Spirit, rather than three and one-half years or twelve hundred and sixty days—is a very significant one. Its factors are 6 and 7, which stand for man and completeness. It is man in his fallen condition, here is the Man of Sin, *fully* manifested. Forty-two stands for *intensified apostasy*. Thus Num. 33 gives the various stopping places of unbelieving Israel in the wilderness as forty-two in number. Judges 12:6 tells us that the number of the apostate Ephraimites which fell before the Gileadites were 42-thousand. See also 2 Kings 2:4 and 10:14.

"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all they that dwell on the earth shall worship him, every one whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the Book of Life of the Lamb that hath been slain" (vv. 7, 8 RV). The "saints" here mentioned are the godly Jewish remnant who will refuse to worship the Beast. Those "overcome" are they who disobeyed the command of Christ recorded in Matt. 24:16; those who obey will be preserved by God—see Rev. 12:6. Note how election is seen here: only they whose names were "written from the foundation of the world in the Book of Life" will be preserved from the unpardonable sin of worshipping the Antichrist—cf. Matt. 24:22, 24.

"And I beheld another Beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon" (v. 11). This brings before us the second Beast, called in 19:20 the False Prophet. He is the third person in the Trinity of Evil. As there is to be an Antichrist who will both counterfeit and oppose the Christ of God, so there will be an Anti-spirit who will simulate and oppose the Spirit of God. Just as the great work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ, so the one aim of the Anti-spirit will be to magnify the false christ (see 13:12). Just as the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was visibly attended by "cloven tongues like as of fire" (Acts 2:3), so we read of the Anti-spirit that "he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh *fire* come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men" (v. 13). And just as it is the Holy Spirit who now *quicken*s dead sinners into newness of life, so of the Anti-spirit we are told, "He had power to give *life* unto the image of the Beast" (v. 15).

The book of Revelation makes known the fact that there is a Trinity of Evil. Each of these three evil persons comes into view in Rev. 13. First, there is "the Beast" (v. 2). Second, there is "the Dragon" (v. 2). Third, there is "another Beast" (v. 11). The fact that of this third Beast it is said "He spake as a dragon" (v. 11) at once intimates his satanic nature and character, for the speech corresponds to the heart. The demonical nature of each of these evil persons comes out clearly in Rev. 16:13, 14, where we read, "And I saw *three* unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet. For they are the spirits of demons, working miracles." Finally, in Rev. 19:19, 20 we are told, "And the Beast was taken, and with him the False Prophet...these both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone," and then in 20:10 we read, "And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

The above Scriptures clearly establish the fact that there is a Trinity of Evil. Now it surely needs no argument to prove that these three evil persons are opposed to and are the antithesis of the three Persons in the Godhead. The Devil stands opposed to God the Father—"Ye are of your *father*, the Devil," John 8:40, etc. The Antichrist stands opposed to God the Son—his very name shows this. The remaining evil person stands opposed to God the Spirit. If this be the case, then our present task is greatly simplified: it is merely a matter of noting what is separately predicated of the two Beasts in Rev. 13 so as to ascertain which of them stands opposed to Christ and which to the Holy Spirit.

Now there are only two arguments of any plausibility which have been advanced to support the view that it is the second Beast of Rev. 13 which is the Antichrist, but so far as we are aware *no one has endeavored to show that the first Beast represents the third Person in the Trinity of Evil!* Yet he must be so if the second is the Antichrist! This is unmistakably clear from Rev. 16:13, 14 and 19:19, 20. The first argument used is drawn from the language of 13:11, where of the second Beast it is said, "He had two horns *like a lamb*, and he spake as a dragon." This, we are told, indicates that it is the Antichrist who is here in view, aping the Lamb of God. Personally, we are amazed that such an assertion should have been made in soberness. It is difficult to imagine anything more wide of the mark, seeing that not only is it not said this beast with the two horns was "like *the lamb*" but in this same book "*the Lamb*" is pictured with "seven horns" (see 5:6). But if this second Beast, the False Prophet, be the opponent of God the Spirit, then the *two* horns have a pertinent significance, for two is the number of *witness*, and just as Christ declared the Spirit of God should "testify (lit., bear witness) of Me" (John 15:26), so the third person in the Trinity of Evil bears witness to the first Beast—see 13:12, 14, 16. In the second place, it is said that the first Beast of Rev 13 is presented as the *political* Head, while it is the second who is viewed as the *religious* Head. But if this is not a bad mistake, it certainly needs to be modified. It is the first Beast, not the second, who is *worshipped* (v. 12)! Having thus noticed briefly the two leading objections which have been brought against the position we are about to define and defend, we shall now present some of the many arguments on the other side.

In the first place, to regard the Antichrist as *limited* to the *religious* realm and *divorced* from the *political*, seems to us, to leave out entirely an essential and fundamental element of his character and career. The Antichrist will claim to be the true Christ, the Christ of God. Hence, it would seem that he will present himself to the Jews as their long-expected Messiah—the One foretold by the Old Testament prophets—and that before apostate Christendom, given over by God to believe the Lie, he will pose as the *returned* Christ. Therefore, must we not predicate, as an *inevitable corollary*, that the pseudo christ, will usher in a false millennium, and rule over a mock messianic kingdom? That this conclusion is fully borne out by Scripture we shall show in a moment.

Why was it (from the human side) that, when our Lord tabernacled among men, the Jews rejected Him as their Messiah? Was it not because He failed to fulfill their expectations that He would take the government upon His shoulder and wield the royal scepter as soon as He presented Himself to them? Was it not because they looked for Him to restore the Kingdom to Israel there and then? Is it not therefore reasonable to suppose that when the Antichrist presents *himself*

to them, that *he will wield great temporal power, and rule over a vast earthly empire?* It would certainly seem so. Happily we are not left to logical deductions and conclusions. We have a "thus saith the Lord" to rest upon. In Dan. 11:36—a Scripture upon which all are agreed concerning its application—the Antichrist is expressly termed "*The King* (which) shall do according to his will." Here then is unequivocal proof that Antichrist *will exercise* political or governmental power. He will be a king, "the king", and if a king he must be at the head of a kingdom.

In the second place, if the Antichrist is to be a perfect counterfeit of the true Christ, if he is to ape the millennial Christ as set forth in Old Testament prophecy—for, of course, he will not mimic the "suffering" Christ of the first advent—then it necessarily follows that he will *fill the role of king*, yea, that he will reign as a King of kings, as Satan's parody of the Son of man seated upon "the throne of His glory." That the Antichrist will also be at the head of the religious world, that he will demand and receive Divine honors, is equally true. Just as in the Millennium the Lord Jesus will "*be a Priest upon His Throne*" (Zech. 6:13), so the Antichrist will combine in his person the headships of both the political and the religious realms. And just as the Son of Man will be the Head of the fifth world-empire (Dan. 2:44), so the Man of Sin will be the head of the revived fourth world-empire (Dan. 2:40).

In the third place, to make the Antichrist and "the False Prophet" one and the same person is to involve us in a difficulty for which there seems to be no solution. In Rev. 19:20 we read, "And the Beast was taken, and with him the False Prophet that wrought miracles before him....These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Now if the "False Prophet" be the Antichrist, then who is "the Beast" that is cast with him into the Lake of Fire? The Beast here cannot be the Roman Empire (the people in it), for no member of the human race (as such) is cast into the Lake of Fire until after the Millennium (see Rev. 20). That "the Beast" is a separate entity, another individual than "the False Prophet" is also clear from Rev. 20:10—"And the Devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet are." In this last quoted Scripture, each of the three persons in the Trinity of Evil is specifically mentioned, and if "the Beast" is not the Antichrist, the Son of Perdition, the second person in the Trinity of Evil, who is he?

In the fourth place, what is predicated of the first "Beast" in Rev. 13 comports much better with what is elsewhere revealed concerning the Antichrist, than what is here said of the second "Beast." In proof of our assertion we submit the following:

Points of resemblance between the first Beast of Rev. 13 and the Man of Sin of 2 Thess. 2:

1. The first Beast receives his power, seat, and great authority from the Dragon, Rev. 13:2. Cf. 2 Thess. 2:9—"Him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders."
2. "All the world" wonders after the first Beast, Rev. 13:2. Cf. 2 Thess. 2:11, 12—"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe the Lie; that they *all* might be damned," etc.
3. The first Beast is "*worshipped*", Rev. 13:4. Cf. 2 Thess. 2:4—"He as *God* sitteth in the temple of God."
4. The first Beast has a mouth "speaking great things," Rev. 13:5. Cf. 2 Thess. 2:4—"Who...*exalteth himself* above all that is called God." Note also that in Rev. 13:5 it is said of the *first* Beast, he "has a mouth speaking great things and *blasphemies*." Is not this one of the chief characteristic marks of the Antichrist?
5. The first Beast makes war on the saints, Rev. 13:7. Cf. 2 Thess. 2:4—"Who *opposeth* ...all that is called God," that is, he will seek to exterminate and obliterate everything on earth which bears God's name. From these points of analogy it is evident that the first Beast of Rev. 13 and the Man of Sin of 2 Thess. 2 are one and the same person.

In the fifth place, that the *second* "Beast" is not "the Man of Sin" appears from the fact that the second Beast causeth the earth to worship the *first* Beast (Rev. 13:12), whereas the Man of Sin "*exalteth himself*" (2Thess. 2:4), and compare Dan. 11:36: "And he *exalteth himself* "

As already intimated, there are several things which show plainly that the second Beast is the *third* person in the Trinity of Evil, that is, the one who is the satanic parody of the Holy Spirit. The point now before us supplies further confirmation. There is nothing in Rev. 13, nor elsewhere, to show that this second Beast is worshipped, rather does he direct worship away from himself, to the first Beast. Therefore, he cannot be the pseudo christ, for the Lord Jesus *did*, again and again, receive worship (see particularly Matthew's Gospel), and will be worshipped on His return. But this second Beast, who directs worship *away from himself*, accurately imitates the Holy Spirit in this respect, for nowhere in the New Testament is the third Person of the Holy Trinity presented as a distinct Object of worship; instead, He is to "glorify" Christ (John 16:14) by drawing out our hearts unto that blessed One who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Again, it has been generally recognized by prophetic students that our Lord referred to the Antichrist when He said, "I am come in My Father's name, and ye receive Me not; if another shall come *in his own name*, him ye will receive" (John 5:43). If the one here mentioned as coming "in his own name" is the Antichrist, then it is certain that the second Beast of Rev. 13 cannot be the Antichrist, for he *does not* come "in his own name." On the contrary, the second Beast comes in the name of the first Beast as is clear from Rev. 13:12-15. Just as the Holy Spirit—the *third* Person in the Holy Trinity—speaks "not of Himself" (John 16:13), but is here to glorify Christ, so the second Beast—the *third* person in the Evil Trinity—seeks to glorify the first Beast, the Antichrist.

If it should be objected that the second Beast is represented as *working miracles* (Rev. 13:13, 14) and, that as the Man of Sin is also said to come "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9), therefore, the second Beast must be the Antichrist, the answer is, this by no means follows. The power to work miracles

is *common to each person* in the Trinity of Evil. Just as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, each perform miracles, so does the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet (see Rev. 16:13, 14 for proof). Three things are said in connection with the second Beast which correspond closely with the work of the Holy Spirit. First "he maketh *fire* come down from heaven" (Rev. 13:13), cf. Acts 2:1-4. Second, "he had power to *give life* unto the image of the Beast" (Rev. 13:15), cf. John 3:6—"born of the Spirit." Third, "he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to *receive a mark* in their right hand, or in their foreheads" (Rev. 13:16), cf. Eph. 4:30—"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, *whereby ye are sealed* unto the day of redemption."

Finally, the second Beast is clearly *subordinate* to the first Beast. But would the Jews receive as their Messiah and King one who was himself the vassal of a Roman? Was not this the very reason why the Jews of old *rejected* the Lord Jesus, i.e., because *He was* subject to Caesar, and because He refused to deliver the Jews *from* the Romans!

In the sixth place, as we have seen, in Dan. 11:36 the Antichrist is termed "the King," and if a king he must possess a kingdom, and can there be any doubt as to the identity of this kingdom? Will not Antichrist's kingdom be the very one which Satan offered in vain to Christ? Namely, "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them" (Matt. 4:8). That the kingdom of the Antichrist will be much wider than Palestine appears from Dan. 11:40-42—"And at the time of the end shall the king of the South push at him (the Antichrist); and the king of the North (the Antichrist, as King of Babylon) shall come against him (the King of the South) like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he (the Antichrist) shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He (the Antichrist) shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape out of his (the Antichrist's) hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He (the Antichrist) shall stretch forth his hand upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape." From this Scripture it is also clear that the Antichrist will be at the head of a great army and therefore must be a *political* ruler as well as a religious chief.

In the seventh place, it is generally agreed among those students of prophecy who belong to the Futurist school, that the rider upon the four horses in Rev. 6 is the Antichrist. If this be the case, then we have further proof that the Antichrist and *the Head* of the revived Roman Empire is one and the same person. This may be seen by comparing three Scriptures. In Rev. 6:8, of the rider on "the pale horse," we read, "His name that sat on him was *Death* and *Hell* followed with him." In Isa. 28:18, those who will be in Jerusalem during the Tribulation period are addressed by Jehovah as follows: "And your covenant with *Death* shall be disannulled, and your agreement with *Hell* shall not stand." What "covenant" can this be, except the one mentioned in Dan. 9:27, where we read of the Roman Prince (the Head of the revived Roman Empire) confirming the covenant with the many for seven years? Now reverse the order of these three passages, and what do we learn? In Dan. 9:27 we learn that the Head of the Roman Empire makes a "covenant" with the Jews. Isa. 28:18 this "covenant" is said to have been made with "Death and Hell." While in Rev. 6:8 the rider on the pale horse (whom it is generally admitted is the Antichrist) is named "Death and Hell." Hence, from whatever angle we approach the subject it is seen that the Antichrist is the Head of the fourth world-kingdom.

(The Antichrist, A. W. Pink)

Following this study in Revelation 13 about the Arch-Enemy of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, express in a few sentences how meaningful this exploration into the ways and plans of the totally wicked king of evil has affected your Christian life and thinking. Does it cause us to be more willing to "put on the full armor of God and stand" in this hour of spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10-18) against all the wiles of the devil?

Revelation 14:1-20

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb" (Rev. 14:9,10). This looks back to what we read of in the closing verses of the preceding chapter: "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark, or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name" (13:16, 17). This "mark" will be the *official sign* of allegiance to the Emperor stamped (or embedded) either upon the hand or forehead of his loyal subjects. It will be the satanic travesty of the "seal" which the angel will stamp on "the foreheads of God's servants" (7:3). This "mark" on the persons of the subjects of the Beast will be, we believe, *the name of the Devil* (cf. Rev. 13:4), as the seal on the foreheads of God's servants is defined in 14:1 as "having their Father's name written on their foreheads." Here in Rev. 14:9-11 we have one of the most solemn warnings in all the Bible. An angel from heaven will announce the terrible punishment which shall be visited upon those who honor the Beast. It is set over against the threats of the Beast and the False Prophet, who will terrify men by the sentence of physical death for all who defy them. But here God, by His angel, declares that all who heed the Beast and his coadjutor will share their awful doom. This no doubt will strengthen the faith and patience of the saints, and enable them to "endure unto the end."

"And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry, to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God" (14:19, 20). The "Vine of the earth" refers, we believe, to the Man of Sin at the head of apostate Israel. This appellation points to one more contrast. In John 15 we find the Lord Jesus saying, "I am the true Vine, ye are the branches." The true Vine, then, consists of the Christ of God and His people in fellowship with Him. Over against this is "the Vine of the earth," which is the Antichrist and those allied to him, particularly, renegade Israel. In Deut. 32 there is a reference to the "Vine of the earth"—"For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. For their Vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah, their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter" (vv. 31, 32). That this is speaking of apostate Israel is clear from v. 28—"For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them." That the passage is speaking of apostate Israel in the days of the Antichrist appears from v. 35—"To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time; for *the day of their calamity is at hand*, and the things which shall come upon them make haste" (v. 35).

(The Antichrist, A.W. Pink)

How pertinent is the question asked in Deut. 32:37 to all faiths when calamity comes into their life?

What pressures will be placed on the people living in this time to receive the mark of the Beast?

Revelation 15:1-8

Chapters 15 and 16 of Revelation bring to consummation the chronologically ordered events leading up to the second coming of Christ described in chapter 19. These are introduced in this chapter as "the seven last plagues" which are the divine judgments preceding the second coming of Christ. As previously indicated, the chronological order of events in revelation is presented basically in the seven seals (6:1-17; 8:1). The seventh seal includes all of the seven trumpets (8:1-9:21; 11:15-19). The seven vials or bowls of divine judgment are included in the seventh trumpet. From this it can be seen that the order of events is one of dramatic crescendo, the seventh seal being all-inclusive of the end-time events including the seven trumpets, and the seventh trumpet including the events described in the seven vials. The second coming of Christ follows this order of events immediately after the seventh vial. The intervening sections such as 10:1-11:14; 13-14; 17-19 do not advance the narrative chronologically. Chapter 19 of Revelation follows immediately after chapter 16 in the chronological development.

(The Revelation of Jesus Christ, John Walvoord)

Why is God sending these plagues (bowl judgments) upon the earth?

Rev. 15:1, 7 Rev. 16:4-7, 19

Revelation 16:1-21

Revelation 16 describes the "vial" judgments which are executed just before the end of the Tribulation. The beast is noticed several times in the chapter. In v. 2 we read, "And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the Beast, and upon them which worshiped his image" (v. 2). This is a foretaste of the grievous torments awaiting the worshippers of the Beast. Again in v. 10 we read, "And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the Beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain." Here the Beast himself receives intimation of the doom awaiting him. In vv. 13 and 14 we are told, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the Dragon, and out of the mouth of the Beast, and out of the mouth of the False Prophet. For they are the spirits of demons, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Here we behold, in symbolic guise, each of the persons in the Evil Trinity. The figure of the "frog" is very suggestive. Frogs are creatures which love the darkness rather than the light; they wallow in the mire and filth; their croaking is heard in the dusk of twilight and by night. Thus they are an apt symbol of the persons in the Trinity of Evil. Their very form suggests inflation by pride. The reference here in Rev. 16:13, 14 indicates the superhuman character of the False Prophet as well as of the Beast and the Dragon.

(The Antichrist, A.W. Pink)

What are the judgments of each vial or bowl, and upon whom do they fall? Can these people see that it is God's judgment upon them and if so why do they not repent but instead blaspheme God?

Revelation 17:1–18:21

In v. 5 we read, "And upon her forehead was a name written—mystery: Babylon the great, the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." We believe that the English translators have misled many by printing (on their own authority) the word "mystery" in large capital letters, thus making it appear that this was a part of "the woman's" name. This we are assured is a mistake. That the "mystery" is connected with the "Woman" herself and not with her "name" is clear from v. 7, where the angel says unto John, "I will tell thee *the mystery of the Woman*, and of the Beast which carrieth her."

The word "mystery" is used in the New Testament in two ways. First, as a *secret*, unfathomable by man but explained by God: see Matt. 13:11; Rom. 16:25, 26; Eph. 3:3, 6, etc. Second, the word "mystery" signifies a *sign* or *symbol*. Such is its meaning in Eph. 5:32, where we are told that a man who is joined to his wife so that the two become "one flesh" is a "great mystery, (that is, a "great sign" or "symbol") of Christ and the Church." So, again, in Rev. 1:20 we read of "the mystery (sign or symbol) of the seven stars," etc.

As we have seen, the term "mystery" has *two* significations in its New Testament usage, and we believe it has a *double* meaning in Rev. 17:5, where it is connected with the "Woman." It signifies both a *symbol* and a *secret*, that is, something not previously revealed. It should also be noted that, in keeping with this, the name given to the Woman is a *dual* one—"Babylon the great," and "the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." Who, then, is symbolized by the Woman with this dual name? Verse 18 tells us, "And the Woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Now to get the force of this it is essential that we should bear in mind that, in the Apocalypse, the words "is" and "are" almost always (in the symbolical sections) signify "*represent*." Thus, in 1:20 "the seven stars are the seven churches" means "the seven stars *represent* the seven churches;" and "the seven candlesticks *are* the seven churches," signifies, "the seven candlesticks *represent* the seven churches." So in 17:9 "the seven heads *are* (represent) seven mountains;" 17:12 "the ten horns *are* (represent) ten kings;" 17:15 "the waters...*are* (represent) peoples," etc. So in 17:18 "the woman *represents* that great city." What, then, is signified by the "great city"?

In keeping with what we have just said above, namely, that the term "mystery" in Rev. 17:5 has a two-fold significance, and that the woman has a dual name, so we believe "that Great City" has a *double* force and application. First, it signifies a *literal* city, which shall yet be built in "the Land of Shinar," on the banks of the "Euphrates." In the second place, the "great city" (unnamed) signifies an *idolatrous system*—"mother of harlots"—a system of idolatry which originated in the Babylon of Nimrod's day, and a system which is to culminate and terminate in another Babylon in a day soon to come. This we think is clear and on the surface. What, then, is the *secret* here disclosed, which had hitherto been so closely guarded?

In seeking the answer to our last question it is important to note that there is another "Woman" in the Revelation, between whom and this one in chapter 17 there are some striking comparisons and some vivid contrasts. Let us note a few of them. First, in Rev. 12:1 we read of "a Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," which symbolically signifies that she occupies a position of *authority* and *rule* (cf. Gen. 37:9); so also the Woman of chapter 17 is pictured as "ruling over the kings of the earth" (v. 18). Second, this Woman of Rev. 12 is a mother, for she gives birth to the Man-child who shall rule all nations (v. 5); so the Woman of chapter 17 is "the *Mother* of harlots." Third, in 12:3 we read of a great red Dragon "having seven heads and ten horns," and he *persecutes* the Woman (v. 13); but in striking contrast, the Woman of chapter 17 is seen *supported* by a scarlet-colored Beast "having seven heads and ten horns" (v. 3). Fourth, in Rev. 19:7 the Woman of chapter 12 is termed the Lamb's Wife (v. 7); whereas the Woman of chapter 17 is the Devil's Whore. Fifth, the Wife of Rev. 19 is "arrayed in fine linen, clean and white" (v. 8); but the Whore of chapter 17 is arrayed in purple and scarlet, and has in her hand a golden cup "full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication" (v. 4). Sixth, the Lamb's Wife is also inseparably connected with a great city, even the holy Jerusalem (21:10); so the Whore of Rev. 17 is connected with a great city, even Babylon. Seventh, the chaste Woman shall dwell with the Lamb forever; the Whore shall suffer endless torment in the Lake of Fire.

Once we learn who is symbolized by the chaste Woman, we are in the position to identify the corrupt Woman, who is compared and contrasted with her. As to whom is signified by the former, there is surely little room for doubt—it is the faithful portion of Israel. *She* is the one who gave birth to the Man-child—i.e., Judah, in contrast from the unfaithful ten tribes, who because of idolatry were, at the time of the Incarnation, in captivity. So in Rev. 19 and 21 there are a number of things which show clearly (to any unprejudiced mind) that the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, is redeemed Israel, and not the Church. For example, in Rev. 19:6, 7, when praise bursts forth because the marriage of the Lamb is come, a great multitude cry, "*Alleluia*, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him, *for* the marriage of the Lamb is come." *Alleluia* (which occurs nowhere in the New Testament but in this chapter) is a peculiarly *Hebrew* expression, meaning "Praise the Lord." In the second place, the word for "marriage" (*gamos*) or "wedding-feast" is the same as is used in Matt. 22:2, 3, 8, 11, 12, where, surely, it is *Israel* that is in view. In the third place, note that we are told "His wife hath *made herself ready*" (v. 7). Contrast this with Eph. 5:26, where we learn that *Christ* will make the Church ready—see Matt. 23:39 for *Israel* making herself "ready." In the fourth place, in 19:8 we read, "And to her was granted that *she should be* arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." The Church will have been arrayed years before the time contemplated here. In the fifth place, note it is said that "the marriage of the Lamb is come" (v. 7), just as He is on the point of leaving heaven for earth (v. 11); but the Church will

have been with Him in the Father's House for at least seven years (probably forty years, or more) when that hour strikes. In the sixth place, in Rev. 21:9, 10 the Lamb's Wife is inseparably connected with that great city, the holy *Jerusalem*, and in the description which follows we are told that on the twelve gates of the city were written "the names of the twelve tribes of the children of *Israel*" (v. 12). Surely that is conclusive evidence that it is not the Church which is in view. In the seventh place, in Rev. 21:14 we are told that in the twelve foundations of the City's wall were "the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (cf. Matt. 19:28) is it thinkable that the name of the apostle *Paul* would have been omitted if the Church was symbolically portrayed?

If, then, the Chaste Woman of Revelation, chapters 12, 19 and 21 symbolizes *faithful* Israel, must not the corrupt Woman (who is compared and contrasted with the former) represent faithless Israel? But if so, *why* connect her so intimately with Babylon, the "great city?" It will help us here to remember that the Chaste Woman of the Apocalypse is also indissolubly united to a city. In Rev. 21:9 we read that one of the seven angels said to John, "Come hither, *I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.*" And immediately following we read, "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, *and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.*" Thus, though separate, the two are intimately connected. The Bride *will dwell* in the holy Jerusalem. So here in Rev. 17, though distinct, the Whore is intimately related to the City, Babylon. One of the many proofs that the Harlot of Rev. 17 is apostate Israel is found in Isa. 1, where we read, "How is the faithful city become an *harlot!*" (v. 21). In the verses which follow it will be seen that the Lord of hosts is addressing Israel, and describing conditions which will prevail in the end-time. After indicting Israel for her sins, the Lord declares, "I will ease Me of Mine adversaries, and avenge Me of Mine enemies". Clearly, this has reference to the tribulation period. Then the Lord continues, "And I will turn Mine hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross", etc., and then He adds, "Afterwards thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the *faithful city*". How clear it is then that God calls Israel "an *Harlot*" for her unfaithfulness. For further proofs see Jer. 2:20; 3:6,8; Ezek. 16:15; 20:30; 43:8, 9; Hosea 2:5, etc.

We would next call attention to some of the Scriptures which prove that there will be Israelites dwelling in Babylon and the land of Assyria at the End-time. In Jer. 50:4-7 we read, "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping; they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten," etc. Clearly these verses treat of the closing days of the time of "Jacob's trouble." Immediately following we read, "Remove out of the midst of *Babylon*, and go forth out of the land of the *Chaldeans*" (v. 8). Then, in the next verse, a reason is given, showing the urgency of this call for the faithful Jews in Babylon to come out: "For lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country; and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken" (v. 9). Again, in Jer. 51:44, the Lord says, "And I will punish Bel in *Babylon*, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up; and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall." And then follows the call for the faithful Jews to separate themselves from the mass of their apostate brethren in Babylon—"My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord." Isa. 11:11; 27:13; Micah 4:10, all show that Israel will be intimately connected with Babylon in the End-time.

It was of incalculable help to students of the past when they discovered that *Israel* is the key which unlocks prophecy, and that the nations are referred to only as they affect the fortunes of Jacob's descendants. There were other mighty peoples of old besides the Egyptians and the Chaldeans, but the Holy Spirit has passed them by, because their history had no bearing on that of the chosen nation. The same reason explains why the empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, *do* occupy such a prominent notice in the book of Daniel—they were the enemies into whose hands God delivered His wayward people. These principles have received wide recognition by prophetic students, and therefore it is the more strange that so few have applied them in their study of the final prophetic book. *Israel* is the key to the Revelation, and the nations are only mentioned therein as they immediately affect *Israel's* fortunes. The *ultimate* design of the Apocalypse is not to take notice of such men as Nero and Charlemagne and Napoleon, nor such systems as Mohammedanism and the Papacy. Nor would so much be said about Babylon unless this "great city" was yet to be the home of apostate Israel. After these preliminary considerations, which though lengthy were necessary, we are now prepared to examine a few of the details supplied by Rev. 17 and 18.

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither, I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Rev. 17:1, 2). The "great whore," in the final accomplishment of this prophecy, describes apostate Israel in the End-time—i.e., Daniel's seventieth week. The figure of an unfaithful woman to represent apostate Israel is a common one in the Scriptures: see Jer. 2:20; 3:6, 8; Ezek. 16:15; 20:30; 43:8, 9; Hosea 2:5, etc. She is here termed "the *great whore*" for two reasons: first, because (as we shall show later) she will, at the end, worship Mammon as she never has in the past; second, because of her idolatrous alliance with the Beast. The apostle is here shown her "judgment." This is in contrast from what we have in Rev. 12, where we learn that the chaste "Woman" will be preserved. That apostate Israel will yet sit "upon many waters" ("peoples," etc., v. 15), and that the kings of the earth will commit fornication with her.

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness; and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored Beast, full of

names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication" (vv. 3 and 4). The Woman seated on the Beast does not signify that she will rule over him, but intimates that he will support her. The ultimate reference here is to the Devil's imitation of the millennium, when the Jews (even now rapidly coming into prominence) shall no longer be the tail of the nations, but the head. How the Devil will bring this about will appear when we examine Rev. 18. As the result of the Beast's *support* (v. 3), apostate Israel will be lifted to heights of worldly power and glory (v. 4).

"And upon her forehead was a name written, mystery: BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (v. 5). In a re-built Babylon will culminate the various systems of idolatry which had their source in the first Babylon of Nimrod's day. It is in this city that the most influential Jews will congregate at the Time of the End. From there, Jewish financiers will control the governments of earth. That apostate Israel, in Babylon, should be clothed in "purple and scarlet" (emblems of royalty and earthly glory) *before* the Kingdom of Messiah is set up, was indeed a "mystery" (secret) disclosed by none of the Prophets, but now made known in *the Revelation*.

"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her, I wondered with a great wonder" (v. 6, R.V.). The final reference is, again, to apostate Israel in the End-time. The most relentless enemies of the godly Jews will be their own apostate brethren. The second half of v. 6, correctly rendered in the R.V., "And when I saw her I wondered with a great wonder," ought to show us that it is not Romanism which is here in view. Why should John, who was himself then suffering from the hatred of Rome (Pagan) wonder at Rome (Papal) being clothed with governmental power and glory, and drunken with the blood of saints? But that the kings of the earth (her worst enemies for three thousand years) should commit fornication with Israel, and that the apostate portion of the nation should be drunken with the blood of their own brethren according to the flesh, was well calculated to fill him with amazement.

"And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the Beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns" (v. 7). It should be noted that in the interpretation which follows, far more is said about "the Beast" than about "the Woman." We believe the chief reason for this is because the 18th verse tells us the Woman represents "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth," and the City receives fuller notice in the chapter that follows—Rev. 18.

"And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the Beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition" (vv. 9-11). Here is the mind which hath wisdom (v. 9): "This repetition of 13:18 identifies and connects these two chapters. The word rendered 'mind' in 17:9 and 'understanding' in 13:18 is the same. This 'wisdom' is, to understand that, though a 'Beast' is seen in the vision, it is not a wild beast that is meant, but one great final superhuman personality; namely, a man energized by satanic power" (Dr. E. W. Bullinger).

The 9th verse should end with the word "wisdom;" what follows belongs to v. 10. The R.V., which in this verse follows a number of reliable translations, renders thus: "The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth, *and they are seven kings.*" This at once disposes of the popular interpretation which regards these "seven *mountains*" as referring to the seven *hills* on which the city of Rome is built. The Holy Spirit expressly tells us that the seven mountains are (*represent*) seven kings. Of these seven kings it is said, "five are fallen, and one is (i.e., the sixth existed when John wrote the Apocalypse), and the other (the seventh) is yet to come; he must continue a short space." And then in Revelation 17:11 we read, "And the Beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven, and he goeth into perdition." Upon these verses we cannot do better than give extracts from Mr. Newton's "Thoughts on the Apocalypse":

This passage is evidently intended to direct our thoughts to the various forms of executive government or kingship which have existed, or shall exist in the prophetic earth, until the hour when the sovereignty of the world shall become the sovereignty of the Lord and of His Christ. We might expect to find such a reference in a chapter which professedly treats of him who is to close the history of human government by the introduction of a new and marvelous form of power—a form new as to its mode of administration and development, yet not unconnected with the past, for it will be constructed upon principles drawn from the experience of preceding ages, and will have the foundations of its greatness laid by the primeval efforts of mankind. He will be the eighth; but he is *of* (ek) the seven.

In its final form, then, the revived Roman Empire—the kingdom of Antichrist—will be partly Gentilish and partly Jewish. And is not this what we must expect? Will not that be the character of the kingdom of that One which the Antichrist will counterfeit? Such Scriptures as Ps. 2:6-8; Isa. 11:10; 42:6; Rev. 11:15, etc., make plain the *dual* character of the kingdom over which our Lord will reign during the Millennium. That the Antichrist *will be* intimately related to both Jews and the Gentiles we have proven again and again in the previous chapters—Rev. 9:11 is quite sufficient to establish the point. Therefore, we should not be surprised to find that that part of the Image which specifically depicts the kingdom over which the Man of Sin shall reign, should be composed of both "iron" and "clay." It would be passing strange were it otherwise. It is indeed striking to note that the "clay" is mentioned in Dan. 2 just *nine* times—the number of judgment!

In Dan. 2:43 we read, "And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the

seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay"—a verse that has sorely puzzled the expositors. We believe that the reference is to the coming intimacy between Jews and Gentiles. The apostate Jews (members of the Corrupt *Woman*) shall "mingle themselves with the seed of men"—the Gentiles. This is amplified in Rev. 17, where we read of the great Whore "with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." "But they shall not cleave one to another" (Dan. 2:43) is explained in Rev. 17:16—"And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall *hate* the Whore, and shall make her desolate and naked," etc.! There is a remarkable verse in Hab. 2 which confirms our remarks above, and connects the Antichrist himself with the "clay." The passage begins with the third verse, which, from its quotation in Heb. 10:37, 38 we know, treats of the period immediately preceding our Lord's return. In vv. 4 and 5 (Habakkuk) we have a description of the Antichrist, and then in v. 6 we read, "Shall not all these take up a parable against him, and a taunting proverb against him, and say, "Woe to him that increaseth that which is not his! how long? and to him that ladeth himself with *thick clay*." The reference is clearly to this "proud Man's" fellowship with apostate Israel. We are satisfied that Hab. 2:6-8 is parallel with Isa. 14:9-12. Isa. 14 gives us a glimpse of the Antichrist being scoffed at in Hell, by the "chief ones of the earth" because he, too, was unable to escape *their* awful fate. So in Hab. 2, after stating that he "gathereth unto him all nations" (v. 5) the prophet goes on to say "Shall not all *these* take up a taunting proverb against him." The taunt is, that though he had leagued himself with the mass of Israel (*laden himself* "with thick clay"), yet it will be "the remnant" of this *same people* that shall "spoil" him (v. 8).

In closing this chapter we wish to call attention to some of the many and striking verbal correspondencies between Rev. 17 and 18 and the Old Testament prophets:

1. In Rev. 17:1 we are told the great Whore "sitteth upon many waters."
In Jer. 51:13 Babylon (see previous verse) is addressed as follows: "O thou that dwellest upon many waters."
2. In Rev. 17:2 it is said that, "The inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."
In Jer. 51:7 we read, "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunken of her wine."
3. In Rev. 17:4 the great Whore has "a golden cup in her hand." In Jer. 51:7 Babylon is termed "a golden cup in the Lord's hand."
4. In Rev. 17-15 we are told, "The waters which thou sawest, where the Whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."
In Jer. 51:13 we read, "O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures."
5. Rev. 17:16 tells us that Babylon shall be burned with fire—cf. 18:8.
So in Jer. 51:58 we read, "The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire".
6. In Rev. 17:18 we are told that the woman who represents the great city "reigneth over the kings of the earth."
In Isa. 47:5 Babylon is denominated "the lady of kingdoms."
7. Rev. 18:2 tells us that after her fall, Babylon becomes "the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."
Isa. 13:21 says, "But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there."
8. Rev. 18:4 records God's call to the faithful Jews—"Come out of her My people."
In Jer. 51:45 God also says, "My people, go ye out of the midst of her."
9. In Rev. 18:5 it is said, "Her sins have reached unto heaven."
In Jer. 51:9 it reads, "For her judgment reacheth unto heaven."
10. In Rev 18:6 we read, "Reward her as she rewarded you."
In Jer. 50:15 it says, "Take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her."
11. In Rev. 18:7 we find Babylon saying in her heart, "I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."
In Isa. 47:8 we also read that Babylon says in her heart, "I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children."

12. In Rev. 18:8 we read, "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day."
Isa. 47:9 declares, "But these two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day."

13. In Rev 18:21 we read, "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, And cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and be found no more at all."

So in Jer. 51:63, 64 we are told, "And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates; And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her."

14. In Rev. 18:23 we read, "And the light of the candle shall shine no more at all in thee, and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee."

In Isa. 24:8, 10 it is said of Babylon, "the mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the heart ceaseth...the City of Confusion is broken down; every house is shut up; that no man may come in...all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone."

15. In Rev. 18:24 we read, "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

In Jer. 51:49 we read, "As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth."

That God will yet permit the Devil to bring forth the satanic Masterpiece, who shall defy God and persecute His people, should scarcely be surprising. In each succeeding age there has been a Cain for every Abel; a Jannes and Jambres for every Moses and Aaron; a Babylon for every Jerusalem; an Herod for every John the Baptist. It has been so during this dispensation: the sowing of the Wheat was followed by the sowing of the Tares. It will be so in the Tribulation period; not only will there be a faithful remnant of Israel, but there shall be an unfaithful company of that people too. And just before the Christ of God returns to this earth to set up His kingdom, God will suffer His arch-enemy to bring forth the false christ, who will establish his kingdom.

(The Antichrist, A. W. Pink)

Who is the Chaste Woman, and what will be her position or influence in the world during these last days?

Rev. 12:1-17 Rev. 19:7, 8 Rev. 21:9

Who is the Whore, and what will be her position or influence in the world during these last days?

Isa. 1:1-31 Jer. 2:20 Jer. 3:6-8 Ezek. 16:15-18 Ezek. 20:30, 31 Ezek. 43:8, 9 Hos. 2:4, 5

Revelation 19:1-10

The events described in the preceding chapters have produced a profound impression in the heavenly world. As from the battlements of the skies the glorified beings there looked down upon the final destruction of the great system which so long defied God and oppressed his people, watching the smoke of her burning, there arose from the heavenly host a great shout,

"Hallelujah!
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,
for true and just are his judgments.
He has condemned the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth by her adulteries.
He has avenged on her the blood of his servants."
And again they shouted:
"Hallelujah!" (19:1-3)

Next from the four living creatures and the 24 elders came echoing back the same response as they fell upon their faces and cried, "Amen, Hallelujah!" (19:4). And then the chorus was taken up by all the voices of the heavens until, like the sound of many waters and the voices of mighty thunderings, it rolled along the heavens, "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns" (19:6).

The special reason for this sublime spectacle of triumph and rejoicing is given in the next verse. It was the undertone of the great organ of the skies thundering forth the notes of the wedding march of the Bride of the Lamb, and the chorus

ends with the overture, "Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready" (19:7).

There is a supreme event in every human life to which affection, hope and memory look forward or backward. It is the climax of life's fondest anticipations and aims. It is not always the winning of a fortune or the attainment of some place of fame and honor, but more often some matter of the heart and the home—perhaps the wedding day when the fond bride at last reaches the accomplishment of her heart's desire or the loving bridegroom comes to claim the one who is dearer to him than all his fortunes or his earthly honors. While this is true in this poor world of imperfect and oft-disappointed happiness, it is more transcendently true in that heavenly world where hope and love are not.

Mere transient fires,
Whose spark flies upward and expires.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

Where do the wedding garments come from and what do they represent?

Who is at the marriage supper of the Lamb? Support your answer with scripture.

Isa. 54:1-10 Hos. 2:1-24

Revelation 19:11

Our righteous Redeemer—does such a title have a strange sound to the reader? Is that adjective unfamiliar in such a context? The great majority of us probably are far more accustomed to such expressions as "our loving Redeemer" and "our gracious Redeemer," or even "our mighty Redeemer." We employ the term here not because we are striving for originality. No, rather such an appellation is required by the teaching of Scripture. In fact, if we carefully observe where the Holy Spirit has placed His emphasis it is incumbent on us that we should conform our terminology thereto. See how many passages you can recall where either *loving* or *gracious* is used as an adjective in connection with Christ. If memory fails, consult a concordance, and you will be surprised that neither of them occurs a single time! Now try the word *righteous* and see how many passages refer to the Lord Jesus as such.

Christ is referred to as "my righteous servant" (Isaiah 53:11); as "a righteous Branch" (Jeremiah 23:5); and in the next verse as "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS"; as "the Sun of righteousness" (Malachi 4:2); as a "righteous man" (Luke 23:47); as "the righteous judge" (2Timothy 4:8). He is seen as the antitypical Melchizedek, or "King of righteousness" ("Melchisedec," KJV; Hebrews 7:1-3); as our "advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). In addition, the same Greek word *dikaïos* is rendered "just" in the following passages: Pilate's wife sent a warning to her husband, "Have thou nothing to do with that just [righteous] man" (Matthew 27:19); in the same chapter Pilate himself declared, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person" (v. 24). He is called "the Just" (Acts 3:14; James 5:6); and "the Just One" (Acts 7:52; 22:14); while in 1 Peter 3:18 are the well-known words, "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust"—actually rendered "the righteous for the unrighteous" (RV). When Zechariah predicted His entry into Jerusalem, riding on a donkey, he said, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just" (Zechariah 9:9; compare Matthew 21:5); in Revelation 19:11, where He is depicted on a white horse, it is said, "in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

(Gleanings In The Godhead, A. W. Pink)

Look up the verses below and show how the great commission of our Lord was to be righteous.

Ps. 40:9 Ps. 45:7 Isa. 11:5 Isa. 42:21 Jer. 23:6 John 17:4 Rom. 3:31 Gal. 4:4

Revelation 19:12–20:6

This is not the coming of Christ for His saints but with His saints. It is that glorious event which Enoch long ago described: "See the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14-15). This is that glorious coming which sounds as a deep undertone through all the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures. Joel saw it afar when he wrote "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision" (Joel 3:14). Isaiah saw it when he cried "The earth reels like a drunkard, it sways like a hut and in the wind; ...The moon will be abashed, the sun ashamed; for the Lord Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders gloriously" (Isaiah 24:20, 23). Zechariah beheld it afar when he cried:

A day of the Lord is coming when your plunder will be divided among you.
Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle.
The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name.
(Zechariah 14:1, 3, 9)

Christ saw it in vision when He exclaimed, "They will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Luke 21:27).

John beholds Him marching down the ether path as a mighty Conqueror. He is mounted upon a white horse, the symbol of victory and righteousness, for "with justice he judges and makes war" (Revelation 19:11). His eyes are like a "blazing fire" (19:12) and from His mouth there passes a consuming flame like "a sharp sword" (19:15). On His head are many diadems, for He has already conquered sin, Satan and death and He is about to wear the crown of all the world. He wears a number of glorious names. "Faithful and True" (19:11) is one, and it means that all that He has promised and all that He has threatened is about to be fulfilled. The "Word of God" (19:13) is another, and this means that He is acting as the representative of God, fulfilling His will, representing His thought and acting in His name and character. There will be no appeal from His judgment, for behind it is all the majesty and power of the Father's throne. Another lofty name is "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (19:16). He is coming now to meet earth's confederate powers and sovereignties and He is to be recognized as the only supreme ruler to whom every knee should bow.

One would have thought that all the world would have been waiting with open arms to receive so glorious and beneficent a King. But lo, we behold earth's armies in battle array to resist His coming. With strange presumptuous fatuity the kings of the earth have allowed themselves to be enrolled under the banner of the Antichrist and his wicked ally, here described as the Beast and False Prophet. These represent on the one hand the godless governments of the earth and on the other her false religion. One political, the other ecclesiastical sovereignty. Both have usurped the place of Jehovah. Both have gathered into their conflict the forces of an ungodly world. From other Scriptures it is plain that the ostensible object of their campaign is some real objective point on earth. They are not fighting in the air but they are fighting God's people on earth. There seems no reason to doubt that the objective point of their attack will be Jerusalem and the Jews. Both Daniel and Zechariah tell us that this last conflict is to be waged against and around Jerusalem and its decisive battle is to be upon the old field of Palestine known as Megiddo, or Armageddon. The Old Testament prophets tell us that for a time the hosts of the ungodly will seem to prevail. The devoted city will fall and the horrors of a fearful sack will have just begun when the Son of God will appear from heaven delivering His people and destroying His enemies.

The discomfort and destruction of the foe is described by a graphic and sublime picture. Suddenly John beholds an angel standing in the sun and beckoning to all the fowls of heaven to gather and prepare themselves to feast on the carcasses of captains and of kings and of myriads of men both small and great.

We find the same vision in Ezekiel where the birds of the air are summoned to "the sacrifice I am preparing for you, the great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel. There you will eat flesh and drink blood. You will eat the flesh of mighty men and drink the blood of the princes of the earth" (39:17). So terrible shall be the slaughter that it will take seven months to bury the dead after that fearful battle and the great valley of Hamon Gog will be the hideous cemetery where Satan's last victims will leave their lifeless bones.

Next comes the capture and imprisonment of the great Arch-leader of all those hosts of evil. Long has he kept in the background and worked out his deep-laid plans through human dupes and instruments. But now the handoff, justice and vengeance reaches the actual head of all the wickedness of the ages and Satan himself is caught in the resistless grasp of Omnipotence. A mighty angel comes down from heaven and lays hold of the dragon, that old serpent, the devil and Satan. One is strongly inclined to think that this mighty angel is no other than the Son of God Himself, who "appeared ...to destroy the devil's work" (1 John 3:8). Often before had He met him in personal combat. Now He meets him for a last defeat and with the resistless grasp of almighty power He holds him helpless in His hand and binds him hand and foot and then hurls him into the bottomless abyss where he is confined in a sealed dungeon for a thousand years.

What a story the history of Satan is! Even the few lurid gleams we have reflect an awful light upon the tragedy of evil and the author of sin. We behold him in Ezekiel's vision (Ezekiel 28), an anointed cherub standing in Eden, walking up and down upon the holy mountain of God, and in the midst of the stones of fire, perfect in his ways until iniquity was found in him.

And so we see him all through the history of the human race watching for the ruin of others, meeting the first human pair at Eden's gates with the awful insinuation of the temptation and the fearful blight of sin.

Again we behold him rearing on earth a kingdom of human ambition, pride and wickedness with which to rival the very throne of Jehovah. Next he appears meeting the Son of God at the threshold of his ministry and seeking at last to crush Him in the garden and on the cross. And when he found himself unable to destroy the Son of God or defeat His personal work, we see him through the ages assailing His people and seeking either to corrupt or destroy His church, until at last the final crisis has come in the last battle of the ages, and now he is vanquished.

And now for a thousand years the world is to be without a devil and the human race put on trial to show what really it will do under the fostering influences of divine love and without the instigations and influences of the great seducer. What

a world, what an age that will be when Satan will tempt no more and all his deceitful wiles and dreadful power will be withdrawn from human history and the only influence outside of earth and humanity will be the beneficence and the holiness of Christ and the heavenly world.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

What was the main reason for the fall of the “morning star” (Satan)?

Gen 3:1 Isa 14:12

Describe the order of events from Revelation 17:1 to Revelation 20:6.

Revelation 20:7-15

The thousand years have run their course and the earth is bright and glorious with all the blessing of the millennial age, until the awful curse of sin has almost been forgotten, and the idea of a personal devil is but a distant remembrance of long-forgotten ages.

Yet we must not forget that while sin has long been suppressed, and the human race has accepted the scepter of Christ to earth's remotest bounds, yet the elements of man's natural corruption have still remained in the human soul, and human nature in itself is really no better notwithstanding the altered circumstances with which it has been favored through the millennial years.

Therefore God permits one further test. One more dark tragedy must pass over the face of this long-distracted planet before it will finally settle into its eternal orbit of righteousness and blessing.

And so it comes to pass that at the close of the 1,000 years Satan is loosed from his prison and permitted to go back once more to deceive the nations. Perhaps there was a purpose in this for even Satan himself. May it not be that God designed to let him see the difference between good and evil through the glorious object lesson of the millennial world? For 6,000 years he has been permitted to rule, and the result is desolation, sorrow, death and desperate ruin. Now for 1,000 years Christ has reigned and he beholds a prospect of beauty, blessedness and peace. How can he fail to recognize the difference between the evil and the good, and, if there can be one spark of desire in the fallen spirit, to turn toward the light?

But the result shows that he is incorrigibly bad. The only feeling that seems to animate him is a fiendish hate of God and a man, a relentless resolve to blight and wreck the very scene that he beholds, and to use his brief respite not to undo his long career of wrong but to perpetrate the most audacious and desperate climax of his long career of wickedness. This is his last chance and he stakes his all upon it. For a thousand years he has been planning his desperate scheme and now is his opportunity to accomplish it.

Perhaps he has come back to earth in the very form and nature of man. Perhaps he has mimicked the Son of God to the last extreme and been granted the power to become incarnate, a fiend in human form.

And so he presents himself to men in his last disguise, a gifted glorious man, and begins to gather around him the restless spirits, who with unsanctified natures, have been tolerating the restraints of a holy government and fretting under the restrictions of Christ's authority.

In alluring light and with ingenious disguise he pictures before them, as once he did to the Son of God on the high mountain of the wilderness, the splendors of a universal empire, combining all the power, the wealth, the grandeur of the world in its supreme civilization, all the glorious culture of those days, and promises to them the aid of supernatural power and even the brilliant dream of dethroning the Son of God from the very heavens as well as the earth, and raising humanity to its grandest possibility, even to “be as gods” and sit upon the throne of the Infinite and Eternal.

This was the dream of Eden. This was the proud ambition which prompted the building of Babel's tower. This was the audacious proposal that He made to the Son of God in the wilderness. This no doubt, will be his last exploit. It was for this that he left his high place in the heavens. This has been the purpose of his grand rebellion from its inception, to take the very place of God and cast Him from His throne.

One by one the restless and unholy spirits of earth gather to his side until at length their numbers are as “the sand of the sea” and as a mighty army of millions, perhaps billions of men, armed not only with the weapons of earth but of hell, and, led by this brilliant archangel, they oppose the camp of the Son of God and besiege the “beloved city” itself.

To human reason and sight it will doubtless seem at first a fearful and formidable assault, but if we are to judge by the dramatic picture of the Apocalypse the suspense will not be long. The tragedy will be swift and terrible.

The fire of God will fall from heaven and in a moment the myriad ranks of earth and hell will melt away, engulfed in devouring flame. Satan will again be caught and cast out in eternal imprisonment not now into the abyss, the scene of his former confinement, but into the Lake of Fire where the Beast and the False Prophet are already suffering torment day and night forever.

Henceforth the devil's career is ended. No more will he return to the earth or go forth to other realms to deceive and to destroy. He has been tested to the uttermost and found to be incorrigibly bad, and human nature has been proved and tried and it also has utterly and signally failed.

Now the story of time is to end. The last of earth's dispensations has run its course, and the Eternal Cycle is about to begin. And so the final scene so long prepared at last appears, and before the vision of the Seer there rises a spectacle of majesty and terror and a tragedy of woe more awful than mortal or angel has ever gazed upon before.

It is the Great White Throne. It is the final judgment. It is the resurrection of the wicked. It is the passing out of the old earth and heaven and the ushering in of the new creation.

It is the symbol of sovereignty and of judgment. Its greatness tells of the importance of this august occasion. It is the greatest day that earth has ever seen. It is the grand assize before which all the millions of the past are to appear. Its whiteness speaks of the immaculate justice and unerring wisdom which are to characterize the Tribunal. There will be no mistakes here. There will be no misunderstandings here. There will be no hasty judgments here. Everything will be right and everything will be final and from this court there will be no appeal.

HE WHO SITS UPON IT

It is the throne of Jehovah. It is the throne of the Son of God. The form that sits enwrapped in majesty is He who once stood a prisoner before Pilate's judgment hall. Pilate and Jesus meet at last, but, oh, how altered are the circumstances!

Yes, it is even He, and many will remember in that day how once He said, "A time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned" (John 5:28-29). "The Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son" (5:22). "And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man" (5:27).

The men of Athens will be there to remember how once a passing missionary stood in the Areopagus and cried, "God . . . commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).

The Gentiles of Cesarea will remember how Peter said, "He is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead" (10:42). Yes, it is Jesus. It is He who came to save the world, and they who have rejected the blood of the Lamb are now to realize what is meant by "the wrath of the Lamb" (Revelation 6:16).

Once or twice during His earthly life there blazed from His eye and from His tongue the foregleam of judgment fire, as when He cursed the barren fig tree and it withered at His word; or, as when he uttered those awful woes against the Scribes and Pharisees which we read in Matthew, finishing up at last with the fearful words, "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?" (Matthew 23:33).

Now His mission of mercy is accomplished. His mediatorial work is finished, and He sits down upon the throne of absolute and impartial judgment, and there is something in His countenance and His bearing so awful that the very universe shudders, and from His face the earth and heaven flee away; the sun goes out in darkness; the firmament is rolled up as a scroll; the stars forget to shine, and the earth reels and staggers like a drunken man.

"And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. . . . The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them" (Revelation 20:12-13). Now earth's myriads who had lived and died and slept on through the 1,000 years are ushered back to life again by an awful power which compels them to live. The wretched spirit of the criminal steals back into his more wretched form, his face distorted with agony and his risen body bearing the impress of the soul that abused it and that now comes back to share its doom. Just as truly as the righteous rise so will the wicked come forth from the graves of earth, from the graves of ocean, from the elements into which their bodies have been dissolved by decay, or by cremation. God will know where to find them. Each soul will take on a body absolutely fitted to its nature and reflecting its quality and character and they will cringe before that awful throne and form a spectacle more terrible even than judgment.

Oh, soul, you may for a little season cut the frail cord that binds you to your body; you may suspend for a little the functions of that mortal frame and "shuffle off," as you call it "the mortal coil." But remember you have got to live forever. That soul can never die and that body must come forth to life and judgment to be "judged according to what [he] had done" (Revelation 20:12).

Oh, how can sinners stand in that great day! Oh, how can any of us meet that awful test? Beloved, we cannot stand; we cannot meet it; we dare not face that dread tribunal and that holy God.

And we need not, because there is another book that will be opened in that day. It is the Lamb's book of life. It is the record of those names that accepted eternal life as the free gift of the Savior's love and the purchase of His precious blood. It is a book of mercy. It is a record of grace, and for those who are entered there the judgment is past. The Lord bore it Himself in their stead and in that dreadful day they will sit with Him among the justified and among the judges of the world.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

Show how satan not changing through the ages wants man to follow in his footsteps.

Continue describing the order of events.

Revelation 21:1-22:5

The scenes of this chapter follow earth's final tragedy. There has been a crisis, a catastrophe, a fearful cataclysm. Before the face of Him upon the Great White Throne the earth and the heavens fled away and there was found no place for them. Just as man had to pass from the earthly to the heavenly, from the natural to the supernatural, from the mortal to the resurrection life through the gates of death, so now the material universe itself has to pass through the resurrection by way of death. The old planet is consumed with flame, the firmament and the heavenly bodies pass through a similar convulsion or dissolution, and from the wreck there emerged a new heaven and a new earth.

This did not occur at the commencement of the millennial age. Then undoubtedly great changes in earth's climate and surface took place, but they were only partial. Now it would seem the whole fabric of the universe must pass through the great transition and have its resurrection too. It would seem as if the taint of sin and the touch of Satan had left defilement and pollution upon the very atmosphere of the universe and God must have a great housecleaning and wash out with flames of fire every vestige, every memory of the awful crisis through which nature and the universe have passed.

And so by some mighty process the existing universe is dissolved and out of it emerges a new creation.

Now this is not the first time this doctrine has been revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Back in Isaiah we read,

Behold, I will create
new heavens and a new earth.
The former things will not be remembered,
nor will they come to mind.
But be glad and rejoice forever
in what I will create,
For I will create Jerusalem to be a delight
and its people a joy.
I will rejoice over Jerusalem
and take delight in my people;
The sound of weeping and crying
will be heard in it no more.
(65:17-19).

And again in Second Peter 3:7-13, we are told that as the earth was once destroyed by a flood of water it is to be once more destroyed by a sea of fire. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. (3:7)

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. (3:11-13)

This is precisely the teaching of the Revelation, and it looks forward not to the millennial reign of Christ but to the great crisis that is to follow it. The apostle's eye is looking on to the end of the panorama and taking it all in the light of final consummation.

The New Earth, God's Abode

It will be the personal residence of God. "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God" (21:3). This is a most significant statement. At the present time this earth is not the residence of God in any primary sense. For a little while it was the residence of Jesus Christ, but He was far from home and His Father's throne. At present it is the residence of the Holy Spirit but He is here as a visitor calling out a people to be gathered home. It is a far outlying world. It is a distant sphere that rolls in its orbit of darkness around the central throne; somewhere else today is the personal seat of God and the metropolis of the universe. When Jesus Christ ascended He went home to His father's throne. He left the realms of earth; He passed through the heavens, He ascended far above all heavens and somewhere yonder in space He rested and sat down at the right hand of God.

No Death or Sorrow

It will be a world without death, disease or sorrow. There will be no more crying. There will be no more pain. There will be no death; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. This does not only mean that there will be no tears shed in that happy world, but that all the tears that were ever shed will be turned into joy, that they will be more than healed and there will be no single memory or shadow of pain or grief to gall the perfect felicity of eternal years. Oh, sorrowing one, be patient. Lift up your heart. Rejoice! "Weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5).

No Sin

The other feature of the renovated earth will be that there will be no sin, and nothing that defiles will enter into the holy city and the happy life of the coming ages. Satan will never tempt again. There will be no more curse or cursed one. Never again will God have to cloud His face and perform the strange work of judgment which He so little loves, but the universe will settle down to everlasting love and uninterrupted joy. We will be established and will know that we will never fall again. Angels will be confirmed in their high and holy state and the very shadow of evil will at last be forgotten. Heaven will be so pure that evil will not be thought, remembered or conceived. The curse of time is to know both good and evil. In the innocence of those happy years man will not know evil but only good. Oh, for that day to come when the crushing, defiling shadow of sin and doubt and fear will never fall again!

The New Jerusalem

The description of this city of light and glory is not a mere figure or symbol. God is not playing with words when He gives us the dimensions, the structure, the very colors of the heavenly city. He means that it is an actual fact and not a mere figure of speech. There will be a real world, a real body of physical beings, a real Christ in His risen state and a real city with all the glory and splendor of which these vivid descriptions give us but a faint approximation.

The Light of the City

There is no light and there is no sun. If our sun has been renewed in yonder heavens, it is but as a taper compared with the glory of Him who is the Light of Heaven. "For the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp" (21:23). God Himself sheds His effulgence through the eternal day and he who is the "light, in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5) fills the heaven with the glory and brightness of His supernal presence. There is no need for rest. There is no cessation of the song or service. There is no yesterday and no tomorrow. There is no chronology and there is no time, but it is one glad, eternal now, and the happy beings know that their joy can never end, their day can never have a period.

The Temple of Heaven

There is no temple there for God is the temple. No outward forms of worship are necessary in our conventional sense, for it is all worship, all love, all fellowship. Perhaps no language will be needed, but knowing as we are known, communing with God in the silent eloquence of the Spirit and undoubtedly knowing each other's hearts as perfectly as God knows ours, heart to heart and soul to soul will flow together like kindred drops of water or globules of air and all will ever breathe out and send forth their adoration unto Him, who is the Source of Life and the Supreme Object of their worship and love.

Yes, this is the city for which Abraham looked, the "city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Hebrews 11:10). This is "the heavenly Jerusalem" of which the apostle wrote where dwell the "thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly...the church of the firstborn" (Heb. 12:22-23). This is the goal of ancient hope, the dream of ancient prophecy and the eternal reward of the sacrifices of the saint, the sufferings of the martyr and the love of those who counted all but loss for Christ.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

Who are the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem?

Rev. 21:6-7, 27 Rev. 22:14

Who are the outcasts?

Col. 3:5 1 John 2:15 Rev. 21:8 Rev. 22:15

How do you picture this new heaven and earth from the information scripture provides?

Isa. 11:1-10 Isa. 55:1 Zech. 9:10 Heb. 12:22-24 1Pet. 1:4 Rev. 3:12

When Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden God placed Cherubims and a flaming sword to guard the tree of life (Gen. 3:23, 24). **Now in Revelation 22:2, the tree of life appears again on both sides of the river bearing fruit.**

Explain what the tree of life is.

Ezek. 47:12 Rev. 2:7 Rev. 22:14

Revelation 22:6-21

“Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy” (22:11). Soon human character will become crystallized. Men and women are settling down to their eternal state. The Lord’s coming will stereotype all conditions and there will be no place for change in those dreadful days; but even before the end men will reach the condition, where being past feeling they neither hope nor fear, and the most inspiring vision of the coming glory and the most awful warnings of the dark abyss are equally in vain. Surely the world is reaching this coarse material age and men just live on according to their natural tendency and trend—each hastening to his own place. Oh, how solemn! Oh, how terrible! Oh, let us make sure which way we are settling!

Then there follows an ardent and intense cry and prayer from the Spirit and the Bride for him to come (22:17). This is the meaning surely of this remarkable passage. It is the cry of the Holy Spirit, “Come, Lord Jesus.” It is the cry of the waiting Bride, “Come, beloved One.” The Holy Spirit has been entrusted with the executive administration of the present age with this one view of leading up to the Lord’s return. Oh, how He longs for the consummation! Oh how earnestly and ardently He has been working to this end! And whenever a human soul enters into the true condition of the Bride, the separation, education, love, fellowship and intimacy which alone can qualify us for Christ’s perfect love and eternal fellowship on the throne, the one cry of all our being is, “Come, Lord Jesus” (22:20).

Dear one, you may know by this whether you are the Bride or not. Are you saying, “Come”?

Next comes the universal call to all the world, the great evangelistic cry; the sending forth of the message to all the nations before the end. We have it in the 17th verse also. “Let him who hears say, ‘Come!’” This is the missionary cry. This is the angel flying in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel to preach unto all them that dwell upon the face of the earth, to all kindreds and peoples and tribes and tongues. This is the great movement of our time. This is the great trust committed to our hands. Let us take up the cry and pass it on until “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14).

Once more the Lord Himself now turns to the sinner and makes His last appeal in all the intense and solemn light of the things that have just been passing before our minds. It would seem as if His heart became overwhelmed as once before when He was marching into Jerusalem in triumph and all the grandeur of His surroundings passed swiftly out of His thoughts; and as He gazed upon the city at His feet He could only think of its peril and coming doom, and yielding bitter weeping and addressed to impenitent Israel that plaintive appeal, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes” (Luke 19:42).

It is said that once a squadron of Austrian cavalry were sweeping in review in front of a great assembly when out from the crowd there stepped a little child in heedlessness who toddled across the way unnoticed until it was just in front of the galloping dragoons. It seemed impossible to save its little life. A moment more and with a mighty thunder those iron heels would dash out its little life. But there was one man equal to the occasion. Leaning forward from his seat, holding himself in the saddle with great dexterity by his feet, he reached in front of his fiery charger until his hands just swept the ground, and by a dexterous movement he caught the little one just in time, lifted it from destruction and recovered his seat without the line for a moment breaking, when a mighty cheer like a thousand thunders told the joy and admiration of that great multitude.

So the Lord Jesus Christ is Himself marching on to His final triumph and almost at the crisis of His appearing. Suddenly He pauses in these closing messages, bends down from His throne and reaches out His hands in tenderness and love to you, poor lost one, who are standing across his path and must inexorably be crushed beneath the tread of the armies of the judgment unless you are swiftly saved. It is you, dear one, that He is calling now as he cries, “Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life” (Revelation 22:17). Often before had He said, “Come,” but never was there such a “Come” as this. Every barrier is broken down, every difficulty is reduced to the simplicity of trust and love. He does not even demand that you should know much or do much or feel much or attempt anything, but just come. Move toward Him. Let your heart reach out, let your prayer cry out, let your will resolve the best you can to follow Him, and He will count it coming; as has He not already said, “Whoever comes to me I will never drive away” (John 6:37)?

Yet once more we cannot resist lingering for a moment to notice the deep and longing desire on the part of the Lord Himself to come. We have heard the Spirit’s cry for Him to come. We have felt the Bride’s deep longing that He should come; but now behold Him expressing His own intense desire to come. Pressing into language its uttermost fullness of meaning He cries, “Yes, I am coming soon” (Revelation 22:20). This is His hour as well as ours. This is the reward of His sufferings, the coronation of His once thorn-crowned head, the joy of His meeting with His bride and His loved ones, the full fruition of all His suffering and shame. Will we not help the Master’s joy and hasten His coming?

Finally the response of his people’s heart is, “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus” (22:20).

Is this our amen? Is this our response? And will we take the “even so,” and by His grace make our lives agree with our language, evening up everything we say or do to this blessed hope, this simple watchword, “Even so, Come Lord Jesus, Come quickly”?

Christ is coming; this we know
Let our lives be “Even so.”

“The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God’s people. Amen” (22:21).

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

What are the warnings of urgency to believers and non-believers in this last chapter of the Bible?

Luke 12:35-38 2 Pet. 3:1-18