

Revelation
The Coming King
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REVELATION

Revelation is the last book of the Bible and a very important and exciting one.

In Scripture God has graciously revealed Himself to all who will read it. We can learn that God created all things, that Christ died for all men, and that the Holy Spirit lives in all believers today. But in Revelation God gives us even more—an exciting picture of His future plans. Think of **God** telling **man** what He is going to do!

The Lord Jesus often did this when He was here with His disciples. These disciples were not only His servants, but He called them His friends. Because of this He told them many things which would happen later, John 15.15. He gave them some details of His coming in Matthew 24, and the apostles were given more about this by the Holy Spirit in their writings—Paul in 1 and 2 Thesalonians and 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Peter in his second letter.

The Spirit had revealed a great deal about God's plans to the Old Testament prophets from Isaiah to Malachi, especially Isaiah and Daniel, also some more in the Psalms.

But the book of Revelation ties all this together and adds much more. The apostle John wrote it and he often used language from the Old Testament without saying where it came from. Some other New Testament writers did the same but other times they quoted the original writer, David or Isaiah, by name, as in Romans 4.6; 10.20. But in Revelation John joined together the words from the prophets and from the Lord as part of what he was saying. For example, Christ will come with clouds, 1.7, as Daniel and the Lord had said, Daniel 7.13; Matthew 24.30; and all Gentiles will see Him and mourn as Zechariah had said, and John had quoted in his gospel, Zechariah 12.10; John 19.37. We will notice more examples as we read this book of Revelation.

The one chosen to write this great book was the youngest of

the twelve apostles. His father was Zebedee, his brother, James. All three, father and sons, were fishermen until the Lord Jesus called John and James with Peter to follow Him, Matthew 4.21. Later the Lord called these three and nine others, and named them apostles, Matthew 10.2.

These three men, Peter, James and John, had a special place close to the Lord, Luke 8.51; 9.28 and special work to do. But they had a lot to learn first. The Lord had called James and John the sons of thunder, Mark 3.17. They seemed very quick to call down judgment on others, Luke 9.49,54. These two brothers went to the Lord to ask Him for the highest place in His Glory. The Lord refused, Mark 10.35-40. Yet He still chose them for special work, Mark 13.3; 14.33.

John knew that he had a place close to the Lord. Five times he called himself the disciple whom Jesus loved, 13.23; 19.26; 20.2; 21.7,20. He was one of the three chosen to see the glorified Lord on the mountain. He leaned on Jesus' breast when they ate together. He took care of Mary after the Lord had died, and he and Peter saw the empty grave and believed that Christ had risen from death. They were both important in the early church, Acts 1.13; 3.1; 8.14; Galatians 2.9, and suffered for the name of Christ, Acts 4.3,13,19. They wrote books in the New Testament and John wrote the great Revelation.

At the very beginning of this book we see a wonderful verse. God the Holy Spirit promised a blessing to all who read or hear the book of Revelation and keep these things, 1.3. So we are part way into a blessing already! But also at the end of the book He warned of punishment to any who try to add or take away anything from it, 22.18,19. This tells us how serious God thinks it is to change His words, and how important He considers Revelation.

There are three main sections in Revelation:

1. The Present Age, chapters 1-3
2. The Great Tribulation, chapters 4-18
3. The Coming of Christ, chapters 19-22

To understand prophecy it is necessary to live a holy life. You cannot disobey God's laws and expect to understand His plans. The first half of the book of Daniel tells how he and his three

friends obeyed God and suffered for it. The second part gives us God's great revelations about the future.

The book of Revelation is the same in that the first three chapters give us Christ's messages to seven churches, and the rest of the book tells us what God is going to do in this world. The study of prophecy should make us live holier lives, 1 John 3.3.

1. THE PRESENT AGE, chapters 1-3

In the first part of Revelation, there are two sections:

1. John and his Lord, chapter 1
2. Messages to seven churches, chapters 2 and 3

1. John and his Lord, chapter 1

The first chapter contains the Introduction, verses 1-3; the writer and his prayer, verses 4-8; and John's vision of Christ, verses 9-20.

Introduction, 1.1-3

V.1 This book is a revelation of Jesus Christ and His coming in glory. The disciples had wanted to know when the Lord would restore the kingdom. But He had told John and the other apostles that they were not to know the time of His coming again. The Father had put this in His own authority, Acts 1.7. This is not to say that Christ is less than God, but the Lord Jesus always gave honour to His Father, John 8.29,49. So here we find God revealing things to us and the order of the revelation of this book is:

God

Jesus Christ

His angel

John

God's servants

Christ is revealed in all Scripture, Luke 24.27, but the word revelation (apocalypse, unveiling) is used of His return in glory, 1 Corinthians 1.7; 2 Thessalonians 1.7; 1 Peter 1.7 3; 4.13. The book of Revelation also reveals the glory of the Lord Jesus; He is mentioned 48 times in the book.

When would these things take place? Verse 1 was written

nearly 1,900 years ago and it says **soon**. But we must remember that a thousand years is with the Lord as one day, 2 Peter 3.8. Today we can surely hope that the Lord will soon return. God has decreed that the events of Revelation **must** come to pass. And God's word will never fail, so how soon it must be now!

God often used angels to speak to His people. He revealed to Moses His covenant with Israel by angels. He spoke to Hagar, Abraham, Manoah and his wife, Elijah and others by an angel. Here we see angels are prominent again in Revelation; they are mentioned 62 times. In the last chapter Jesus said that He had sent His angel to reveal these things through John to the churches, 22.16.

John saw and heard many strange and wonderful things in Revelation and we must look for the meaning. Many verses in the Bible are like this. For example, before He died, the Lord Jesus said that He would be "lifted up"; this meant that He would die on a cross, John 12.33,34.

So in Revelation; everything has a meaning. Even though we do not understand it at first, the Lord is telling us something. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you to understand.

V.2 John was a faithful witness and recorded in this book what God said to him about Jesus Christ. He also wrote what he saw in visions. However he was commanded not to write down some things which he heard, 10.4. Paul also was told not to write what he heard in the third heaven, 2 Corinthians 12.3,4. God had special revelations for these men and they obeyed God by not writing them down.

V.3 First God gave John the wonderful promise of blessing for all who read the words of this prophecy. The promise is also for those who listen to someone else read it. But it is necessary to **keep** these words to get the promised blessing. It is possible for us to read and then forget, James 1.23. **Keeping** God's Word means to obey, Revelation 14.12, and we should remember that the time of the Lord's coming is near, so let us read, listen to, and keep His Word.

In Matthew 5 the Lord Jesus on earth gave nine promises of blessing called the "Beatitudes". In Revelation, from Heaven, He added seven more: 1.3; 14.13; 16.15; 19.9; 20.6; 22.7,14.

One of the interesting things about Revelation is the number of different names used for God. The following list gives twelve different names and how often they appear in each chapter:

Names of God in Revelation																								
chapter	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	total	
Lord	1		1				1				2			1	1	1	1		1				10	
Lord God				1							1				1	1		1	2		1	2	10	
God		4	1	6		2	1	7	2	2	1		7	5	1		6	5	6	2	3	7	4	86
Son of God	1																						1	
Holy Spirit	2	4	4	2	1						1			1			1	1		1	1		19	
Son of Man	1													1									2	
Jesus														1			1	2	1		1		6	
Jesus Christ	5										1												6	
Lord Jesus																					1		1	
Lord Jesus																								
Christ																						1	1	
Christ											1	1								2			4	
Lamb					4	2	4						1	1	4	1		2		2		5	2	28

The writer and his prayer, 1.4-8

V.4 John stated that he was the writer and that the message was for seven churches in the province of Asia in the old Roman Empire, now called Turkey. All 13 of Paul's letters begin in the same way and give first the writer's name; James, 1 and 2 Peter and Jude are the same. In all of these except James, the writers ask that God might give grace or mercy and peace to the readers.

Here John asked for grace and peace from God and the seven Spirits, v.4, and from Jesus Christ, vs. 5-8; God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, see also 2 Corinthians 13.14.

Grace comes from the God of all grace, 1 Peter 5,10, and is the basis for our salvation and justification, Romans 3.24; Ephesians 2.8. We also have peace from the God of peace, Romans 5.1, and His own peace to keep us, Philippians 4.7.

God is the eternal One, He always was and always will be, Exodus 3.14; Deuteronomy 33.27.

There is only one Holy Spirit, Ephesians 4.4, and the words the seven Spirits refer to the Holy Spirit in all His fulness, Isaiah 11.2.

The Holy Spirit is mentioned ten times in Revelation 1 to 3, and nine times in the rest of the book. Here He is before the throne of God. The throne of God is mentioned forty times in Revelation, only ten times in all the rest of the New Testament. This teaches us that God will still rule in the end.

5 John also prayed that grace and truth might be given to the churches from Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus is described here as:

- (1) **The faithful Witness**, Isaiah 55.4; John 8.14. The Lord Jesus always told the truth, even when it meant that He would be put to death, Psalm 15.4; Matthew 26.64.

We too should be faithful witnesses, Acts 1.8; Revelation 1.9; 6.9; 12.11.

- (2) **The Firstborn** from among the dead. Christ rose from death and some day all men will rise from death, John 5.29. Christ will be the supreme Man in the new world, Colossians 1.18. "First-born" does not mean the first in time, it means the first in **position**. Others were raised from death before Christ, 1 Kings 17.22; 2 Kings 4.35; Matthew 9.25; Luke 8.54; John 11.44,' but He is the Head of all. This is His title at present.

- (3) **The Prince of Kings**. The Lord Jesus Christ will be the most important King; He will be called King of kings, 17.14; 19.16.

Jesus Christ:

In the past, the faithful Witness

In the present, Firstborn from death

In the future, Prince of all kings

These words tell us who He is, and the next words, what He has done for us.

- 6 (1) He loves us. This has always been true, Jeremiah 31.3. He loved us before we were born, He surely loves us now and always will.

- (2) He has set us free from sin and cleansed us from all evil. Sin is like slavery, we are chained by sin and cannot free ourselves, only the Son can set us free, John 8.36. Sin is also like filth, we cannot wash it away, only the blood of Christ can make us clean, John 13.10; Hebrews 10.22.

- (3) He has made us to be a kingdom of priests. This is what God offered to all Israel, He wanted them to be a special people for Himself, Exodus 19.6 but they failed, and only the men of the tribe of Levi were allowed to serve as priests. But the Holy Spirit taught Peter that now all Christians born from above are priests. How are we priests? A priest in the Old Testament offered sacrifices and worshipped God. But today all Christians may and should worship God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 2.5,9. Christ is the King of kings and He is also our Great High Priest, Hebrews 1.8; 4.14.

In the past: He loved us and shed His blood.

In the present: He loves us and makes us worship as priests to God.

(It is important to know that Christ has made US priests; not other men to be priests for us.)

In the future: He will still love us when He appears as King of the world. We will give Him the glory and He will rule for ever and ever.

- 7 So we see God and the Holy Spirit in verse 4 and the Son of God in verses 5 and 6. Two more verses tell us what Christ is ready to do, and who He is.

We have read that the time is near, 1.3, and here He is already coming. He will come with clouds as Daniel prophesied, Daniel 7.13; Matthew 24.30. He went up to heaven first when only His disciples saw Him, but when He returns every person will see Him. Those who hate Him, those who reject Him, will suddenly see the Son of God coming back. John wrote that *all men will mourn* at that time, as Zechariah had prophesied, Zechariah 12.10. No wonder they are afraid! (Verse 7 is a good example of how John used words from Old and New Testament prophecy, and added more details as given to him by the Spirit of God.)

We say *Amen* because we know that God will judge sinners and we want Christ to get the glory.

- 8 Now the Lord speaks and declares that He is the Alpha and Omega. These are the first and the last letters of the Greek

alphabet. Christ is the Logos, the Word of God, and everything we know about God has come to us through Christ. The words of the Bible are made up of the different letters of the alphabet, so the title *Alpha and Omega* means that Christ is the complete revelation of all that God is. He is the exact representation of God's inner nature, Hebrews 1.3.

Some Bibles add the word God in verse 8. In Revelation it is sometimes difficult to be sure who is speaking, God or the Son of God, because what is said is true either way.

In verse 4 God is described as the Eternal One who always was and always will be. He is the Lord who is, who was, and who is to come. In verse 8 the Son of God uses these same words about Himself. These words *is to come* say more than just that He always will exist in the future. We may say that God, as the coming One, is the Son of God. He came once, He is coming again.

The Lord also said He is the **Almighty**. The Almighty is the God of all power without any limit. Such power was needed to create the world, to redeem sinners, and to overcome God's enemies as in the book of Revelation. God is called the Almighty nine times in Revelation: 1.8; 4.8; 11.17; 15.3; 16.7,14; 19.6,15; 21.22; (only once in the rest of the New Testament, 2 Corinthians 6.18).

John's vision of Christ, 1.9-20

This book is the revelation of Jesus Christ and Christ Himself is here revealed to John. The apostle described what he saw and heard.

1. John himself, vs. 9,10
2. The Voice, v.11
3. The Vision, vs. 12-16
4. The Words, vs. 17-20

1. The apostle John, vs. 9,10

9 None of the apostles set himself up as a ruler over the Christians. Peter called himself an elder like those to whom he was writing, 1 Peter 5.1. John did the same, 2 John 1; 3 John 1.

Here John called himself a brother writing to brothers. The Christians were having trouble because of persecution from the government and John shared in that too. The believers had Christ

as their King and they were waiting with patience for Him to come.

The little island of Patmos is in the sea near the city of Ephesus and John was sent there as a prisoner. His crime? He preached the Word of God and gave his testimony that he believed in Jesus Christ.

When Joseph was unfairly cast into prison God gave him a special ability to interpret dreams, Genesis 40. Daniel was a slave when he was used to explain the king's dream, Daniel 2. Here John was given this great revelation when he was a prisoner on Patmos. God has His own purposes in everything.

10 One Sunday he was filled with the Holy Spirit and heard a great voice from someone behind him. It was as loud as a trumpet. This word *great* is found 82 times in Revelation.

2. The Voice, v.11

11 It was the voice of the Lord Jesus and He commanded John to write in a book everything which he was about to see. He was to send this book to the seven churches of Asia Minor, v.4. These churches are now named.

3. The Vision, vs. 12-16

12 John turned to see the Speaker. At first he saw seven gold lampstands. Moses made a gold lampstand with seven lamps for the Holy Place in the tabernacle, Exodus 37.17,23. Solomon made ten lampstands for the temple, 1 Kings 7.49. These were taken by Nebuchadnezzar, Jeremiah 52.19, and perhaps one of them was in the king's palace when the fingers wrote on the wall, Daniel 5.3,5. In a vision Zechariah saw a lampstand with seven lamps, Zechariah 4.2. Here the seven lampstands are pictures of the seven churches, v.20, and Christ is standing among them.

13-16 The One John saw made him think of the Lord Jesus, the Son of Man. Daniel called the Messiah the Son of Man, Daniel 7.13. The Lord Jesus often called Himself Son of Man, and John had heard Him do so many times. Here John recorded nine things about the Lord Jesus.

1) He wore a long robe down to feet like what a priest or a king would wear, Exodus 28.4; 1 Kings 22.10. The Lord

Jesus is both our High Priest and the King of kings.

- 2) The girdle around His chest was made of gold, which speaks of His deity. John the Baptist also had a girdle, made of leather, which he wore lower down, around his waist. Christ's breasts speak of His tender care for all God's children, even when He has to warn them.
- 3) His head and His hair were as white as wool, as white as snow. Here John used the same words that Daniel used to describe the Eternal God, Daniel 7.9. Christ is equally God.
- 4) His eyes were like a flame of fire. God can see everything and know everything. With the fire He will judge whatever is not according to His holy will. In the letters to seven churches, He says seven times, *I know your works*. The word *fire* is used 25 times in Revelation, mostly for God's judgment.
- 5) His feet were like fine bronze in a hot furnace. This too speaks of judgment because He is ready to judge and stamp out all that is opposed to God's will. God's throne was like fire in Daniel 7.9.
- 6) His voice was loud enough to swallow up all other voices and sounds, like the sea roaring. It was very frightening, Ezekiel 1.24; 43.2.
- 7) In His right hand He held seven stars. His hands had been pierced with nails and still had the marks, Luke 24.39. The Son upholds all things, Hebrews 1.3, but here the stars stand for these seven churches, v.20.
- 8) The sharp sword is a picture of the Word of God, Hebrews 4.12, which comes from the mouth of Christ, the Logos, the Alpha and Omega.
- 9) His face shone as bright as the sun. John had seen this before, Matthew 17.2 . Also see Ezekiel 8.1,2.

The Lord loved both Daniel and John and He gave them these visions of Himself, Daniel 10.5,6,11,19; Revelation 19.11-15. They described Him in the same way; they were both impressed with the brilliant light shining from His eyes and face, and with the thundering sound of His voice. Here are their visions of Christ:

VISIONS OF CHRIST

	Daniel 10	Revelation 1	Revelation 19
garment	linen	down to the feet	dipped in blood
girdle	gold, on the waist	gold, on His breast	—
head and hair	—	white as wool, as snow	many crowns
eyes	lamps of fire	flame of fire	flame of fire
feet	and arms, bronze	bronze, in a furnace	—
voice	like many people	like many waters	—
hand	—	holding seven stars	—
mouth	—	sharp sword	sharp sword
face	like lightning	like the sun	—
body	like a beryl	—	—

In Daniel 10 the Son of God was in conflict with wicked spirits, Daniel 10.13 In Revelation 1 He was ready to judge His people, and in Revelation 19 He defeated His enemies, v.15.

In the Song of Solomon also the Bride describes her Beloved from head to foot, Song of Solomon 5.10-16. This is our vision as we think of His love to us. We should however remember that He must judge everything which is not according to His will.

4. The Words, vs. 17-20

17 The glorious visions of Christ had a great effect on Daniel and John, Daniel 10.8,9. Imagine John suddenly hearing a voice like a trumpet blast behind him saying *I am the First and the Last. What you see write in a book.* He turned and saw a Person who at once reminded him of the Lord Jesus. He wore a long white robe with a gold band around His breast. This Person had head and hair as white as wool or snow. His eyes looked like flames of fire, His face shone like the sun, His feet like brass. His voice sounded louder than a huge water-fall or the roaring sea. He held seven stars in one hand and there was a sharp sword in His mouth. His face shone so brightly that it was like looking into the sun at noon. No wonder that John fainted!

John fell at the Lord's feet as if he had died. The Lord had been holding seven stars in His right hand, but now He laid His right hand on John and spoke to him words of comfort, no doubt more softly than in verse 15.

The Lord Jesus often comforted people by *touching* them with His hands:

Matthew 8.3,15; 9.25,29; 17.17; 19.15; 20.34

Mark 1.31; 6.5; 7.33; 8.22; 9.2; 10.13

Luke 4.40; 13.13; 22.51

And He allowed His disciples to touch Him, 1 John 1.1.

The Son of God laid aside His glory when He became man and even little children were not afraid of Him, Mark 9.36; 10.16. John himself leaned on Jesus' breast, John 13:23. Why then was John now afraid? We have no idea of the glory of the Lord. It is not a word which we can really understand. John was here suddenly faced with this glory and it made him terribly afraid. John had known and believed in Christ when He was here, but it was a terrifying sight to see Him in His glory.

The apostle was overcome by the sight of the glory of the Son of God. No man can bear to see God in all His glory, Exodus 33.20; 1 Timothy 6.16, so the Son veiled most of His glory when He became Man.

Now the Lord told John not to be afraid even though the Eternal God was speaking to him. He is the First and the Last; from eternity to eternity He is God, Psalm, 90.2. Isaiah revealed God as the First and the Last, Isaiah 44.6; 48.12. This means He existed before anyone else, there is no other God, and no one will exist longer than He.

18 He was alive, but He had been dead. Now He was alive again and would never die a second time. He is alive forever and ever and the keys of everything are in His control. He is in charge of death and the place where dead people are. He is the eternal and all-powerful Son of God. This is what the Lord told John.

19 Then He commanded John to write down the vision, the things that are, and the things to come. This verse gives us an outline of the book of Revelation.

1. What John had seen, the vision of Christ, chapter 1
2. The things that are, the conditions in the churches, chapters 2,3
3. Future things, chapters 4-22

Jehovah knows all the future, Isaiah 45.21; Daniel 2.28.

20 We cannot understand all the pictures of Revelation, but sometimes we can get help from the Old Testament. Here the Lord explained the meaning of two things which John had seen:

The seven stars (v.16) are the angels of the seven churches.

The seven lampstands (v.12) are the seven churches.

Stars stand for angels in Job 38.7 and Isaiah 14.13...The lampstand gives light in a dark place and so the church gives light in the world of darkness, Matthew 5.14-16; Acts 13.47.

The churches should shine like stars.

Who are the angels of the churches? In chapters 2 and 3 we will see that there are seven messages to the seven angels of the churches, but Christ spoke directly to the people in the church. Some books teach that these angels are spirits and every church has a spirit being who looks after it. It is true that angels have been sent to take care of us, Hebrews 1.14; Acts 5.19; 8.26; 10.22; 12.7. Again angels watch the churches to see if people obey God's Word, 1 Corinthians 11.10; Ephesians 3.10; 1 Peter 1.12; 1 Timothy 5.21.

But the word angel also means *messenger* and is used that way seven times: Matthew 11.10; Mark 1.2; Luke 7.24,27; 9.52; 2 Corinthians 12.7; James 2.25. Many people could not read in those early days and the apostle Paul wanted his letters to be read and understood, Colossians 4.16. We may think of the *messenger* of the church as one who read letters to the church and wrote letters for the church, perhaps also taking them himself as there was no postal service. Today he would be called the *secretary* of the church.

2. Messages to the churches, chapters 2 and 3

The first part of Revelation is about the present Church Age, and chapter 1 has told us about John and his Lord. We will now

read carefully the seven messages of the Lord Jesus Christ to the seven churches.

Some of the letters have seven parts. They all follow the same plan except there are a few gaps.

Who was speaking.

What was good

What was bad

What to do

Warning

Message to the remnant

Promise to the victor

1. EPHESUS, 2.1-7

Who was speaking

1 The Lord, who was holding the seven stars (the seven angels) in His right hand. He was walking among the seven churches, 1.13,16. This means that all churches are responsible to Him and He has the right to tell them what to do. He is the Chief Shepherd and Bishop, 1 Peter 2.25; 5.4. (This is like Matthew 28.18-20, where the Lord said that all authority was His, and then told His disciples what they had to do. First His authority, v.1, then His command, v.5.)

What was good

In the seven letters the Lord always pointed out what was good in the church and praised the believers for this. The Lord loves us and looks for things He can praise in our lives. It is our privilege to be like Him and look for things to praise in others.

Paul by the Holy Spirit did just that: 1 Corinthians 1.4-8; Philippians 1.3-6; Colossians 1.3-8; Philemon 4-7. Here in every letter the Lord said He knew their *works*, but in two, Sardis and Laodicea, He found nothing in these works for which He could praise them.

2,3 In Ephesus He found seven good things:

1. Their labour. This meant that they served the Lord until they were tired, Hebrews 6.10.

2. Their patience in times of trouble while waiting for Christ to come, 1.9.

3. The Spirit had warned the Ephesian elders, perhaps thirty years before this, that false teachers would come into their assembly, and some of their own members would teach wrong doctrine, Acts 20.29,30. Paul asked Timothy to stay in Ephesus because some people were trying to bring in false teaching, 1 Timothy 1.3-7, 20; 2 Timothy 1.15; 2.17. As Timothy was a young man this was a heavy responsibility. But he must have been faithful in his work because when John wrote Revelation the assembly at Ephesus had refused to let these false teachers stay in the church. The Lord has use for such faithful young men.

4. There were even some men who had claimed to be apostles. The church at Ephesus had to decide whether they were true apostles or not. So they judged these men according to the Word of God and found that they were liars. This was a very serious charge but the church was able to prove it.

5. They could bear and endure trouble from outside.

6. Their patience is mentioned again, also...

7. Their labour for His sake. This showed that they continued to serve and be patient without becoming weary.

What was bad

4 Everything they had done at first had been done because they loved the Lord with their whole heart. But this love had cooled. They still served Him but not only because they loved Him, 1 Thessalonians 1.3. They had their own reasons for serving. They could even judge false apostles for other reasons than loving the Lord. Even before this their love to Paul, the Lord's servant, had changed, Acts 20.37; 2 Timothy 1.15.

Is this love important? Yes, God is love and most of all He wants our love, Jeremiah 1 John 4.19.

What to do

5 Then they were on a high level in their love for the Lord. But this love had faded. This is true of all of us, for we lose our appreciation of His love for us. But the Lord told them they could

do something to change this. They could repent and go back to their first works and first love. These early works included spreading the Gospel to all parts of the province of Asia, Acts 19.10,20. The Lord wanted their reason for service to be their love for Him, for:

Love and service go together.

Mary stands for love to Christ.

Martha stands for service to Christ. Luke 10.38,42.

We all need both to love and serve the Lord.

Suppose the church at Ephesus refused to obey the Lord's command to repent and to return to their first love? Then they would keep going *backwards*. There would be no progress in their Christian lives. More than that, the Lord would soon have to remove their lampstand. What would that mean? They would no longer be a light for the Gospel in a dark, heathen city. This would be very sad, for the Lord wants our lights to shine before men. Our lamps should not be placed under a bed or a basket, Mark 4.21. **Let your light shine!**

6 The Lord still looked for something to praise and He added another word of approval in verse 6. Here He said the believers in Ephesus hated the works of the Nicolaitans and so did He. Who were the Nicolaitans? The name is made up of two words: to *overcome*, found 16 times in Revelation; and the *people*, eight times in Revelation. So it means one or more persons who try to rule over the people. This is something the Lord hates. It is a serious matter when the Lord hates what you are doing. The Pharisees tried to rule over the people of Jerusalem, Matthew 23.4,7,13,15. In Peter's days some elders tried to rule over the church for their own benefit.

But the Lord did not want a few people ruling over the others to please themselves. He gave gifts to the church—teachers, shepherds—so the people could build themselves up in the knowledge of Christ. He hated the works of the Nicolaitans and so did the Ephesians. It was against the order the Lord had set up for His church, as Paul had written to this church years earlier, Ephesians 4.11,12.

Message to the remnant

In three of the churches there were some believers who did not go as far into sin as most of the others did. Christ had a special message for this remnant. We will take up these messages with the letters to these churches.

Promise to the overcomer

7 In each letter there is a command to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to all the churches; what Christ says the Spirit says. There is also a promise to everyone who gains the victory. Faith is the victory which overcomes the world, 1 John 5.4. Our battle is with wicked spirits in heavenly places but we are able to stand with God's armour on, Ephesians 6.11,12.

The Lord's promise here is to give to the believers the privilege of eating the fruit of the tree of life in God's great garden in heaven. This tree of life was in the garden of Eden and Adam was not allowed to eat its fruit, because he had sinned and had to die, Genesis 2.9; 3.22. Now it is God's will that we should live forever, John 10.10. Eating the fruit of the tree of life is a picture of living forever, Revelation 22.2,14. It is in Paradise. The dying thief went straight to Paradise and Paul was there for a short time, Luke 23.43; 2 Corinthians 12.4.

2. SMYRNA, 2.8-11

Ephesus and Laodicea are mentioned in the epistles of Paul but the other five churches are not referred to in the New Testament.

Smyrna means *myrrh* which was used in making the holy ointment for the Tabernacle and the priests, Exodus 30.33. This word is found in the New Testament in Matthew 2.11; Mark 15.23; John 19.39 the birth, death and burial of our Lord Jesus Christ. So myrrh speaks of the sorrow which the second church would have, but their faithfulness to Christ would be like a sweet smell to God.

Who was speaking

8 The Lord Jesus described Himself as the First and the Last, the One who had died but now lives, 1.17,18. This was a remarkable description of Christ for those who might be killed for their

faith. All through the ages there have been those who faced death because of their faith. They were stoned to death, they were killed with the sword, they were thrown to the lions. The saints of Smyrna might face death or trials and the Lord told them that He too had done so and He had risen again. He is the eternal God who Himself had overcome death. So would they.

What was good

9 The eternal Victor knew all about Smyrna, the suffering church. They were having great trouble and poverty. They had been robbed of everything, but really they were rich, Matthew 6.20; Hebrews 10.34 (Besides, the Lord Himself had become poor, He knows what it is like, 2 Corinthians 8.9.

In verse 2 there were those who said they were apostles and were liars. Now we have those who said they were Jews but were not. They persecuted the believers and said terrible things about them. This proved that they were servants of Satan. Jews persecuted the early Christians and stirred up the Gentiles to do the same, Acts 13.50; 14.2,19; 17.5,13; 18.2; 20.3; 21.11; 23.12; 25.2,3. Now here were people pretending to be Jews and doing these things.

What to do

10 The Lord had nothing bad to say about the church in Smyrna, but He told them not to be afraid of the trouble which they would soon have to face. False Jews from the synagogue of Satan would succeed in putting some of them into prison. This would test their faith to see if they would give up and go back to the Jewish or heathen religion. They would have terrible trouble, but it would not last forever, God would limit the time. They should be ready to die for Christ. He promised to give the faithful ones a crown of life.

Our trouble may last for more than ten actual days but God tells us that it will come to an end.

Christ had already given them the gift of eternal life ... all true believers have received this, John 17.3. But God will also give us wonderful rewards, if we serve Christ. Other crowns are mentioned in 1 Corinthians 9.25; 2 Timothy 4.8; James 1.12; 1 Peter 5.4.

Promise to the victor

11 The overcomer might lose his life for Christ's sake but he would not be hurt by the second death. The second death is the lake of fire, 20.14, and no believer will ever go there. Believers who have died will be raised from death at the first resurrection when the Lord Jesus comes back and they will not be hurt by the second death, 20.6. Here in verse 11 the Lord gives this special promise to His faithful martyrs.

3. PERGAMUM, 2.12-17

12 The sharp sword with two edges came from the mouth of the Lord, 1.16, and speaks of the Word of God, Hebrews 4.12. The Bible will build up God's people, Acts 20.32, but it can also cut away all evil. Every church and every believer must follow the Word of the Lord.

What was good

13 Works are good if they are the result of faith, and the Lord knows if we have faith and love and also if we are working for Him. The church of Pergamum was in a wicked city where most of the people worshipped idols. The Lord said Satan's throne was there and Satan lived there. Still the believers held fast to the name of Christ and did not deny the doctrine of Christ, even when one of them died rather than give up his faith in the Lord.

What was bad

14,15 But the Christians in Pergamum allowed in the church false teachers who strongly held two wrong doctrines: the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans.

Balaam taught many things which were true, Numbers 23.9, 10,19-24; 24.5-9,16-24. But he wanted money so badly that he taught King Balak how to make the people of Israel sin. The Israelites ate food which had been sacrificed to idols and committed sin with the women of Moab, Numbers 25.1,2. False teachers today love money, 2 Peter 2.15; Jude 11, and they lead people into sin and false religion to get more money for themselves.

Others in Pergamum held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which the Lord Jesus hated, v.6. In Ephesus some tried to rule

over the people of God but the believers hated their deeds. In Pergamum the Nicolaitans taught that these things were right and tried to prove them from Scripture. The believers accepted this but the Lord Jesus hated it.

In the New Testament there were elders in every church as well as other leaders or shepherds, but some tried to take the chief place, 3 John 9. In Corinth the believers wanted to follow a leader but Paul told them not to divide the church, 1 Corinthians 1.12. We are taught to obey the leaders who teach the Scripture, Hebrews 13.7, but not those who cause trouble.

What to do

16 The Lord's only command to Pergamum was to repent, to change their mind about these evil things and to do what was right, that is, reject these false teachers. He also told the churches of Ephesus, Thyatira, Sardis and Laodicea to repent. He did not find anything bad at Smyrna or Philadelphia so there was no need to repent.

Warning

What if they refused to obey? He would quickly come to them and fight against the false teachers with the sword of His mouth. The Lord promised to be with us always and especially when we meet together in His name. The church of Pergamum did not act as if Christ were their Head, and they accepted false teaching which He hated. He would come and fight against these false teachers by using the sword of the Spirit, Ephesians 6.17. The angel of the Lord opposed Balaam, the false prophet, with the sword, Numbers 22.23. True believers will follow the Word of God and not accept false doctrine.

Promise to the victor

17 Three things were promised to the overcomer in Pergamum: (1) He would be able to eat the hidden manna. Manna was the food for the people of God in their long journey through the desert, Exodus 16.35. They put some manna in a gold pot and kept it in the ark or box of the covenant, Hebrews 9.4, but some in Israel did not think it was good enough, Numbers 11.6. God has given us His Word for our food in this world, Matthew 4.4, but

many do not think it is enough, they accept also the teaching of men. So the Lord promises that we may have His Word, and may understand the deeper truths which are hidden from others, the hidden manna.

(2) The overcomer would also get a white stone. Little stones were used for counting, but this one will be white which speaks of purity. The Lord's head was white and our clothes in Heaven will be white, 1.14; 7.14.

(3) This stone also has a new name which no one else can know except the Lord and the one who receives it. This shows that God knows us each one, we will never be lost in the crowd. There will be many millions in Heaven but the Lord will know each one and call him by his own special name.

4. THYATIRA, 2.18-29

This is the longest of the seven letters; the Lord had many things to say about what was wrong in Thyatira.

Who was speaking

18 The Son of God spoke, His eyes like fire, His feet like hot bronze, 1.14,15. As God He can see and know everything and He must judge and stamp out all that is not according to His Word. There was a lot to judge in this church.

What was good

19 The Lord could speak well of their works and love, also their service and their faith and patience. In fact their works were greater than before. Some of the early Christians tried to teach that we are saved by good works, but at Thyatira they worked and served because they had both faith and love, like the saints in 1 Thessalonians 1.3. The believers in Ephesus also had patience, but they left their first love.

What was bad

20-23 Again the Lord had something against the believers at Thyatira, as at Ephesus, and this time it was very serious. They allowed a woman called Jezebel to teach her evil ways in the church. The Holy Spirit said that women should learn in silence and

not teach in the church, 1 Timothy 2.11; 1 Corinthians 14.34. But this woman called herself a prophetess, as if she had been sent by God.

God called her **Jezebel**. This was the name of a wicked woman who with 450 false prophets tried to make the people of Israel worship the god Baal, 1 Kings 18.19. She killed Naboth, a man of God, and tried to kill Elijah, a prophet of God, 1 Kings 19.2; 21.10. She used witchcraft and stirred up her husband, King Ahab, to do great evil, 1 Kings 21.25; 2 Kings 9.22, and when she died the dogs ate her body, 2 Kings 9.36.

In Thyatira the false prophetess taught the people in the church to commit two sins: sexual immorality and idolatry. God warned her and gave her time to repent, but she would not obey Him. Here again we see the long-suffering of God, for He gave this woman a chance to repent. There is nothing good written about Jezebel of the Old Testament or of the woman in this chapter. Yet God still gave her a chance to repent, but she would not.

God also warned those who followed her teaching: they would soon have great trouble unless they repented. And God would kill her children, those who followed her ways, as a warning to others in all the churches. These seven letters were all in one book, 1.11, and in all seven there is a message from the Holy Spirit for all the churches.

Christ here has eyes like a flame of fire and knows the thoughts of our hearts, as Jehovah, Jeremiah 11.20. God will judge sinners according to their sinful works, and give us rewards according to our good works, Romans 2.6; 14.12; 1 Peter 1.17; Revelation 20.12,13; 22.12.

Message to the remnant

24,25 In Thyatira there were some believers who did not accept this false teaching. We may call these people the Remnant. In Elijah's time there was a remnant in Israel who would not worship Baal, and today there is a remnant among the Jews, 1 Kings 19.18; Romans 11.4,5. In Thyatira the remnant rejected the teaching of the false prophetess, and did not go down as far as the others in the deep secrets of Satan as they call them. The Lord spoke of the *synagogue of Satan*, v.9; the *throne of Satan*, v.13; and here of the *depths of Satan*.

So He promised not to put any other burden on them, but told them to hold firmly to the truth which they had. He also gave them the promise that He would return at His second coming.

Promise to the victor

26-29 People in Thyatira were busy with their works, but some of their deeds were very evil. Believers could overcome by keeping on with the Lord's works, not those of the false prophetess. The Lord promised two things to anyone who did:

(1) He would have authority with Christ in His Kingdom. The Lord received authority from His Father to rule over all nations of the world, Psalm 2.8,9. He will not allow any opposition and will break in pieces all who disobey, Revelation 19.15.

(2) The overcomer would also have the glad hope of our Lord's return. Christ will rule the nations like the sun shining all over the world, Malachi 4.2, but before that He will come for His Church. The **morning star** is seen very early, before the day comes, and so is a brilliant light in a dark sky. Those who see it know that the day will soon appear. The Lord called Himself the **Bright and Morning Star**, 22.16, for when He appears we know that the night is finished. Here He promised the light of His love for the present, and His return in the future. Christ in us is the hope of glory, Colossians 1.27.

The Lord plainly promised to return, but many Christians do not know or do not believe His promise. It is good to have that "blessed hope", Titus 2.13.

In the first three letters we have the promise to the overcomer after the command to hear what the Spirit says. In this letter and the last three, this command comes after the promise.

5. SARDIS, 3.1-6

The fifth letter was to Sardis. Again the Lord found only a few good things.

Who was speaking

1 The Lord described Himself as the One who had the sevenfold Spirit of God, 1.4, and the seven stars. He therefore had con-

trol of the seven messengers and the churches were responsible to Him.

What was good

Nothing, except a few things which remained, v.3, and the remnant, v.4. We must remember that the Lord was speaking to a church—not to the world. He examined the church at Sardis and could not find anything that was good. How sad if the One we call our Lord examines our lives and finds nothing good!

What was bad

As always, the Lord knew their works, but here He was not pleased with them. They had a name that they were alive but really were dead. They told people that they had been born again and had the new life in Christ, but they were still dead in their sins. Their works were not nearly good enough before God, v.2; they had forgotten what they had learned, v.3, and most of them had soiled their clothing by their sinful deeds, v.4.

What to do

2,3 The Lord commanded the believers in Sardis to wake up and be watchful, to strengthen what little remained of their Christian testimony. They should remember what they had been taught, hold on to what truth they still had and repent of their evil deeds.

Warning

3 If not He would suddenly come when they were not at all prepared. This coming is as a thief in the night and therefore not welcome. It is not the coming of the Lord for His own, which will be with the trumpet of God and very welcome indeed.

Message to the remnant

4 Many people had their names on the church roll as if they were true Christians, but they were really dead. A few were separate from the majority, they were not made unclean by the sinful ways of the rest. They were worthy to walk with the Lord in white.

Promise to the victor

5 The overcomer will wear white clothing, like the elders, 4.4;

the martyrs, 6.11; many others, 7.9 and the army of the Lord, 19.14.

The overcomer's name would never be taken out of the book of life. This is true of all believers, but many are afraid that they will fall and be lost again. The overcomer in Sardis could know from God's Word, and be sure that he already had eternal life, 1 John 5.13.

Finally the Lord would not be ashamed to confess the overcomer's name before God and the holy angels, Luke 9.26; 12.8,9. In spite of our failings and mistakes the Lord of glory will actually not be ashamed of His own before God and the holy angels of heaven. How wonderful is His grace!

6 *We should listen to what the Spirit said to all seven churches. 6.*

PHILADELPHIA, 3.7-13

This name means brotherly love and the Lord Jesus found nothing bad or wrong in this church. This does not mean that these people were perfect, for no one is. But on the whole their lives and work were pleasing to the Lord. So Philadelphia was like Smyrna in this way. May this be our aim also!

Who was speaking

7 The Lord described Himself in five ways:

1. *He is holy.* This did not make the believers in Philadelphia afraid because they knew that they had been washed and freed from their sins, 1.5.

2. *He is true,* 1 John 5.20. The Lord is called holy and true again in 6.10. There are false gods and false christs, and we will read about two great leaders in chapter 13, both of them false.

3. *He has the key of David.* Christ as the Son of God is called the Root of David; as the Son of Man He is a descendant of David, 5.5; 22.16, born to take the throne of Israel, Luke 1.32. In 1.18 He said He had the keys of death and Hades, the place of dead people, but here He used the words spoken to Eliakim when God gave him great authority in Isaiah's time, Isaiah 22.22. This Eliakim was in charge of the palace of King Hezekiah, 2 Kings 18.18, and was a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. So Isaiah's words were really a prophecy concerning the Lord.

He can open doors and no one is able to close them. Paul had an open door to serve the Lord in Ephesus and Troas and he asked prayer for the same in Rome, 1 Corinthians 16.9; 2 Corinthians 2.12; Colossians 4.3.

5. *Christ can also shut doors* so that no one can open them. We should ask Him to open doors of service so we will always be where He wants us to be.

What was good

8 The Lord gave these believers an open door of service which no man or demon could shut. He did this because they had a little strength. This strength came from God who has all power, 4.11; 5.12; 7.12; 11.17; 12.10; 19.1; and is available to us through the Holy Spirit, Acts 1.8.

The believers in Philadelphia also kept God's Word, not like those in Pergamum and Thyatira, who accepted false teaching, 2.14,15,20.

In Corinth some wanted to take the name of a great teacher, but in Philadelphia we read that they did not deny the name of Christ, they confessed it, Hebrews 13.15. In Pergamum also they held fast to Christ's name and did not deny the faith. The overcomer in Pergamum would get a new secret name, 2.17, and in Philadelphia, Christ's new name, 3.12.

9,10 Then the Lord gave two more special promises to Philadelphia. False Jews from Satan's synagogue had been trying to force their teaching on these believers, but they stood up against them. The Lord promised to show that He loved the Philadelphian believers by placing them near Himself when He rules on His throne, and all enemies will have to bow before Him. These false Jews had persecuted the church of Smyrna, and were always opposed to Christians, Acts 14.2,5; 1 Thessalonians 2.15.

The Lord was pleased because the believers in Philadelphia had patiently kept His Word, like John himself, 1.9, and like the saints at Ephesus and Thyatira, 2.2,3,19. So He promised to keep *them* from the terrible time of trouble which will come on the whole world. We will learn more about the Great Tribulation in

chapters 4 through 18. Many believers even now are going through great trouble and some get killed. They will receive a crown of life, as those at Smyrna, 2.10.

What to do

11 Another promise: The Lord would come quickly. He had warned other churches that He would come and judge them, 2.5,16; 3.3, but here and in 2.25 it is a promise to those who love Him, 2 Timothy 4.8.

So the Lord commanded the believers at Philadelphia to hold firmly to the truth which they already had. If they gave up they might not get their rewards. A man or a woman might lead you into sin and so you would lose your crown.

You cannot lose the gift of eternal life, but rewards depend on faithful service right to the end.

Promise to the victor

12 Anyone can overcome with the Spirit's help, and here the Lord added five special promises for the one who does.

(1) He would be a pillar in the temple of God. In Solomon's temple there were two pillars, 1 Kings 7.21, and Peter and John and James (the Lord's brother) were considered to be pillars in the church in Jerusalem, Galatians 2.9. God made Jeremiah like an iron pillar, able to stand up against his enemies, Jeremiah 1.18. Here the Lord meant that the victor would have a permanent place of honour.

(2) The victor would never leave God's house. This is like the special promise to the victor in Sardis, the Lord would not blot his name out of the book of life, 3.5. Both of these promises are true for all of God's people but are repeated here to encourage the believers.

(3) The Lord would write on him three names: the name of God, the Lord said my God (see 14.1 and 22.4);

(4) The name of God's city, the new Jerusalem, Hebrews 12.22; Revelation 21.2,10; and

(5) The name of the Lord Jesus. The believers in Philadelphia

had not denied His name, He will write it on them so all will know, and at His name every knee shall bow. The Lord will have another name which no one else will know, 19.12.

13 It is good for believers today to be called Christians. We do not need any other name but His. This is what the Spirit is saying.

7. LAODICEA, 3.14-22

This name means people of righteousness. In Laodicea there was no great sin or bad doctrine as in Pergamum and Thyatira. Paul had never been to Laodicea, but he wrote a letter to this church, and also asked that his epistle to the Colossians should be read to the believers there, Colossians 2.1; 4.16. Perhaps the Laodiceans had the same bad teaching as the Colossians, and both churches repented when they read Paul's letter. In John's time the Laodiceans may have been living up to their name, yet the Lord was ready to put them out. Why?

Who was speaking

14 The Lord Jesus called Himself the Amen. This word in the Old Testament meant faithful or true. People said amen after a prayer to show that they agreed, 1 Chronicles 16.36; Nehemiah 8.6. The same in the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 14.16; Revelation 5.14, but the Lord often used it while on earth to show that what He was saying was true, Matthew 5.18; John 1.51. Here He used the word to describe Himself, because He will fulfill all the promises of God, 2 Corinthians 1.20.

He is also the faithful and true Witness:

- 1) the faithful Witness, 1.5
- 2) holy and true, 3.7
- 3) faithful and true, 19.11

Of course all His words are true, 21.5.

The Lord also called Himself the beginning of the creation of God. This means that He is the Head of all creation, not that He was created first. The Lord Jesus is the Son of God, He was never created, He Himself created all things. But He came to this world and became a Man; being always God, He is the Head of all,

Colossians 1.15,16. He is called the Beginning in Colossians 1.18, and He called Himself by the same name in Revelation 21.6 and 22.13. See also 1.5.

What was good

15 The Lord of course knew their works and found nothing to praise them for. Even so this church was not dead like Sardis.

What was bad

The Laodiceans were neither cold nor hot. The Lord prophesied that the love of many would grow cold, Matthew 24.12, but the Laodiceans had not fully given up everything. They should have been boiling hot, like Apollos, or the believers at Rome, Acts 18.25; Romans 12.11.

16 They were neither cold nor hot and the Lord was ready to throw them out, like something which tastes very bad, Isaiah 19.14.

17 They said everything was good, but the Lord knew differently.

They thought they –	The Lord knew they were
were rich	sad
	miserable
had become richer	poor
	blind
were in need of nothing	naked

Later great Babylon is a picture of the false church, and she thinks she is very rich, 17.4; 18.3. Two men in Luke thought they were rich, Luke 12.16; 16.19, but like the Laodiceans they were really poor.

They may have thought that money would make them happy, but their hearts were very sad. They were not only poor, they were blind and could not see the glory of the Lord, John 9.41. They thought they could wear their fine clothes, but they needed white linen to stand before God.

What to do

18 The Lord is called Counsellor, Isaiah 9.6, and here He advised the Laodiceans to buy three things:

- (1) pure gold. They could really be rich if they were willing to serve the Lord like the believers of Smyrna, 2.9.
- (2) white clothing. Then they would be able to walk with the Lord, v.4, and not be ashamed like Adam and Eve, Genesis 3.7,10.
- (3) medicine for their eyes, so they could see wonderful things, Psalm 119.18.

Does the Lord Jesus sell these things?

The gift of eternal life is free, Isaiah 55.1, but we “buy” other blessings by using our time, days and years, to serve the Lord. It takes time to study the Bible in order to help in God’s work, but the rewards are very great.

Why did the Lord speak so strongly to Laodicea?

19 In Ephesians 5.25 we read that Christ loved the Church and we know that He loves all His people. Here He said He loved the Laodiceans even though He would have to throw them out if they did not repent. The Lord loves all of us and so He tries to keep us from sin, Hebrews 12.6.

The Lord also commanded the Laodiceans to be zealous, not lukewarm, and to repent, as He had told Ephesus, Pergamum, Thyatira, and Sardis.

Warning

The Lord warned Ephesus that He would remove their lamp-stand if they did not repent. Here He said that He would throw them out, like something which made Him feel sick.

Message to remnant

20 The Lord was ready to reject the church of Laodicea, but there were a few left who would hear His voice, John 10.27, and respond to His personal call. He was knocking at the heart’s door and promised to enter the life of anyone who would receive Him. These people were already believers but were filled with pride

and so satisfied with themselves that they had little room for Christ. Like the bridegroom He stands ready to enter and to bless, Song of Solomon 5.2. If they refuse, He is ready to judge, James 5.9.

The Lord Himself sometimes stands outside the door of our hearts. He waits for us to let Him come in for He will not come in if unwanted. He does not go where He is not welcome. Perhaps our hearts are too full of other things so that we do not have room in our lives for the Son of God.

Eating together is a mark of fellowship. We can have fellowship with the Father and the Son, 1 John 1.3,7. The Lord could have no fellowship with the worldly persons in Laodicea but He promised to eat supper together with any who repented.

We can have fellowship with the Lord and with one another at the Lord's supper, 1 Corinthians 10.16, but Revelation 3.20 means daily, hourly, fellowship with our Saviour.

Promise to the victor

21 This also speaks of fellowship. The Lord is outside the church of Laodicea, but some want to be with Him. The overcomer will share in the glory of Christ by sitting with Him on His throne. He got victory over His enemy, 5.5; Luke 10.18; John 16.33; 1 John 3.8. He is seated on His Father's throne, 22.3; Hebrews 8.1.

The Lord is now seated on His Father's throne because He gained victory over His enemy. Here He promised that the overcomer will share in His glory by sitting with Him on His throne. Such a promise is beyond our imagination. Think of sitting with the Son of God on His throne! No throne on earth could ever compare with that, not even Solomon's. But it is the One on the throne who gives it glory. What a promise!

The Lord shares all that He has with His people, 1 Corinthians 3.21. We can share His inheritance and His glory, if we are willing to suffer with Him, Romans 8.17. He also shares with us the privilege of going out to the whole world with the Gospel, John 20.21.

The History of the Church

Revelation is a book of prophecy, written about 1900 years ago. Chapters 4 through 21 tell us about things which are still future. In chapters 2 and 3 we have seen the condition of seven churches in John's time. These chapters also are a prophecy about the Church during the 1900 years which are now past.

1. **Ephesus** could not accept evil persons. False teachers tried to enter the churches of Galatia, Corinth and Colossae, but they were rejected. At first the churches spread the Gospel throughout the world, Colossians 1.23. Still Ephesus lost its first love and so did the early church in general. For example, all in Asia turned against the apostle Paul, 2 Timothy 1.15... We see that conditions in Ephesus describe the church during the first hundred years while the apostles were still alive.

2. **Smyrna** suffered great tribulation and most churches did, after the apostles died. The Roman Empire tried to destroy the Bible and kill all Christians. This was the second period of the history of the Church.

3. **Pergamum**. In history the period of persecution was followed by a time of peace. The government of Rome accepted the churches and many people wanted to join. These were not all Christians and some began to teach false doctrine. There was a mixture of Christianity and the world and idol worship. During this period it became common for a few men to rule over the churches. In these things we see the church of Pergamum.

4. **Thyatira**. The Church of Rome became very strong and the Pope was the supreme ruler over all the churches. The priests taught the people to worship images of Mary and the saints. Heathen people were brought into the church by sprinkling water on their heads, and heathen customs with only slight changes were followed. The Old Testament prophets called this "fornication"--mixing idol worship with the worship of Jehovah. So we see that many churches were like Thyatira during the fourth period.

5. **Sardis**. About the year 1500 the Church of Rome had become so wicked that many believers left and the Protestant churches were formed. Many unbelievers joined these churches and took the name of the denomination. The Lord said to Sardis

that they had a name, as if they had eternal life, but really were dead.

The Lord spoke about His return in His message to Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia, 2.25; 3.3,11, so we understand that these conditions will continue until the end of the age. Today we have the Church of Rome with many true believers who love and serve the Lord, but also accept many heathen customs. We also have the great Protestant churches which formerly taught the truth about Christ, but now have many members who are “dead”-not really born again.

6. **Philadelphia.** There are also many churches today like Philadelphia, and this is what we should try to follow. These churches have a little strength and an open door to preach the Gospel. They believe in the Word of God and do not deny Christ’s name as the Son of God. The Lord is with them and has promised to keep them and all true believers from the hour of Great Tribulation.

7. **Laodicea.** Many today are like the last church, Laodicea, neither cold nor hot. They think they are rich but in God’s sight they are very poor and blind and naked. The Lord is ready to throw them out but He has promised to give them gold and clothing and eye medicine, and have fellowship with all who receive Him.

So these seven letters tell us something about the church throughout this age, and the last four describe conditions in many churches today. We should remember our brothers in some churches like Smyrna, who are suffering great persecution right now. The Church of Christ is one Body, and if one member suffers, we all suffer, 1 Corinthians 12.26.

We should also try to please the Lord whatever kind of church we may be in. There are special promises to those in any church who overcome, and a great promise to any overcomer in chapter 21, verse 7. The overcomer may be able to help other true believers in his church, or he may be able to leave a cold or sinful church and find fellowship with others who love the Lord in a Philadelphian church.

The book of Revelation describes the spiritual conflict of the

ages; we can be sure of victory because of Christ (chapter 1), not because of the churches (chapter 2 and 3), most of which are failures.

Another book will help you to understand Revelation 2 and 3, and the history of the churches; it is called **The Church Age**. There are other books about the New Testament Church: **Church Growth**, **God's Plan**; and **The Church of the Book**.

Dispensation	Church Age	Great Tribulation, one week or 7 years, Daniel 10.7		Millennium	Eternity
<i>Duration</i>	<i>1950 years</i>	<i>3½ years</i>	<i>3½ times,</i> <i>42 months,</i> <i>1,260 days</i>	<i>1,000 years</i>	<i>No end ever</i>
Jews	few saved added to Church	144,000 Jews sealed. Many believe Many killed, 6.10 false prophet, 13.11	Israel fed 3½ times/1,260 days 12.6,14 Two witnesses 1,260 days, 11.3 Jerusalem under Gentiles 42 months, 11.2	Leading nation	all saints together
Gentiles	many saved	1st beast, 13.1 L. 7 Seals, 1 billion die, 6.8. 7 Trumpets, 1 billion die, 9.18. 7 Bowls, 16.1 Great number saved, killed, 7.9	Armageddon 16.16; 19.19. Armies killed	Satan bound, Saints reign Last battle	Lake of fire
Church	chapters 1-3	Babylon the Great, 17.1-6	Marriage supper of Lamb, 19.1-9 Prostitute destroyed, 17.7-18		New heaven New earth New Jerusalem
Other events not in Revelation		Covenant made between Jews and beast, Dan. 10.27 Judgment Seat of Christ, Rom. 14.10; 1 Cor. 3.13; 2 Cor. 5.10	Covenant broken, Daniel 10.27 Great Tribulation, Matt. 24.15-21 Judgment of nations Matt. 25.31-46	Great blessing	God all in all, 1 Cor. 15.28

2. THE GREAT TRIBULATION,

chapters 4-18

The first part of Revelation tells us about the present age, but most of the book is about what will happen next, after the church age and before the Lord appears on earth in power and glory. We read about the Tribulation, the Great One, the greatest suffering and punishment ever known in the history of the world, Matthew 24.21; Revelation 7.14.

Paul by the Spirit taught that the Lord will come *for* His saints and *with* His saints:

For His saints

1 Thessalonians 4.17

1 Corinthians 15.51,52

With His saints

1 Thessalonians 3.13

2 Thessalonians 1.10

also see Jude 14

Many believers will be here on earth until the Lord comes. We have seen that four churches in chapters 2 and 3 continue until the end of the church age. The Lord will first come for them and take them to be with Himself. This is called the **Rapture**.

A little later He will come back to destroy His enemies and to rule over the whole world. We believe that the Great Tribulation will come after the Rapture and before He comes in power.

Rapture

Great Tribulation

The Lord's return to rule..

These three events will take place in a short time. It is hard to believe that there will still be those who do not accept the Lord. Our gracious God will give them one last chance to repent. Many

will do so but most will refuse and be judged. (Another book, **What Next? a Primer on Prophecy**, explains these things more fully.)

We will learn more about the Great Tribulation in this part of Revelation.

1. The Throne in Heaven, 4.1-5.14
2. The Seven Seals, 6.1-8.1
3. The Seven Trumpets, 8.2-11.18
4. Satan's Activities, 11.19-13.18
5. Seven Bowls, 14.1-16.21
6. Great Babylon, 17.1-18.24

1. The Throne in Heaven, 4.1-5.14

God has never left His throne, but He does not always judge evil men at once. This is one of the things people complain about. "Why doesn't God judge wicked men?" Even Asaph wondered why the wicked prosper in this life, Psalm 73.3,12. But God has His own timing. That is one reason why God gave us Revelation—to tell us that these judgments will come.

The Great Tribulation is one of these judgments. God will punish men severely at this time and so it is fitting that this section should start off with God on His throne in heaven. In chapter 4 we see God and hear His creatures praising Him as the **Creator**. In chapter 5 the Lamb is able to open the book with seven seals, and He is given praise as the **Redeemer**.

1. God the Creator, 4.1-11

- (1) John called, v.1
- (2) The throne, vs. 2-5
- (3) The living creatures, vs. 6-8
- (4) Praise to the Creator, vs. 9-11

(1) *John called, v.1*

1 John was on the island of Patmos when he saw the vision of Christ, 1.9. The seven messages speak to us of the things that are, 1.19, the church age and the present time. After that John looked up and saw the opened door of heaven. He heard the same

voice like a trumpet, which before had told him to write the seven letters, 1.10,11. This time the Lord called John to heaven so He could show him what would take place next. The seven messages take us to the end of the church age when the Lord comes for His people.

Now John will learn what will take place in the Great Tribulation following the Rapture of the Church. The words *after these things* are found ten times in Revelation. These things must take place because God has planned them and He is well able to make them happen. Verse 1 tells us what this whole section is about, things that must happen in the future, chapters 4 through 18.

In chapter 1, verse 10, John was in the Spirit, and this time he at once became in the Spirit when Christ spoke to him, 4.2. This means he was ready to receive God's message.

The churches in chapters 2 and 3 were told to hear what the Spirit was saying. We read in the Psalms a prayer: "Open my eyes that I may see wondrous things from your law," Psalm 119.18. Again David wrote, "Let the words of my mouth, and the thoughts of my heart, be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer," Psalm 19.14. If our ears, eyes, mouth and heart were centered on Christ, we too would be ready to receive God's message from His Word at any time.

(2) *The throne, vs. 2-5*

John saw a throne set in heaven, and a Person sitting on it. We read about this throne and the One who sits on it in 3.21; 4.2,3,9,10; 5.1,7,13; 6.16; 7.10,15; 19.4; 20.11; 21.5; in all, 14 times in Revelation.

It is good to know that God alone rules supreme and His throne can never be upset.

3 No man has seen God at any time and no man can see Him and live, Exodus 33.20; John 1.18; 1 Timothy 6.16. In the Spirit John learned something about God when He appeared to him as two beautiful stones: a jasper (green) and a carnelian (red).

These two precious stones were set in the breastplate of the High Priest, the first and the last of the twelve stones, Exodus

39.8-14. Later John saw these two stones in the wall and the foundation of the New Jerusalem, 21.18-20. Here they speak of God's glory and teach us that we cannot know what God looks like. So we must never try to make an image or picture of God.

There was a rainbow around the throne. The rainbow is a sign of God's covenant, Genesis 9.13. Here it is around the throne so we can be sure that He will never break His promises, even when He has to judge men. The rainbow in the sky includes many colours, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, but this one was mostly green, like an emerald.

In Solomon's day we have a description of the throne, but not of the person on it, 1 Kings 10.18-20. But here it was not the throne which attracted John, but the Person—glowing like precious stones, surrounded by all the colours of the rainbow. What a beautiful sight!

4 The names of the twelve tribes of Israel were engraved on the precious stones which were on the priest's breast, close to his heart. God is seen here also with His people close to Him, because His throne is surrounded by 24 elders, wearing white clothes, sitting on 24 thrones. These elders represent all of God's people: in the Old Testament there were twelve tribes, and in the New Testament, twelve apostles. The gates and foundations of the New Jerusalem have the names of the twelve tribes and the twelve apostles, 21.12,14. Here the elders have thrones and crowns, they are reigning with Him, 2 Timothy 2.12; Revelation 22.5. So we see that the Church is already in heaven in John's vision.

5 From God's throne there came lightning, thunder and voices. These are signs of God's great power, and we shall read about them again, with earthquakes, after the seventh seal, 8.5, after the seventh trumpet, 11.19, and after the seventh bowl, 16.18.

Before the throne John saw seven lamps blazing with fire. In chapter 1 the seven lampstands represent the seven churches which should be giving out light, but these blazing lamps stand for the Spirit of God in His full power and holiness, 1.4.

THE THRONE IN HEAVEN, chapter 4

- v.3 On it—God
- v.3 Around it—the rainbow
- v.4 Around it—24 thrones and elders
- v.5 Out of it—lightning, voices and thunder
- v.5 Before it—seven lamps, the Holy Spirit
- v.6 Before it—sea of glass
- v.6 Around it—four living creatures

(3) The living creatures, vs. 6-8

6 The sea of glass makes us think of the large vessel of brass, full of water, in the court of the Tabernacle. The priests of Israel used this water to wash their hands and their feet every day before they served in the Tabernacle, Exodus 30.18-21. For the temple Solomon made a larger vessel called a sea, 2 Chronicles 4.2. Now in heaven the people of God do not need to wash, they are clean and can worship God continually. This sea of glass has no water, but it will remind us of our life on earth and the need of the Word of God to keep us clean. Water is a picture of God's Word. In Revelation 15.2 the sea of glass is solid and the overcomers stand on it as they sing praises to God. Later we will see the river of life is pure crystal, 22.1, like the sea here.

There are also four *living creatures* who were seen in the center of the throne and around it. The Lamb is really central, 5.6; 7.17, but these living creatures are closer than the elders. Who are these living creatures?

John described the living creatures as full of eyes front and back, inside and out. We know what we see, so God has made these creatures so they can see and know a great deal.

7,8 Each of the four looked like a different creature:

1. a lion, a wild animal
2. a calf, a tame animal

- 3. a man
- 4. an eagle, a great bird

So the four represent all living creatures.

Each one had six wings so any of them could fly quickly anywhere at God’s command. They always give praise to God, He is holy: the Father is holy, John 17.11; Jesus Christ is holy, Luke 1.35; Acts 3.14; 4.27,30; Revelation 3.7; 6.10; and the Spirit is holy, 2 Corinthians 13.14. We have seen that God is now and always has been, 1.4, and these words are also used of Christ, 1.8. God the Son is the coming One, 1.7; 3.11; 16.15; 22.7,12,20.

There are different ranks of angels, Romans 8.38; Ephesians 1.21; 3.10; 6.12; Colossians 1.16; 2.10,15. Some angels are called seraphim, Isaiah 6.2,6; others, cherubim, Genesis 3.24; Ezekiel 10.1. The living creatures of Revelation 4.6 are like the living creatures of Ezekiel 1.5-11 and these are called cherubim in Ezekiel 10.15. In some ways the living creatures are like the seraphim. We can think of these living creatures as angels who are especially close to God.

Living Creatures <i>Revelation 4</i>	Living Creatures <i>Ezekiel 1</i>	Cherubim <i>Ezekiel 10</i>	Seraphim <i>Isaiah 6</i>
v.6 Midst of throne around throne full of eyes before and behind	v.26 under throne v.18 rings full of eyes	v.1 under throne v.12 full of eyes	v.2 above throne
v.7 1. like a lion 2. like a calf 3. like a man 4. like an eagle	v.6 four faces each 2. like a lion 3. like an ox 1. like a man 4. like an eagle	v.14 four faces 3. like a lion 1. like a cherub 2. like a man 4. like an eagle	
v.8 Six wings Full of eyes within “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is and is to come.”	v.6 Four wings v.7 Feet straight v.8 hands under wings v.13 Likeness of fire v.16 Wheels	v.21 Four wings	v.2 Six wings v.3 “Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of His glory.”

The Son of God created the angels, and they serve Him and glorify Him. These living creatures speak of Christ here on earth, as seen in the four gospels:

1. The lion is the king of all animals, Proverbs 30.30. In Matthew Christ is seen as King.

2. The calf or ox was used to serve man, or as a sacrifice, 1 Kings 19.19; Exodus, 24.5. So the Lord Jesus came to serve, and to give His life, Mark 10.45. Mark especially shows the Lord as the Servant of God.

3. Luke described Christ as the perfect Man.

4. The eagle can fly high in the heavens and can see better than most birds or animals. The fourth living creature was like an eagle and this speaks of Christ as the Son of God who knows all things. John in the fourth gospel shows us this more than the other three.

(4) *Praise to the Creator, vs. 9-11*

9 The living creatures praise God because He is holy and eternal. They give Him glory, honour and thanks. So do others:

		To
1.6	living believers	glory and honour Christ
4.9	four living creatures	glory, honour and thanks God
4.11	elders	glory and honour God
5.12	angels	glory and honour the Lamb
5.13	all creatures	glory and honour the Lamb
7.12	angels	glory, honour and thanks God
11.13	men still alive	glory God

10 Here the 24 elders join in this praise. They fall down and worship God on His throne, the eternal God. What a glorious moment this will be! These 24 elders represent all God's people from the beginning of time – millions and millions of them. They will not be moved by the lightning and thunder and the voices, for they are forgiven and have nothing to fear. But they hear the wonderful cry ring out: *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which is and was and is to come*. Then these saints from all ages fall down before the throne. They take their crowns from their heads and throw them at the feet of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The

crowns were their reward for faithful service, 2.10; 3.11; 4.4. In heaven all glory belongs to God, and we will understand that He alone gave us strength to serve Him.

It will be nice to have something to throw at His feet. This is our time to earn rewards, so that in heaven we can give Him the glory.

11 Even now we can praise God with the elders. In this verse they praise Him for His great power and wisdom in creating the world. He created everything according to His will, and everything is for His glory. We can thank Him for the beauties of His creation, from little flowers to huge trees, from the smallest insects to the greatest wild animals, the lakes and rivers and mountains, the stars and sun and moon. The very air we breathe and the food we eat are the products of His loving hand. What a Creator!

Men refuse to give God the glory and try to teach that everything just happened by chance. In Colossians 1.16 we read that all things were created by and for our Lord Jesus Christ. In Revelation glory and honour are given equally to God and to Christ, as we see on the chart.

2. Christ the Redeemer, 5.1-14

In chapter 4 angels and men worshipped God their Creator. Chapter 5 brings us to the Lamb of God, and angels and men worship Him.

1. The Lamb victorious, vs. 1-7
2. The Lamb worshipped, vs. 8-14

1. The Lamb victorious, 5.1-7

John saw a book or scroll in God's hand, a scroll which no man could open, vs. 1-4; Christ alone was able to do so, vs. 5-7.

(1) The sealed scroll, vs. 1-4

1 At first the One on the throne looked like beautiful stones, 4.3.

Now John saw His right hand, and there was a book like a scroll or roll of paper. This was the way they wrote books in those days. The book of Isaiah was a scroll, Luke 4.17; and so were

shorter records, for example, a letter of divorce, Mark 10.4.

This scroll had writing on both the back and the front, but no one could read it because it was well sealed with seven seals. (The number seven is found 53 times in Revelation.) People used to seal important letters and records with wax so that no one could change them, Esther 3.12; 8.8; Isaiah 29.11. Only the proper person had the authority to open the seal.

2-4 Then John saw a strong angel who asked if anyone was worthy to break the seals and open the scroll. In 1.10 the Lord Jesus spoke to John with a great voice, but here it is an angel speaking. In Revelation John heard a voice 33 times, and twenty times it was a great voice. (See note on 16.1.) So on Patmos John saw and heard many wonderful things.

No one was able to open the book, or even to look at it, no one in heaven or earth or under the earth. This includes angels and saints in heaven, and living men on earth. Under the earth means Hades, the place of dead people; and also demons or wicked spirits. None of these was able to open the scroll. John was very sorry because they looked but could not find anyone who was worthy to open the seals and read the book, and he cried out loud.

Why is this scroll so important? It makes us think of Jeremiah's sealed scroll. This was the proof that he had paid money and was the only true owner of some land which really belonged to him anyway, Jeremiah 32.8-12 ... The earth belongs to the Creator, but Satan made a claim to the world and all its kingdoms, Luke 4.6. Now in heaven Satan cannot prove this claim. Here in the highest court ever held, in the presence of the Lord God, Satan and his angels are silent. The seven-sealed scroll is a picture of God's ownership of the whole world and no one can open it or look at it.

(2) Christ alone can open the scroll, vs. 5-7

5 One of the 24 elders told John to stop crying; a Man had gained the victory and was able to break the seals and open the scroll. This Man is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. The lion is the strongest of animals, and Judah was the chief tribe of Israel. Jacob said Judah would be like a lion and that his eleven brothers would bow down to him, Genesis 49.8-10.

Jacob also prophesied that Judah's descendants would rule *until Shiloh come*. This word *Shiloh* means *he whose right it is*. Later God said to Ezekiel that He would overturn the wicked descendants of David until he comes whose right it is, Ezekiel 21.27. God promised that His Son would rule the world, Psalm 2.6,7, and Christ has defeated Satan, Hebrews 2.14. Now in Revelation 5 we see that the true King, the Lion of Judah, alone has won the victory and has the right to open the scroll and rule over the earth.

This Man is also called the Root of David. In Matthew 1.6 and in Luke 3.31 we read that Christ is a Descendant of David. In Isaiah 11 the coming King is called the *Branch* in verse 1, and the *Root* of Jesse, David's father, in verse 10. How could Jesus be both the Branch and the Root? The Lord Himself put this question to the Pharisees: How could Christ be David's Son and his Lord, Mark 12.36,37?

The answer is **Only as the God-Man**. As God, the Son is the Creator of Jesse and of all men, He is the **Root**. As Man He descended from Jesse and David, He is the **Branch**.

So in verse 5 we see Christ as a Man of the tribe of Judah, the all-powerful King. He is the Root or Creator of all men including His own ancestors according to nature. He is the Victor who has overcome Satan, and He alone is worthy and able to open this great book containing the title deed of the world. He alone has the authority to rule over all men.

He promised special blessings to the believers in all seven churches who can overcome. In 5.5 He Himself is the Overcomer who has gained the victory and the crown.

6 John stopped weeping and saw a Person in the center of the throne, surrounded by elders and angels. This Person looked more like a dead lamb than a strong lion. John the Baptist pointed to Christ and called Him the Lamb of God, John 1.29,36, and Isaiah and Peter said the Lord was like a lamb in His death, Acts 8.32; 1 Peter 1.19.

The lamb was used for a burnt offering, Exodus 29.39,42; Numbers 6.14; for a peace or fellowship offering, Leviticus 23.19; for a trespass or guilt offering, Numbers 6.12; and for a sin offer-

ing, Leviticus 4.32; Numbers 6.14. The Lord is called the *Lamb* 28 times in Revelation, and here in 5.6 He is the Lamb slain.

At the same time the Lord is seen in the center of the angels and elders surrounding the throne of God. He died as the Lamb of God, but He rose from death and sat down with God, 3.21. More still, He has seven horns and seven eyes. The horn speaks of strength, Deuteronomy 33.17; Zechariah 1.19, and the number seven means perfection. So this Lamb has perfect strength, He is God Almighty.

The eyes speak of knowledge; the Lamb has perfect knowledge as God. The Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit, John 14.26; 15.26, and the Spirit in His fullness is in every part of the earth, Zechariah 4.10. God can see and know everything which happens in the whole world.

7 So we have here God on His throne, the Lamb of God with Him, and the Spirit of God in all the world. God held the scroll with seven seals in His right hand, and the Lamb came and took it.

THE LAMB IS:		
Man	King	God
Tribe of Judah	Lion of Judah	Root of David
Put to death	Victorious	Seven horns, seven eyes

2. *The Lamb worshipped, 5.8-14*

There was a great joy in heaven when the Lamb took the scroll. The elders sang a new song of praise, angels worshipped Him, and every creature gave Him glory.

- (1) All redeemed people, vs. 8-10
- (2) Millions of angels, vs. 11,12
- (3) All creatures, vs. 13,14

(1) *Redeemed people, vs. 8-10*

At once the four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the Lamb, as the elders do before God, 4.10. (If the living creatures are angels, their praise is in verses 11 and 12.)

The elders have harps and gold bowls ... they play on the harps, and the gold bowls give forth the sweet smell of incense. The 24 elders represent all believers of the Old and New Testaments, and here they offer the prayers of the saints to the Lamb. Later an angel did the same, 8.3.

Prayer and praise go together.

Here the elders offer the prayers of the saints with praise to God, Philippians 4.6.

9 The elders sang a new song, the song of redemption. The Lamb was worthy and able to open the scroll because He died and by His death He bought back God's lost people. In the Old Testament only those of the chosen race, Israel, were called the children of God. Now by grace some from every nation will be in heaven, 7.9.

10 More than that, He has made us His kingdom and we are all priests, 1.6. We thank Him for bringing us into His kingdom by the new birth, John 3.5. Christ alone is King, but we will rule with Him, 20.4,6; 22.5. As the Bride the Church will be with Christ wherever He goes. He is the Great High Priest, but even now we worship God as priests and can bring our sacrifices of praise to Him.

(2) Angels, vs.11,12

11 Then John looked and heard a loud voice of more than a hundred million angels around the throne. They too praised the Lamb who had died. Many angels fell with Satan, but there is no salvation for them. They knew quite well what they were doing when they rebelled against God. Man's first sin was different. Eve was deceived by a greater being, Satan, and so God offers men a way to be saved.

12 The holy angels never sinned and in verse 12 they do not praise the Lamb for redeeming them. They do say He is worthy to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing. As the Son of God, Christ has all power, riches, wisdom and strength and in His kingdom He will take what is His own and use these things to rule over all men.

Christ gave up the honour and glory which were His in heav-

en, and became a Man, the God-Man. God has commanded that Christ will receive honour and glory here on earth when He comes to rule. All living men will bless Him and call Him blessed, Matthew 23.39, even as God is called, 2 Corinthians 1.3; Ephesians 1.3; 1 Peter 1.3; Revelation 7.12.

(3) *All creatures, vs. 13,14*

Then John heard all the creatures in the world giving praise to God and to the Lamb. God created all things and the whole universe glorifies Him by showing His power and wisdom, Romans 1.20. Animals do not have spirits as men do, so they cannot worship God.

13 Verse 13 means:

- (a) men: people in heaven or still living on earth;
- (b) some are *under the earth*. These are dead persons, 5.3, who have gone *down* into Hades, 20.13; Matthew 11.23; Luke 10.15;
- (c) those *in the sea* may refer to fallen angels who are bound *in the dark*, 2 Peter 2.4; Jude 6; or evil spirits like those who did not want the Lord to send them into the *deep*, Luke 8.31.

We know that every knee must bow before Christ in heaven, every being in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue will confess Him as Lord, Philippians 2.10. But here they agree that blessing and honour and glory and power belong to God and to the Lamb forever.

- (d) Some teachers say that verse 13 means birds, animals and fish, and it is true that the whole creation is waiting for Christ to come, Romans 8.19-22. See also Psalm 103.20-22.

14 In this chapter redeemed men, holy angels, and all creatures, give praise to the Lamb of God. So in the last verse, the four living creatures or cherubim say *Amen* to show that they fully agree. The 24 elders represent all believers of all ages. They sang their praise in verses 9 and 10, and here they fall down again as in 4.10, and worship God eternal.

2. The Seven Seals, 6.1 – 8.1

All in heaven and earth agree that the Lamb of God is the only One who is worthy to open the scroll with seven seals. He made the earth and it is all His, Psalm 24.1. Even so, Satan still claims that he can rule over men, and he will not give up without a fight. The Great Tribulation will be the time when God starts to use His great power to control men and Satan.

GOD'S DEALINGS WITH MEN

Through the ages God has tested men under different conditions, and men have always failed at the end.

1. Adam and Eve were at first innocent and without a sinful nature. They failed.

2. All men since Adam and Eve have been born with a sinful nature, but they also have a *conscience* which tells them what is right and wrong, Romans 2.15. After Adam men got steadily worse until God destroyed everyone in the world except Noah and his family.

3. After the flood God commanded men to *govern* themselves, Genesis 9.6. Again men failed and became idol-worshippers, Joshua 24.2.

4. Next God called Abraham and promised to make his descendants into a great nation. God made a *covenant* that He would bless Israel, but in Egypt the people shared in the religion of their masters. This is shown when God had delivered them and they were on their way to the promised land. They made idols and worshipped false gods, Joshua 24.14; Acts 7.39-43.

5. Then God gave them the law, the tabernacle, priests and judges, but they refused to obey. God Himself was their leader but they demanded a king, 1 Samuel 8.6-9.

6. Some of the *kings* of Judah led the people in the right way, but sin became so common that God set aside the nation and the temple, 2 Chronicles 36.14-20. Failure.

7. Israel came back to their land, but Gentiles still ruled over them. This punishment should have taught them to obey God.

Indeed they never went back to idolatry, but when Christ came they rejected Him. Failure.

8. Now we are not under law but under grace, John 1.17. We have seen in chapters 1 and 2 that the Church age ends in failure.

9. Someone might say, "God should plainly punish men for their sins, surely they would repent and obey Him." In the *Great Tribulation* God's anger against sin will be poured out, but we shall see that men will not repent, 9.20,21; 16.9. Failure.

10. Another might say, "No, let God fully show His love to men, then they will love and obey Him." After the Tribulation, Christ will rule on the earth in righteousness for a thousand years, there will be no hunger, no wars. Yet at the end of that time millions of men will follow Satan in the last great attempt to reject Christ, 20.7-9. Failure.

So God will show that men must be born again. He will have tried them under different circumstances and in different ages, but every age ends in man's failure. Here in Revelation we will study in detail the Great Tribulation, chapters 6 through 18, and then a little about the Millennium in chapter 20.

AGES OF MAN'S HISTORY all end in failure

Innocence	Adam and Eve
Conscience	Adam to Noah
Government	Noah to Abraham
Covenant	Abraham to Moses
Law	Moses to Christ
Kingdom	David to Zedekiah
Gentiles	Zedekiah to Christ
Grace	The Church Age
Tribulation	Seven years, still future
Millennium	One thousand years, still future

Chapter 6 informs us what will happen when the first six seals are opened. Men on earth will have great trouble, but this is only the beginning of sorrows, like the first pains of childbirth, Matthew 24:8. Chapter 7 tell us about God's children, some on

earth, some in heaven. The seventh seal is opened in chapter 8, verse 1, followed by still greater trouble on earth.

1. The first four seals, 6.1-8
2. Fifth and sixth seals, 6.9-17
3. The 144,000 sealed, 7.1-8
4. Millions in heaven, 7.9-17
5. The seventh seal, 8.1

1. The first four seals, 6.1-8

When Christ opens each of the first four seals, one of the living creatures calls on someone to come. In each case a horse with a rider appears. What do these horses and riders represent?

In Zechariah chapter 6, verses 1 to 7, we read about four chariots and horses of different colours.

HORSES	
Zechariah 6	Revelation 6
1. red	white
2. black	red
3. white	black
4. spotted	pale or green

These are spirits sent out by God to judge men, Zechariah 6.5,8. They were standing before the Lord, and the spotted horses walked to and fro on the earth, like Satan, Zechariah 6.7; Job 1.6,7; 2.1,2. God can use wicked spirits to punish men, and to accomplish His purposes. Many wicked spirits will come like locusts which look like horses, 9.2,3,7. In Revelation 6 God is beginning to show His anger, as the Lamb opens the seven seals of the scroll.

(1) *The first seal, 6.1,2*

The Lamb alone is worthy to open the scroll. He begins to claim the world as His own and opens the first seal. There was a noise like thunder and one of the living creatures said **Come**. Then John saw a white horse with a rider. He had a bow and was

given a crown of leaves. He is a picture of a great leader who wishes to conquer all men.

Christ also will come on a white horse to overcome all men, 19.11, and He will have a crown of gold leaves, 14.14. This horse-man may represent the false christs who come and try to win men's worship, Matthew 24.5.

(2) The second seal, 6.3,4

The second living creature spoke when the second seal was opened, and John saw a red horse with a rider. This rider was permitted to take away peace from among men so they fight and kill each other. The sword represents war, Matthew 10.34. The Lord Jesus prophesied that there will be many wars at the time of the end, Matthew 24.6,7.

(3) The third seal, 6.5,6

The third seal and the third living creature brought out a black horse. This rider had a pair of scales in his hand. This was to measure out the food very carefully. A voice gave the price of wheat and barley, very expensive. People will have to work a whole day for a bowl of wheat or three of barley, hardly enough to feed a family. Only rich people will be able to get wine and oil. Famines in the last day were prophesied by the Lord Jesus, Matthew 24.7.

(4) The fourth seal, 6.7,8

The fourth horse was a pale colour, or green (same word as in 8.7 and 9.4 about green plants) and the rider was Death. Hades, the place of dead people, was close behind. Authority was given to these two to kill one fourth of all people in the world, but they could not harm the other three fourths. They may use four methods: war, famine, death by incurable disease, and wild animals. These methods were used by Jehovah to punish men in the Old Testament, Ezekiel 14.21, and will be used again in the Great Tribulation.

Men have always had these troubles, but they will become worse during the first half of the Great Tribulation. The Lord described these things in Matthew 24, also earthquakes, false prophets, and some who lose their first love, like the church at Ephesus, Matthew 24.7,11,12.

Seal	Living Creature	Appearance Rev. 4.7	Horse	Picture of	Matthew 24
1st	1st	lion	white	false christs	verse 5
2nd	2nd	calf	red	war	verse 7
3rd	3rd	face of man	black	famine	verse 7
4th	4th	eagle	green	sickness, etc.	verse 7

2. The fifth and sixth seals, 6.9-17

The Lamb opened the fifth and sixth seals, which do not reveal more trouble for men, but John saw what will happen in heaven and on earth.

(5) *The fifth seal, 6.9-11*

9 John saw an altar in heaven, and under it the souls of believers who die for their faith. There were two altars in the tabernacle: one covered with brass, used for sacrifices; and one covered with gold, used for burning incense, Exodus 27.1; 30.1; 1 Corinthians 10.18; Luke 1.11. The altar is mentioned seven times more in Revelation; twice it is the gold altar, 8.3; 9.13.

Here the souls of men are protected by the blood of the Lamb, God's great Sacrifice. These people have been killed during the Great Tribulation because they believe the Word of God and witness for our Lord Jesus Christ, 12.17. The apostle Paul spoke of his service for Christ as a sacrifice, Philippians 2.17; 2 Timothy 4.6. Many believers have been killed during the church age, 2.10, but millions more will die as martyrs during the Tribulation, 7.9,14; 12.11.

10 John heard these martyrs asking the Lord how much longer they had to wait until He would take vengeance on those men who had killed them. They called the Lord holy and true, which He is, 3.7.

The Lord teaches us not to seek vengeance on our enemies, Matthew 5.44; 6.12; Luke 23.34, and so does the Holy Spirit, Romans 12.19. But after the church age believers will have the promises and commands of the Old Testament.

Daniel spoke of seventy “weeks” until Christ comes, with the Great Tribulation in the last week (each “week” is seven years not seven days). After 69 times seven years, 483 years, Messiah did come and was put to death, Daniel 9.25-27. He rose, sent the Holy Spirit and the church age started.

The 70th week will come when the Rapture ends the church age and God again deals with His people Israel. So these martyrs ask for vengeance, as David did in Psalm 35.4-6; 40.14,15; 52.5; 59.13-15; 69.25-28; 109.8-15. (For more help on the seventy weeks of Daniel see “What Next? a Primer on Prophecy”.)

We often read about “those who live on the earth”, 13 times in Revelation. These are unbelievers who refuse to obey God. They live only for this world, they have no home in heaven, no hope for the future. God will offer them an opportunity to repent but they choose to follow Satan, 11.10; 12.12; 13.14.

11 The martyrs must wait for God’s time to come. They were given white clothes like the elders’, 4.4. White is beautiful in Revelation: hair, 1.14; stone, 2.17; clothing, 3.4; a cloud, 14.14; a horse, 19.11; a throne, 20.11 ... Many more believers must be killed and win a martyr’s crown, as they of Smyrna, 2.10.

(6) The sixth seal, 6.12-17

Next John saw what will happen here on earth: seven terrible judgments from God, vs. 12-14; and seven kinds of men, all very much afraid, vs. 15-17:

1) Seven terrible things, vs. 12-14

1. A great earthquake. When the earth shakes people are afraid because the very foundations are moving. The Lord prophesied about great earthquakes, Luke 21.11, and in Revelation John noted earthquakes in 8.5; 11.13,19, but the greatest ever will take place after the seventh bowl of God’s anger is poured out, 16.18.

2. The sun becomes black. When the fourth trumpet is sounded one-third of the sun, moon and stars will be struck so they cannot give light for one-third of the day or night, 8.12. But when the fourth bowl of wrath is poured out, the sun will be hotter than ever, 16.8.

3. The moon becomes red. Joel prophesied this, Joel 2.30,31, and Peter used these words in Acts 2.20.

4. Stars fall on the earth. Meteors are small stones which become very hot and glow like a star as they pass through the air at great speed. Sometimes very large stones have fallen from the sky and landed on the earth or in the sea. There will be many of these when the fifth seal is broken. A great star will fall after the third and the fifth trumpet, 8.10; 9.1.

5. The heaven will go away. The word *heaven* sometimes means the sky where birds fly, Genesis 1.20; Revelation 19.17, and this will pass away, Isaiah 34.4; Matthew 24.35; Hebrews 1.12.

6 & 7. Every mountain and every island will be moved. This shows that the earthquake, v.12, will be very great indeed. These judgments will be worse still after the seventh bowl is poured out, 16.20.

God created the heaven and the earth, and He is able to shake them and remove them. But these verses may be pictures of the fall of governments and great leaders. David asked what can righteous men do when the foundations of a nation are shaken, Psalm 11.3. The next paragraph shows us how wicked men will feel when these things happen.

2) Seven kinds of men, all very much afraid, vs. 15-17

These are kings, rulers, army officers, rich people, strong men, slaves and free men. People from every level of society are all filled with fear of God's judgments. They will try to hide in caves and among the rocks and the mountains, Isaiah 2.21, as if they could get away from God. The great earthquake of verse 12 should have taught them that God is in control. They will try to commit suicide, and even ask the mountains and rocks to fall on them, Hosea 10.8.

Why are they so disturbed? They are afraid of God (they know He is on the throne) and of the Lamb (whom they have rejected as their Saviour). They know they cannot stand in the day of judgment, Psalm 1.5; 2.5.

The lamb is a gentle animal, and the Lamb of God willingly died for our sakes. At His first coming, He showed God's love and

defeated Satan by dying as a Lamb. At His second coming we read about His anger and His seven horns of power. He will punish men on earth, because some will repent only when they see God's power. All the rest will be forced to bow their knees, because Christ must rule over the world.

3. The 144,000 sealed, 7.1-8

We have seen in chapter 6 that men on earth will have much trouble even during the first half of the Great Tribulation. What about believers during this time? We understand that the Church will be in heaven, because the Great Tribulation starts after the Rapture. Even so, many Jews will read the Bible and turn to God and Jesus Christ. They will go and preach the Gospel to others all over the world, Matthew 24.14. In chapter 7, verses 1 to 8, there are 144,000 who are sealed and protected.

1 Four angels hold back the winds of evil which bring judgment on the earth. The word *wind* also means *spirit*, and in Daniel 7.2 the four winds are blowing up storms over the sea of many nations. God sometimes allows wicked spirits to do their worst so He can accomplish His purposes. Here the spirits are under the control of four holy angels. The earth, sea and trees will be damaged when the first two angels blow their trumpets in chapter 8.7-9.

2 A fifth angel came up from the sun-rising, carrying the seal of God. He had a message for the first four angels. In Ezekiel's vision God sent six angels to destroy Jerusalem, but first another put a mark on those who believed in Him, Ezekiel 9.3,4.

3 The judgments of God were restrained until the angel had time to put the seal on the foreheads of His servants. This mark was the name of the Father, 14.1, and all God's servants will have it, 9.4; 22.4.

4 At first the seal was placed only on 144,000 believing Jews. This may mean a great number, or a perfect number, or it could mean exactly 12,000 out of each tribe.

5-8 Israel had twelve sons, but Joseph's two sons were counted as the sons of Israel. In this list Joseph is named for Ephraim, and Dan is not mentioned at all, so the result is still twelve tribes. Perhaps we should think of a very large number of Israeli

believers. God knows every one of them and not one will be missing when Christ comes.

The false teachers of Jehovah's Witnesses claim that they are the 144,000, specially blessed of God because they deny that Christ is His Son. But the Father has declared that all men must honour the Son as they honour the Father, John 5.23, so we can be sure that their teaching is wrong.

We see only a few Jewish people today coming to Christ, but after the Rapture, a great number will believe. Many, perhaps most, of these will be killed in the Great Tribulation, but a large number, these 144,000, are sealed and protected from harm. They keep on to the end and greet the Lamb when He arrives on Mount Zion, 14.1; Matthew 24.13.

4. Millions in heaven, 7.9-17

Next John saw a very great number of people in heaven. They were praising God, vs. 9-12. They had suffered in the Great Tribulation, vs. 13,14, but will be very happy in heaven, vs. 15-17.

(1) *Praise to God, vs. 9-12*

9 No one could count all these Gentiles from every nation, tribe and language group. They were standing before the throne and the Lamb. They too wore white clothes, like the martyrs of 6.11, and were holding branches of palm trees in their hands. The people of Israel took palm branches and laid them on the dusty road when they went to meet the Lord, John 12.13; Matthew 21.8.

Before that the Israelites used palm branches and other branches to make little shelters at the Feast of Tabernacles, Leviticus 23.40; Nehemiah 8.15. This was to remind them of their long, hard journey through the desert. These believers in heaven praised the Lord with palms in their hands; they too had gone through great trouble in the world.

10 These Gentiles had been saved from sin, and so they cried out their thanks for their salvation to God alone and to the Lamb, 19.1. Satan and his servants would destroy all believers if they could, but Christ has won the victory and we are safe. God is our Saviour, Titus 3.4; Jude 25; and Christ is our Saviour, 2 Peter 1.1.

11,12 All the angels joined in praising God, 5.11, and so did the

elders and the living creatures. They say Amen, meaning that they agree with the words of praise spoken by the great company of Gentiles, 5.14; 19.4. Then the angels and elders had seven more words of praise to God, seven things which belong to Him forever.

Some of these words are used in other verses of Revelation, where different ones praise the Lord.

7.12	1.6	4.9	4.11	5.12	5.13	12.10	19.1
Blessing				*	*		
Glory	*	*	*	*			*
Wisdom				*			
Thanks		*					
Honour		*	*	*	*		
Power			*	*		*	*
Strength	*	.			*		
forever and ever	*				*		

And again they said *Amen*.

(2) *Those who gave praise, vs. 13-17*

One of the 24 elders told John about these Gentiles, where they came from, where they are, and their eternal blessing in the future.

13 The elder asked John if he knew who these people were or where they came from.

14 John asked the elder to answer his own question, and so we learn:

Their past history: they came out of the Great Tribulation. They had white clothes because they believed in Christ. These Gentiles will be saved through the witness of the faithful Jews, the 144,000 of verses 3 to 8.

15 *Their present blessing:* with sins forgiven they can stand without fear before the holy throne of a holy God. They served Him on earth, and so they have the privilege of serving Him in heaven.

16,17 *Their happy future:*

(a) God will live among them as He lived in the Tabernacle in the middle of the camp of Israel, Exodus 25.8; 29.45. Paul was sometimes hungry as he served the Lord and many of God's servants have to suffer for Him. But during the Great Tribulation these believers will be terribly persecuted by their enemies. This verse suggests that their food and clothing will be taken and they will be forced to run away. Without clothing they will have no protection from the great heat of the sun. These things will never happen to them again.

17 Instead the almighty Lamb of God will be their shepherd. He will feed them and lead them to the living water, John 4.10; Revelation 21.6. God Himself will wipe away all their tears, 21.4.

Other believers will share some of these blessings:

white clothing,	3.4,5; 6.11; 19.8,14
before the throne,	14.3
serve God,	22.3
God among them,	21.3
living water,	21.6
no more tears,	21.4

So before the seventh seal we are shown in chapter 7 two groups of people:

1. *On earth* 144,000 Israeli.. They are sealed and protected from the judgments of God during the Great Tribulation.
2. *In heaven*, a gathering of countless people from all nations who will come out of the Great Tribulation. They praise God for saving them.

5. The seventh seal, 8.1

The first four seals brought four horsemen with power to cause trouble on earth. The fifth seal tells us one reason for this, men had shown they hated God by killing His people. God's full judgment would soon be seen. The sixth seal tells us how these judgments will affect men: they will be very much afraid.

In chapter 7 we saw how God will protect His Israeli servants still on earth, and a much larger number of people saved after the Church has gone to heaven.

Finally the seventh seal was opened and the whole scroll could be read. At first no one had been able to open the seals, only the Lamb who had been killed. When He opened all seven seals there was no great burst of praise or of wailing, just silence for one half hour. This could be more awful than thunder, 10.4, or earthquake. It suggests that even the people in heaven were waiting in expectation to see what God would say or do next, Acts 15.12; 21.40.

3. The Seven Trumpets, 8.2-11.18

This is the second of the three great series of judgments in the Tribulation period. We noticed a break after the sixth seal and before the seventh, when people on earth and in heaven were seen. Now in the seven trumpets also, the first six follow each other quickly, but there is a break after the sixth trumpet and before the seventh is sounded.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Prayer and preparation, | 8.2-6 |
| 2. The first four trumpets, | 8.7-13 |
| 3. The fifth and sixth trumpets, | 9.1-21 |
| 4. The little book of prophecy, | 10.1-11 |
| 5. The two witnesses, | 11.1-14 |
| 6. The seventh trumpet, | 11.15-18 |

1. Prayer and preparation, 8.2-6

- 2 Seven trumpets were given to seven angels standing before the throne of God, as Gabriel did, Luke 1.19.

Two kinds of trumpet were used in Israel. Some trumpets were made of silver and were blown to call the people together, Numbers 10.2, 8-10. These were also used by the priests, 1 Chronicles 15.24, or as musical instruments, 2 Chronicles 29.28. The other was really the horn of the male sheep, and a man would blow it so the people would know that the new month or the year of liberty had come, Psalm 81.3; Leviticus 25.8-10. It was sounded when a king started to rule, 1 Kings 1.34, and when a battle was about to begin, Joshua 6.13-16; Judges 7.18.

In the New Testament we read that the trumpet will, sound to

announce the coming of the Lord for His people, 1 Corinthians 15.52; 1 Thessalonians 4.16, and the coming of the King to rule, Matthew 24.31. Here in chapter 8 the trumpets announce God's judgment on men, the beginning of the last great battle with the armies of Satan before the King comes to rule.

3 Another angel came and stood at the gold altar of sweet-smelling incense. He had a gold bowl which was filled with incense to offer on the altar. This incense is a picture of the prayers of all God's people, Psalm 141.2.

4 These prayers reach the ear of God Himself. His beloved people have been killed, and His righteousness demands that He should punish their enemies. This is God's will and His people pray that His will should be done, 6.10.

We should always pray for God's will, but as Christians we wait for the Lord to punish men when His time comes.

5 God will be ready to answer these prayers by sending great trouble to the earth. As a picture of this, the angel filled a bowl with hot coals from the altar and threw it to the earth. The result was more thunder, great voices, lightning and an earthquake, 4.5; 6.12, but more will come later: after the seventh trumpet, 11.19; and after the seventh bowl of God's judgment, 16.18.

Prayers of the saints:

in heaven ... sweet incense
on earth great trouble

6 Now the seven angels get ready to blow their trumpets. The time had come for God's judgment, but everything was done with prayer preparation. So we read of four angels prepared for a definite time to put one third of men to death, 9.15. The way was prepared for the kings of Asia coming for the last great battle, 16.12. On the other hand, God prepared a safe place for the nation of Israel, 12.6.

2. The first four trumpets, 8.7-13

The first four trumpets follow closely together, then the fifth and sixth, then after a break, the seventh. This is the pattern followed in the opening of the seals. When the fourth seal is opened, one quarter of all men are killed, 6.8. The first four trumpets

brought great sorrow on earth, and some people died after the second and the third trumpets.

7 First there was hail with fire like the seventh judgment on Egypt, Exodus 9.23, but also with blood. In Egypt the hail destroyed trees, grass and crops, and also struck men and animals. Here the fire did the damage and one third of the trees were burned up and all the grass, so men would suffer from hunger.

8,9 The second angel blew his trumpet and John saw something like a great mountain burning with fire, which was thrown into the sea. This turned one third of the sea into blood, so that one third of all fish and sea animals died; also one third of ships (and sailors) on the sea were destroyed. These things will hurt men and should be a warning.

The first blow against Egypt was a warning. Moses and Aaron struck the waters of the Nile River with the rod of God, and the water became blood, fish died, and men could not drink the water, Exodus 7.19-21.

10,11 When the third angel blew his trumpet, John saw a great star or meteor like a ball of fire falling from heaven. It fell on one third of the rivers and the springs of drinking water.

This star is called Wormwood, the name of a very bitter plant. God warned the people of Israel that He would feed them wormwood because they worshipped idols and committed adultery, Jeremiah 9.15; 23.15. This meteor will make the drinking water bitter and poisonous, so that many people will die.

12 The fourth angel blew his trumpet and one third of the sun, moon and stars were darkened, so there was total darkness for four hours of the day and four hours of the night. This will be like the ninth judgment of Egypt, Exodus 10.21-23. Men become frightened when the moon passes in front of the sun and so cuts off light for a few minutes during an eclipse. It will be far worse after the fourth trumpet in the Great Tribulation.

So the first four trumpets will bring judgment on
 one third of the trees and all the green grass
 one third of sea-life and ships and sailors
 one third of the rivers and springs of water
 one third of the heavenly lights

13 But things much worse will follow. John saw another angel like an eagle flying through the sky. This angel warns men that there are still three more angels who will blow their trumpets and terrible sorrow will come to those who live on the earth and refuse to repent. See 6.10 and 12.12.

3. The fifth and sixth trumpets, 9.1-21

Satan will be given power to hurt men for five months after the fifth trumpet is blown, but after the sixth, one third of all men will be killed.

(1) The fifth trumpet, the first woe, 9.1-12

John saw what looked like a great many locusts which he described in detail. The locusts are a picture of wicked spirits who have power to torture men.

1. Where will they come from?
2. What will they do?
3. What will they look like?
4. Who is their leader?

1) Where will the locusts come from? vs. 1-3

1 The angel blew his trumpet and John saw a star fall from heaven. Sometimes a star is a picture of an angel, for example, the morning stars, meaning the angels of God, sang when He created the earth, Job 38.7. Here the fallen star is a picture of Satan who fell from heaven, Isaiah 14.12. At this time he will be given permission to open the great deep pit where millions of other angels or wicked spirits have been locked up, Luke 8.31. This pit is called the abyss seven times in Revelation: 9.1,2,11; 11.7; 17.8; 20.1,3, and Satan himself will be chained there for one thousand years while Christ is ruling over the world.

2,3 At first John saw a great smoke which made the sun and the air dark. Out of the smoke came millions of locusts. Jehovah had used these flying insects to teach Pharaoh that He was God, Exodus 10.4-6. This was the eighth blow against Egypt, and the locusts ate every green thing. The locusts in Revelation 9 are very fierce and have power like scorpions, a kind of large spider with a poisonous sting in their tails.

2) *What will they do? vs. 4-6*

4 These locusts do not hurt the grass or the trees, they only hurt men. The Lord made a difference between the Egyptians and the Israelites when He punished the Egyptians, Exodus 8.22; 9.4; 10.23; 11.7. The locust-scorpions of the fifth trumpet will not hurt men who belong to God and have His seal on their foreheads.

5 The scorpions will not be able to kill other men, they will torture them for five months. Real scorpions can cause terrible pain but these creatures here are a picture of evil spirits. They come from the abyss when Satan opens it. Evil spirits can cause men to act in an unusual way, Mark 5.2-5; make them dumb or blind, Matthew 9.32; 12.22; or try to kill them, Mark 9.17,18,22.

6 Indeed men will be in such pain that they will wish they could die, but this will not be permitted. After the sixth seal is opened, men will want to die but they cannot command mountains and rocks to fall on them. Evil spirits can control man so he cannot do what he wants.

3) *What do they look like? vs. 7-10*

war horses
kings with crowns of gold
men
 with women's hair
 and lions' teeth
warriors with armour
locusts, but their wings make a great noise
scorpions, with stinging tails

These evil spirits will be able to hurt men for five months. Some men may repent.

4) *Who is their leader? vs. 11,12*

The fallen angel's names are Abaddon and Apollyon; both of which mean Destroyer. Satan is also called the devil because he accuses us before God, 12.10; and the liar, because he deceives men, 12.9; John 8.44.

So terrible trouble will come on men when the fifth trumpet is blown, but this is only the first woe, v.12. More is yet to come.

(2) *The sixth trumpet, the second woe, 9.13-21*

Four angels were released and a very great army came from the east; they had the power to kill one third of all men.

13-15 After the trumpet John heard a voice from the altar. We have seen that this gold altar is a picture of the prayers of believers, 8.3, so the judgment of God is partly the result of the way men have treated His people. In the Old Testament both altars had a horn or handle at each corner, Exodus 27.2; 30.2.

John heard God's voice commanding the sixth angel to release the four wicked angels who were tied up in the river Euphrates. Many angels are kept like prisoners until God's time comes. The great river Euphrates is east of Israel.

These four angels were ready at the right place at the right time. God knows the exact hour when all these things will happen. These wicked angels will destroy one third of all living people.

16,17 Then John saw a great army of men on horses, two hundred million of them. This is bigger than any army in the world today, but nations may agree even before the Great Tribulation to have one great army with millions of soldiers. These men from the east will have fire to protect them, also bright-coloured breast-plates. Their horses have heads like lions' heads. The locusts looked like horses, v.7, but only their teeth were like lions' teeth, v.8. This shows that the punishment of the sixth trumpet will be worse than that of the fifth. These horses also had fire, smoke and sulphur coming out of their mouths.

18,19 This is how they killed one third of all people, by the fire, smoke and sulphur. After the fourth seal men were killed by war, hunger, disease or wild animals. Some people think that these three words, fire, smoke and sulphur, describe modern nuclear weapons which could indeed kill millions of people.

But remember these things are pictures. The authority is in their mouths: this could mean false teaching by evil spirits. The tails like serpents speak of Satan. The numbers may be exact or they may mean very many people. It is clear that God will allow Satan and his angels to destroy, up to half of the population of the world: one quarter, 6.8, leaving three quarters alive, and now one

third of the three quarters, or another quarter of the earlier total. However there will be millions in heaven, 7.9. The 144,000 Jews will be protected but many Gentiles and other Jews will die or be killed. Today many true believers die in natural disasters, and some get killed by the enemy, Satan. In the Great Tribulation millions will die for their faith, 5.9.

20,21 Angels might surely expect that those still alive would repent and leave their sins. Some were guilty of worshipping idols and demons. They made their own images of gold, silver, brass, stone or wood. These images cannot see, hear, walk, or save anyone, Isaiah 46.5-7.

Many people today are also guilty of murder, witchcraft, sexual immorality and stealing. God will show His anger against these sins, and half the population of the world will be killed, but the other half just will not repent.

John saw two other visions in chapters 10 and 11. In chapter 10 a strong angel gave John a little book which he ate. In chapter 11 two witnesses are seen on earth before the seventh angel blew his trumpet.

4. The little book of prophecy, 10.1-11

In verses 1 to 7 the Angel held the little book in His hand, and in verses 8 to 11 John took it and ate it.

(1) The strong Angel, 10.1-7

1,2 John saw another strong angel, like the one in 5.2, or 18.21. He came down from heaven like those in 18.1 and 20.1, but this one is different:

He *wears a cloud*, a picture of God's presence in the Old Testament.

Christ *sits on a cloud*, 14.14,16, and will come with clouds, 1.7.

He *wears a rainbow*, on His head, like the rainbow around God's throne, 4.3.

His *face is like the sun*, as in 1.16.

His *feet are like fire*, as in 1.15.

The Son of God sometimes appeared as an angel in the Old

Testament, Genesis 16.7-13; 22.15-18; Exodus 3.2,4; Judges 6.12-16. The word angel means messenger, and here He is called *another* angel, because other angels have been seen before this in Revelation, 5.11; 7.1,2,11; 8.2,3.

Now the Angel of the Lord comes with the little book in His hand. This is not the same as the scroll with seven seals in chapter 5; or the book of life, 17.8; 20.12; 21.27; or the book of men's acts, 20.12. This is a little book, and we will see what happened to John when he ate it, v.10.

3,4 The Angel then called out in a loud voice that sounded like lions roaring. Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, 5.5. Then John heard seven times the great sound of thunder, like the thunder that came from God's throne, 4.5. He heard sounds like thunder also when the Lamb opened the first seal, 6.1; and when men praised God in 14.2 and 19.6.

These seven thunders had messages for John, but he was told not to write them down. Before, the Lord told him twice to write down what he saw, 1.11,19, and seven times to write to the seven churches of Asia, chapters 2 and 3. After this he was told three times more to write, 14.13; 19.9; 20.15, but this time he was told not to write. God has revealed a great deal to us but some things are hidden, Deuteronomy 29.29.

We may have many questions about God's ways but in heaven we will understand better.

5-7 Then the strong Angel lifted up His hand to heaven, as Abraham had done when he made a promise with an oath, Genesis 14.22. The Angel swore with an oath by the eternal God, the Creator of heaven, earth and sea and everything in them.

The Lord can swear by no one greater, so He swears by Himself, Deuteronomy 32.40; Hebrews 6.13. In Daniel 12.7 the Son of God lifted up His hand and swore by the Eternal God that all things would be finished. Here in Revelation He promised that there would be no more "delay".

The mystery of God would be finished when the seventh angel sounded his trumpet. A "mystery" in Scripture means something which has not been revealed before to men but is now made known to God's servants the prophets. For example, the

Lord told His disciples about the “mysteries” of the Kingdom of Heaven, Matthew 13.11. Paul spoke of the mystery of the Church and of the Rapture of all Christians when the Lord returns, Ephesians 3.3; 1 Corinthians 15.51. Here in Revelation the “mystery” is what God has revealed to His prophets about the coming of Christ and His great victory over evil. This will follow at once after the seventh trumpet.

God often delays His judgment until men have had every opportunity to repent. For example, He told Abraham that the sin of the Amorites was not yet full, Genesis 15.16. He does not want to see anyone fall under His judgment, 2 Peter 3.9, but the time will come when He can wait no longer.

2. The little scroll, vs. 8-11

8-10 Now God commanded John to take the little scroll and eat it. John had been afraid when Christ appeared to him in chapter 1, but now he went near and asked for the little scroll.

The angel told him to eat the scroll but warned him that it would turn sour in his stomach. It tasted sweet in John’s mouth but turned sour after he had eaten it.

11 What does the little scroll stand for? Think of it as the book of “prophecy”. Christ held it in His hand and declared that there would be no more delay, God’s judgments were about to fall on this world. John, God’s prophet, was glad at first to know that the time had come when men would be punished for killing the saints of God. But later he would be sorry because these people would never have another opportunity to be saved.

Remember that God loves every person, even those He must put into the Lake of Fire.

Here John is told that he must continue to tell men God’s Word, even if it made him sad. He wrote these words in this book which has been read by many different nations and their kings.

5. The two witnesses, 11.1-14

Two servants of God will witness in the city of Jerusalem. First we read of the temple to be built there.

(1) The temple, 11.1,2

In chapter 13 verses 1 to 8 we will read about the “first beast”, who is called the man of sin or the wicked one in 2 Thessalonians verses 3 and 4. This person will set himself up as if he were God and sit in the temple to be worshipped.

There is no Jewish temple in Jerusalem at present but one will be built in the Tribulation period. John was given a stick and told to measure the temple and the altar and to count the people who were worshipping there. Ezekiel had been told the measurements of the new temple which will be built “after” the Lord comes to rule the world, Ezekiel 40.3-5.

Solomon’s temple had a large yard around it, called the court. John was told not to measure this because it was given to the heathen for 42 months. This is just half of the seven years of the tribulation period. The Gentiles will control Jerusalem and the temple until the Lord comes at the end of the Great Tribulation.

(2) The two witnesses, 11.3-14

Before the seventh trumpet we read about God’s two witnesses: their power, verses 3 to 6; and their death, verses 7 to 13.

1) Their power, vs. 3-6

3 The Lord promised His disciples that they would receive power to witness after the Holy Spirit came upon them, Acts 1.8. God will have many people who will witness to Him during the Great Tribulation, but these two will have special power. They will continue their witness for 1,260 days. We may think of thirty days in a month, and so this is the same as the 42 months of verse 2. We will see these same numbers in 12.6 and 13.5. They both refer to the second half of the Great Tribulation.

4 Zechariah had eight visions in one night, Zechariah 1.7-6.15. In the fifth vision he saw a gold lampstand and two olive trees, 4.1-3. The angel explained to the prophet that two branches of the olive trees were two people chosen by the Lord. Here in Revelation 11.4 we see that these two witnesses will be like two olive trees and two lampstands, and God will be with them in the Great Tribulation. A lamp needs oil if it is to give out light. These two lampstands were connected directly to two olive trees so they

always had plenty of oil. Oil was also used to anoint a priest or a king, both pictures of Christ, who was fully anointed by the Holy Spirit, Matthew 3.16; John 3.34. So we see that the oil is a picture of the Spirit and God will give the Spirit's power to His two witnesses in Jerusalem in the second half of the Great Tribulation.

5 In the days of Moses, God destroyed 250 men who had sinned against Him, by sending fire down from heaven, Numbers 16.35. The prophet Elijah was given power to call down fire from heaven to destroy his enemies, 2 Kings 1.10,12,14. These two witnesses will be able to protect themselves by fire which comes from their mouths. This may be real fire or it may be a picture of the Word of God, as the promise to Jeremiah, Jeremiah 5.14.

6 Elijah also had power to keep rain from falling on the land, 1 Kings 17.1. Moses turned the water of the Nile River into blood and struck Egypt with many other plagues, Exodus 7.3,4,20. The two witnesses will be able to protect themselves and also to make sinful men suffer with these miracles.

2) *Their death, vs. 7-13*

No one could hurt these two witnesses until they had finished the work God gave them to do.

This is true of all Christians. The apostle Paul was twice in prison in Rome where he might have been killed. The first time he knew his work was not yet finished and that he would live, Philippians 1.25. The second time he knew that his service for the Lord was over, 2 Timothy 4.6,7.

7 These two witnesses will be killed by the "beast who will come out of the abyss," the great hole without any bottom. We read about the abyss in 9.1,2,11, and will learn more about this "beast" in chapter 17, verse 8, and in chapter 13, verse 3. We will call him the "first beast", because there is another in chapter 13. Here he is given power to fight against God's two servants and to kill them.

8 No one would bury their dead bodies and they lay on the street of Jerusalem for 3½ days. We know that the Lord Jesus was crucified just outside of the city wall of Jerusalem. John here calls it Sodom and Egypt, because Sodom was a very wicked city before God destroyed it, and Egypt was a very wicked country.

- 9 People from many different countries will see these dead bodies and will not allow anyone to bury them. This is to insult the witnesses and their God, but God will have His own plan in mind.
- 10 The people of the world (6.11) will be very happy because these witnesses will have been killed by the first beast. The servants of God will bring suffering on the people of the world as part of God's desire to bring them to repentance. Instead of that they will rejoice and celebrate their death.
- 11 But not for long. After three and a half days God will raise them up to life again. Then people will be really afraid!
- 12 Then God will call them to come right up to heaven. Their enemies will see them go up in a cloud, just as their Lord had done and the Church also, Acts 1.9; 1 Thessalonians 4.17.
- 13 When Christ died and rose from death there were earthquakes in Jerusalem, Matthew 27.51; 28.2. One tenth part of the city will fall when the two witnesses go up to heaven, and 7,000 people will be killed. The rest will be still more afraid, in fact, at this time some of them will even give praise to the true God. So some people will believe as a result of these two witnesses, when they die and rise again, and perhaps others will also before they die.
- 14 In 8.13 a flying angel announced there would be three woes. The first woe was over in 9.12; now the second is past.

6. The seventh trumpet, 11.15-18

Finally the seventh trumpet will be heard. This seems to take us right on to the time of Christ's return, but still there is another series of seven, the bowls of God's anger, chapters 15 and 16.

- 15 John heard great voices announcing from heaven that Christ is the King of this world and He will reign forever. The man of sin, the first beast, will try to unite all nations under his control but he will be thrown into the lake of fire and the Lord Jesus will become the King of kings.
- 16,17 Then the twenty-four elders again worship God, Almighty and Eternal, because He is about to reign as King with great power. We see that Christ is God.

18 We see these elders praising God in 4.10; 5.9; 7.11; and 19.4.

Here they give glory to God for many things which will take place at different times in the future. Sinners are angry with God in 9.20; 11.2; 16.6,9,11,21. God's anger is seen in 6.17 and 19.15. Sinners who die will be judged in 20.12 and rewards given in 22.12. So the seventh trumpet takes us to the end time, not to the last day.

4. Satan's Activities, 11.19-13.18

This section begins with the last verse of chapter 11. In 11.1 we read of the temple of God on earth; in the first verse of this new section, John saw the temple of God in heaven. In the Old Testament the ark of the covenant was a box covered with gold, Hebrews 9.4. It was a picture of God's presence and no one but the High Priest could see it. Now John saw it in heaven and there were great signs of God's power on earth.

Chapter 12 then gives us in short form the history of Satan's struggle with God. There is a woman, her child, and a great dragon, vs. 1-6; war and victory, vs. 7-12; and great trouble for Israel, vs. 13-16.

1. The woman, her child and the great dragon, 12.1-6.

1 There were two wonderful signs in heaven, vs. 1,3. The first was a woman, glorious with the sun, moon and twelve stars. In Joseph's dream these are a picture of Jacob, his wife and his twelve sons, Genesis 37.9,10, so this woman stands for the nation of Israel.

2 God had promised Abraham that one of his children would be a blessing to all men and throughout the Old Testament the people of Israel looked forward to the birth of their Messiah, Romans 9.5.

3 The second wonder in heaven was a great red dragon, with seven heads, ten horns and seven crowns. Verse 9 tells us that this is Satan. He has great power, as seen in the heads and horns, and would like to rule over all men. He will try to do this through the first beast, as we will see in 13.1.

4 We know that Satan fell into sin and it seems that many of the

angels followed him. Stars are a picture of angels, and one third of them were thrown down to the earth. So Satan had lots of help when he tried to destroy the woman's Child. Satan tried to kill the Lord Jesus more than once, for example, Matthew 2.16; Luke 4.29.

5 Christ is the One who will rule over all nations, 19.15. God looked after His Son and Satan could not succeed. Nothing is said here about the life, death or resurrection of the Lord, only that He went up to heaven to His throne.

6 This verse takes us again to the second half of the Great Tribulation. There will be many true believers in Israel and they will have to run away when the first beast sets up an image of himself in the temple at Jerusalem, Matthew 24.16. They will be sealed, 7.3, and God will look after them for 42 months.

2. War and Victory, 12.7-12

7,8 John then saw that there was a great war in heaven between the angels of God and the angels of Satan. Michael the chief angel fought for Israel in the past, Daniel 10.13,21; 12.1; Jude 9 and will do so again. He will gain the victory and throw Satan and his demons out of heaven.

9 In verse 9 we learn that this great red dragon is the same as the devil and Satan. He appeared to Eve as a snake and ever since he has been trying to deceive all men. The devil tempted the Lord Jesus, Matthew 4 and Luke 4; keeps all men in fear, Hebrews 2.14; sets traps for believers, 2 Timothy 2.26; and always tries to keep us from following the Lord, 1 Peter 5.8; James 4.7 Satan entered Judas, Luke 22.3; tempted Ananias and all believers, Acts 5.3; 1 Corinthians 7.5; 2 Corinthians 2.11; and kept Paul back, 1 Thessalonians 2.18.

10-12 Some day he will be overcome. No wonder a voice announced that the kingdom of Christ had come with power to save. The devil has been accusing us before God's throne, as he did Job, Job 1.11; 2.3. Still even now we can gain the victory over Satan through the blood of Christ, but we must keep witnessing to the Lord and be willing to die for Him if necessary. We will be glad when Satan is thrown out of heaven, but we must remember that men on earth will have greater trouble still. He will be more angry than ever and greatly increase his efforts to hurt Israel.

3. Great trouble for Israel, 12.13-17

Satan will try to attack and destroy Israel but God will continue to protect her.

13 Satan hates Israel because he hates Christ. When he is thrown out of heaven he will do all he can to hurt the people of God.

14 The Lord will help His people to escape. Some teachers think that the faithful Jews will be able to fly away in aircraft and this will be quite possible. God will also provide food for the rest of the Tribulation period for those who escape.

NOTE: Daniel's last week starts after the Church goes to heaven. The coming world leader will make a covenant with Israel for this "week" of seven years, but in the middle of the week he will break his agreement, Daniel 9.27. This will mark the beginning of the Great Tribulation in its worst form. This period is called:

Daniel		Revelation
7.26; 12.7	3½ times	12.14
	42 months	11.2; 13.5
	1,260 days	11.3; 12.6
12.11	1,290 days	

The word "times" must mean at least two times, let us say, three, so a time, times and a half a time would mean 3½ times, or years. In this way it would be the same as 42 months (of 30 days each) or 1,260 days. Daniel adds another month of thirty days, for a total of 1,290 days, 12.11.

We should also remember that there will be many believers in Israel, sometimes called the remnant, or the 144,000. God will protect these His children, but the nation of Israel as a whole will continue to reject God and Christ and they will suffer terrible trouble in those last days.

15,16 Satan will continue to attack the faithful remnant, as if by a flood he could destroy them all. God also will again help His people, this time by natural means.

17 This will make Satan very angry and he will make war with the remnant of faithful Jews. Here we learn that the remnant means those who obey God's commands and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. This is how they will overcome, by their testimony, v.11.

What about Israel?

Today most Jews reject the Lord Jesus as their Messiah. Those who accept Him are added to the Church, Ephesians 2.12,16; 3.6, and will go to heaven at the Rapture.

God will take up His ancient people Israel again after the Church age is over. In the next age as in this one, there will be both saved and unsaved.

At first the nation of Israel will prosper and will make a covenant with the world leader of the Gentiles, the first beast, for seven years. We believe Israel will join up with the great union of religions of the world, called later Babylon the Great. There will be a temple at Jerusalem, but it will be under Gentile control.

Half way through the seven years, the first beast will break his covenant with Israel, Daniel 9.27, and turn against the united religions, 17.16. He will then persecute the Jews and many will be put to death.

God will punish His people because they rejected Christ, Matthew 27.25. Israel will also suffer with all men when God pours out His wrath on the earth. Half of all men will die, no doubt including many of Israel. However many will live to the end of the Tribulation, still unsaved, but will repent when they see Christ, Zechariah 12.10.

Many Israeli will be saved during the Tribulation. They will be persecuted by the unbelieving nation as well as the Gentile people and Babylon the Great. God will seal 144,000 of them and they will live to greet the Lord when He appears on Mount Zion, 14.1. These 144,000 witnesses will see many of their fellow Jews come to Christ and millions of Gentiles also. Many of these will die for their faith, 6.10; 7.9, but some will live until Christ appears, Matthew 24.13. They will form the beginning of Christ's kingdom on earth which will continue for 1,000 years.

4. Two great world leaders, 13.1-18

Satan will continue to attack God and His people right to the end. His greatest work will be done by two men in the last half of the Tribulation period. The first of these will be a world political leader; the second will be a great religious leader.

(1) The first beast, vs. 1-10

He is described in verses 1 and 2. Then we read of what he will do, vs. 3-6; and of his great attack on God's people, vs. 7-10.

1 The sea is a picture of the restless nations of the world and the first beast is a Gentile. He will have great power and John saw this beast with seven heads, ten crowns and the name of blasphemy on his heads, v.6.

Daniel had a vision of four animals, pictures of four great world empires. The fourth animal had ten horns, Daniel 7.7, so the first beast will be like the fourth wild animal of Daniel's vision.

2 What John saw was like a leopard, the third animal of Daniel 7. The first beast had feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion. These two animals were the second and the first in Daniel 7.4-6.

Daniel's four animals stand for four kings or empires. In Daniel 2, the prophet told the king about his dream, and stated that his empire, Babylon, would be followed by three more, Daniel 2.38-40. God gave Daniel still more details in chapter 8. You would get more help on Daniel in my book "What Next: A Primer on Prophecy" but here is a short survey:

Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8	Empire
1. gold	lion, v.4		Babylon
2. silver	bear, v.5	ram, v.20	Persia
3. bronze	leopard, v.6	goat, v.21	Greece
4. iron	ten horns, v.7		Rome

This last empire will continue until Christ comes, Daniel 7.13,27. We know that Christ came long ago and that the Roman Empire has disappeared. From Daniel and Revelation, we believe that the Roman Empire will be restored and the first beast will be its leader.

This man will get his power and authority from Satan himself. The devil offered Christ the kingdoms of the world; this man will give himself to Satan and rule for a short time.

3 In John's vision one of the seven heads will be put to death.

The first beast is also described in 17.8 as one which "was and is not and yet is." This also may mean that the Roman Empire apparently came to its end, yet will be revived again in the last days. It will be a cause of great wonder.

4 This will result in most people being willing to worship the beast and the devil who gives him power. They will be afraid because no one will be able to stand up against him.

Even today millions of people worship Satan, but some of them do not know what they are doing.

5,6 People of the world will praise the first beast and he will set himself up as if he were God, 2 Thessalonians 2.4. This of course will make him more proud than ever and he will boast about himself and blaspheme the name of God and all who are in heaven. Men on earth will also blaspheme the name of God, 16.9,11,21. The Lord will allow this to continue for three and a half years, until the Great Tribulation is over and Christ comes to rule.

7 The first beast will show that he hates God by attacking His people on earth. At first he will succeed, Daniel 7.21, and gain control over all men of every nation. Satan will give this man power but of course God is on the throne, John 19.11.

8 All men on earth will obey and worship this man, the first beast ... all except those whose names are written in the book of life. God's people who are still alive will refuse to bow down to any creature. They will suffer for it, but they have eternal life and will be in heaven forever. Our names are known to God from the time He created the world, 17.8; Ephesians 1.4; 1 Peter 1.20.

9,10 This truth will comfort and strengthen God's people during the Tribulation, even as it does today. So we should listen to what the Spirit is saying, 2.11.

Here He adds also that God will punish those who kill others or make them prisoners. The same thing will happen to them, Exodus 21.12. All men will be judged according to their deeds, 20.12.

(2) *The second beast, vs. 11-18*

The first beast will be a great political leader, like a king over the nations of the world. The second beast will be a religious leader, like a prophet or a priest, over the religions of men. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the true Prophet, Priest and King, and these false leaders will not last long.

The second beast is also called the false prophet, and will be thrown alive into the lake of fire with the first beast, 19.20. The Lord spoke of false christs and John wrote about antichrists. Matthew 24.24; 1 John 2.18,22; 2 John 7. The second beast may be called the Antichrist.

11 This second beast comes from the earth, which often means the land of Israel. In John's vision he has two horns like a lamb, so he wants to appear as the Lamb of God. His words however show that he too is from Satan. The Lord Jesus taught that false prophets may look like the true sheep, but we can know what they really are by their fruits, Matthew 7.15,20; 1 John 4.1-3.

12 This antichrist will have the same power as the first beast and will use this power to make men worship him who almost died.

13,14 The second beast will do many great miracles so people will think that he is the true Christ. He will make fire come from heaven and threaten men with death if they do not make an image of the first beast.

God has told us not to make any images or worship any creature. In the Great Tribulation men will not pay any attention to God or His Christ, except to hate and hurt all believers.

15 This false prophet will even be able to give breath to the image of the first beast. It will be able to speak and to destroy all those who refuse to fall down and worship the image. Believers will refuse to worship and many will be killed.

16,17 The second beast is also called the false prophet or the antichrist. His great desire will be to cause all men to worship the first beast, the world political leader. To do this he will force all men to receive a mark on their bodies, either on the right hand

or the forehead. Then he will set up a great world-wide system of buying and selling.

No one will be able to buy food or anything else unless he has this mark of the beast or his name or the number of his name. Some people might try to help those who refuse to receive this mark, but they will not be able to sell them anything.

18 We do not know the name of the first beast but this verse tells us his number: 666. What does this mean?

In Scripture every word is important because the Holy Spirit inspired the whole Bible. For example, the number seven often has the idea of “perfection”, the number of God. Six is the number of man, who always comes short of God’s perfection. The first beast is not God, only a man, the greatest man in his time, ruler of the world, still only a man. God will punish this man, 19.20, and all those who worship him or receive his mark, 16.2.

Terrible times are coming for men of this world. We must warn them that God’s judgment is about to fall on all who refuse to accept Christ as Saviour. When the second beast comes, men should refuse his mark and trust God and Christ. However all who believe in the Lord before He comes will be in heaven before Revelation 13 is fulfilled.

5 . The Seven Bowls, 14.1–16.21

In the fourth part of Revelation the main vision is about the seven angels who pour out their bowls full of the wrath of an angry God, 16.1-21. Before that we have four short visions in which we learn that God will gain the final victory and judge all His enemies. After the seven bowls an angel told John what will happen to the great religious system set up by the second beast, the false prophet, chapters 18 and 19.

1. Four visions before the seven bowls, chapter 14

Three visions are in chapter 14, one in chapter 15. Each of these begins with the words, “I saw”, 14.1,6,14; 15.1.

(1) *A new song, vs. 1-5*

We have seen Satan's activity in trying to make all men worship the first beast, but millions of people will refuse to do so. Most of these will be put to death, but God will seal 144,000, 7.4, and save them alive until Christ comes.

1 These are seen with the Lamb on Mount Zion in Jerusalem.

They still have the seal or name of God and of Christ on their foreheads. We know that the Lord will come and stand on the Mount of Olives just outside the city, Zechariah 14.4. Men will hate these 144,000 and laugh at them, but they will be seen with the Lamb, the King, when He comes.

2 Then John heard a beautiful sound from heaven, like many waters, like thunder, like the music of harps. The voice of the Lord Jesus was like the sound of many waters, 1.15, and John later heard the voice of many saints in heaven giving praise to God, 19.6. He heard the harps again in 15.2.

3 These people in heaven were singing a new song which no one else could learn. The 24 elders also sang a new song, 5.9, but this is different. These saints in heaven have died for the Lord's sake and so have a special song of praise. Martyrs of the Old Testament will have "better" resurrection, Hebrews 11.35. The 144,000 were prepared to die for Christ, but they were preserved by God's power and so they too can share in this great song of praise.

4 These 144,000 witnesses will spread the gospel all around the world and this great work will not allow them to get married and stay at home. Men and women will live very sinful lives during the Great Tribulation, but these 144,000 will not fall into sin, they will be virgins. They will be redeemed by the blood of Christ and follow Him when He comes as King. In the millennium most people will believe and obey Christ, a great harvest, but these 144,000 will be the first to meet Him when He returns. They will be like the firstfruits of a great harvest, Exodus 23.19, and bring special pleasure to God and the Lamb of God.

5 These witnesses will not follow the false prophet at all nor accept any false teaching, certainly they will not teach anything which is not true. False teachers deceive people with their

lies and the dragon is the father of lies... No man is without sin, but these are justified by the blood of Christ, Romans 5.9, and God sees no fault in them.

(2) God's message to man, vs. 6-13

John heard the voices of six angels in the rest of this chapter, also the voice of God, v.13. The first three angels are heard in verses 6,8 and 9. They declare what God wants men to know during the Great Tribulation.

6 John had already heard the voices of angels, 5.2,11; 7.2; 8.13; 10.9; 11.1. This one was flying in the sky with the eternal gospel to preach to all men. What is this "everlasting gospel"?

7 It is not the gospel of the kingdom which John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus preached, and which will be preached during the Tribulation, Matthew 4.23. It is not the gospel of the grace of God, Acts 20.24, or the gospel of Christ, 2 Corinthians 2.12; 9.13. The Lord Jesus commanded us Christians (not angels) to preach this gospel to every creature.

The day of God's grace will be over when the Church is taken to heaven so this is our great opportunity to preach this gospel.

The everlasting gospel is really the gospel of the ages, and men should fear God and give Him the glory in every age. This message will be especially important at the end when God's judgment will be very near. Men may not know Him as their Redeemer, but they should at least honour Him as their Creator. This is the message of the angel.

During the Tribulation God's witnesses will tell people that they should repent because the kingdom of God is near, Matthew 24.14. Perhaps even at the very end God will show mercy on those who turn and fear Him, 15.4; 19.5.

8 The second of these six angels made an important announcement: Babylon has fallen. We will learn more about this great event in chapters 18 and 19. Here the angel used the words of Isaiah 21.9, which apply to the empire of Babylon, at that time becoming very powerful. It is said twice that she has fallen, and it will be because of her sins in making all nations drink and commit fornication.

9-12 The third angel brought a strong warning to all living men, and a word of encouragement to those who obey God.

9,10 We have seen that the second beast, the false prophet, will try and kill anyone who refuses to worship the image of the first beast, 13.15. Men will not be able to buy or sell without the mark "666". So God warns all men that those who do will drink God's anger. (Seven angels will pour out seven bowls of God's wrath, chapter 16.)

After death these idolators will be tortured in fire, Luke 16.24. Their agony will be worse because it will be before the holy angels and the Lamb of God and they will remember that they refused the warning of this angel and rejected Christ.

11 Later they will be judged at the Great White Throne and thrown into the lake of fire forever. They will never be able to rest at any time, these who worship the first beast or his image, or receive his mark.

12 Millions will obey God's commands, refuse to bow down to the false prophet but will keep their faith in Christ. This solemn warning in verse 11 will give them great comfort and help them to be patient until He comes for them. We have another promise like this in 13.10.

13 Then John heard another voice from heaven with another wonderful promise for the Tribulation saints. John was told to write what the Spirit was saying, as in 1.11,19; 2.7,11, and the other letters. Many were about to die for their faith, and God promised that they would be very happy. They will have rest and great rewards, 6.11; 20.4. This promise is true in part for all Christians, but here it is for those believers who resist the two beasts of Revelation 13.

(3) God's judgment on man, vs. 14-20

Now we see the Lord and three more angels executing God's judgment on the earth.

14 John saw the Son of Man sitting on a white cloud, with a gold crown and a sharp sickle. We read about Christ coming in, on or with a cloud or clouds, 1.7; 10.1; Daniel 7.13; Mark 13.26; 14.62; Luke 21.27; 1 Thessalonians 4.17. He is already wearing a crown;

and later, many crowns, when He destroys the armies of the two beasts, 19.12-19. At that time He will use a sharp sword, like a soldier, but here a sharp sickle, like a farmer.

15,16 The fourth angel came out of the temple in heaven and asked the Lord to start the work of harvesting the earth. God's time had come and this angel spoke for God, as well as the martyrs, 6.10. In the Lord's parable the harvest is the end of the age, Matthew 13.39. The Lord did this at once.

17 Then the fifth angel came from the temple in heaven. He also had a sharp sickle.

18 The sixth angel came from the altar which is in the temple of God, 8.3,5; he had power over fire. With a loud cry he told the fifth angel to use his sickle to cut off the grapes of the earth because the time had come.

19 The angel did so and threw the grapes into the winepress of God's judgment. One angel alone would be strong enough to bring all sinners to God for punishment, but many angels will share in this work, 2 Thessalonians 1.7-9.

20 This picture of the grapes looks forward to the last great battle when the Lord comes, 19.14-21. This may take place just outside of Jerusalem and many millions of men will be killed. Their blood will be spread over a great area and the birds will eat their bodies.

What is the difference between the harvest, vs. 14-16, and the gathering of grapes, vs. 17-20? Some teachers believe that the first is a picture of general judgment as in the first part of the Tribulation period, and the cutting of the grapes will be the last great battle. However, the harvest does not result in judgment, as the gathering of grapes does. In the parable the angels separate the good from the bad, Matthew 13.30,49, and when the Lord comes He will welcome His people into His kingdom but destroy those who have rejected Him, Joel 3.12,13.

In chapter 12 we read in short form about the age-long struggle between God and Satan, reaching right on into the Great Tribulation. In chapter 13 the two great leaders appear on earth to do Satan's great work. In chapter 14 we have in brief form a description of what will happen in the Tribulation: the remnant of

Israel with the Lamb; the call to all to give glory to their Creator; judgment on Babylon, the great religious system; a warning not to accept the mark of the beast; a promise to those who die for the Lord; the gathering of all who believe and the end of those who reject the Lord.

The word *harvest* is also used by the Lord for the gathering of those who believe through our testimony. In Matthew 9.37,38, many workers are needed; in John 4.35-38 great rewards are promised. We should therefore pray and witness because the end of this harvest is near. The Lord says to each of us, "Son, go work today in my vineyard," Matthew 21.28. This is the time to feel sorry for those who are lost, while there is still time for them to be saved.

2. The seven bowls of God's wrath, chapters 15 and 16

Chapter 15 prepares for the seven bowls which are poured out in chapter 16.

(1) *Preparing for the seven bowls, 15.1-8*

First there is a song of victory in heaven, vs. 1-4; then the seven angels appear, vs. 5-8.

1) *The song of victory, vs. 1-4*

1 John had seen two wonderful signs in heaven, 12.1,3, and now another. This time he sees seven angels with the seven last blows of God's anger against men. This verse introduces the chapter, then John saw something else.

2 He saw a sea of glass which he had seen before the throne of God earlier, 4.6. Now a great number of people were standing on the sea of glass. They have gained the victory over the first beast. When they were here in this world they refused to worship him and to receive his mark or number, 666. They were killed for their faith and now they are seen in heaven. No doubt the second beast will think he has been successful when he puts these believers to death, but they are really the overcomers, the victory is theirs not his. We have seen these people before in 14.2.

3 There they sang a new song which only they themselves and

the 144,000 still on earth could learn. Now they are singing two songs, of Moses and of the Lamb. There are two songs of Moses: Exodus 15, when God delivered Israel from Egypt; and after the forty years in the wilderness, Deuteronomy 31.30–32.34. Many of these people in heaven will be Jews who will be saved during the great Tribulation. They will also sing the song of the Lamb, with the millions of Gentiles who will be saved through their testimony.

They will all give praise to the Lord God Almighty because all His works are so wonderful; and because all His judgments are fair and righteous. They call Him the King of the nations, so they are praising the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God.

4 They ask who will refuse to fear the Lord, the holy One. All nations will come and worship Christ when He comes to rule the world in the Millennium. But first God must pour out His judgments to give men their last opportunity to repent.

2) The seven angels appear, vs. 5-8

5 John looked again and he saw now that the most holy place in the tabernacle of God in heaven was open. In the Old Testament, the ark contained the two stones of the law, which were called the testimony. This gold-covered box was placed in the most holy place and so the holy tent was often called the “tabernacle of the testimony”, Exodus 25.16,21; 31.18; 40.20. The true tabernacle is in heaven, Hebrews 8.1,2; 9.11, and John saw that the most holy place was open.

6 Seven angels came out from the presence of God. They have the seven last bowls and are ready to do God’s will. They are wearing pure, white robes and have gold belts around their breasts, like the Lord Himself, 1.13.

7 Then another angel, one of the four living creatures, gave each of the angels a gold bowl full of God’s anger, called here the eternal God, as in 4.9,10; 5.14; 10.6. Glory will be given to God and to the Lamb forever and ever, 1.6; 5.13; 7.12. Christ is alive and will rule with His servants forever and ever, 1.18; 11.5; 22.5.

8 Smoke filled the most holy place and no one was able to enter until the angels had poured out their bowls and the seven blows had fallen on men. This is a very solemn time. God is the

God of mercy and He loves to show His kindness to men. But this is the time of His “strange work”, Isaiah 28.21, when He must pour out His judgments on His creatures because of their sins.

(2) The seven bowls, 16.1-21

The seven angels pour out their seven bowls in this chapter but there are two messages, after the third and the sixth angels.

The first angel, vs. 1,2

John heard a loud voice from the temple in heaven, God commanding the angels to go and do their work. John heard many great voices in Revelation, as well as seeing many great things: 1.10; 5.12; 6.10; 7.2,10; 8.13; 10.3; 11.12,15; 12.10; 14.7,9,15; 16.1,17; 18.2; 19.1,17; 21.3.

The first angel poured his bowl on the earth and the first blow was terrible sores which came on men and women who had the mark 666 on them. This was like the sixth blow on Egypt when God was giving Pharaoh many opportunities to repent. People at the end of the Great Tribulation also will refuse to give up their sins, v.11.

The second angel, v.3

This angel poured out his bowl on the sea which became like the blood of a dead man and all fish in the sea died. When the second angel blew his trumpet only one third of the sea became like blood and only one third of the fish died, 8.8,9. Now the whole sea is affected and all fish die. The second blow here is like the first in Exodus 7.20-25.

The third angel, vs. 4-7

This time the blow fell on the rivers and springs of drinking water and all turned to blood. The angel of the waters did not become angry with God, he said that the Lord, the Eternal One, is righteous. Men will kill God’s people in the Great Tribulation, just as they always have done, Matthew 23.31-35. They may think that God does not know or care but they will surely be punished when God’s time comes. They shed the blood of the saints, they will have to drink blood as their punishment.

An angel from the altar of incense agreed, v.7. All God’s judg-

ments must be true and righteous; the judge of all the earth will surely do what is right, Genesis 18.25.

The fourth angel, vs. 8,9

The fourth blow fell on the sun. Before, the sun became dark for one third of the day when the fourth angel sounded his trumpet, 8.12. Now the sun becomes terribly hot and men are burned and tormented.

Does this make men repent? No, instead they continue to blaspheme the name of God. Today millions of people do not believe in God and they say that natural causes are behind any disaster. In the Great Tribulation they will know that God is behind their trouble and they will still reject Him. Pharaoh knew that God was with Moses and Aaron, but he would not repent either.

The fifth angel vs. 10,11

This time the blow fell on the throne of the beast and great darkness came on his kingdom. This was like the ninth blow against Egypt, Exodus 10.21-23. People were in such pain that they chewed their own tongues but that did not help them. Then they used their tongues and their voices to blaspheme God more and more.

This is the answer to those who say that anyone would repent if God would punish evil at once in this world. Later men will suffer in the lake of fire, but they will not repent even then.

The sixth angel, vs. 12-16

12 The Euphrates is one of the great rivers of the world. In the Bible it is first mentioned in Genesis 15.18. It will be dried up so that the vast armies from eastern Asia will be able to cross on their way to the land of Israel.

13,14 John saw three frogs pop out of the mouths of the devil, the first beast and the antichrist. These frogs stand for wicked spirits and this verse shows how men will work with demons in the latter days, 1 Timothy 4.1. This will become far worse during the Tribulation. Here the devil, the first beast and the antichrist will use these demons to gather the kings and armies of the whole

world to the battle of the great day of the Lord God Almighty. These demons will be able to do miracles and persuade people to come together.

(The devil will have control over these two men and they will agree to do his will. We have seen that the second beast will support the first, who himself will get authority from Satan, 13.2,14. It is not right however to call these three a "trinity". God is One, revealed to us as three Persons, but still only one God. God is very different from any three persons even if they agree together perfectly. The word Trinity should be used only of God, the great Three-in-One. Perhaps the word Triunity would be better for God.)

15 These three great powerful persons are enough to make anyone feel afraid, especially when they call together all the armies of men who have been blaspheming God, vs. 9,11. So at this point we hear the voice of the Lord Jesus promising His faithful servants that He will come suddenly and save them from their enemies. A thief never tells anyone that he will come that night and steal what he owns, Matthew 24.43. The Lord warned the church of Sardis that He would come when they did not expect Him, 3.3, and the Spirit told believers the same thing, 1 Thessalonians 5.2; 2 Peter 3.10.

Here the Lord said that His people should watch, stay awake and resist the enemy, as in Matthew 24.42; 25.13; Acts 20.31; 1 Corinthians 16.13; Colossians 4.2; 1 Thessalonians 5.6; 1 Peter 5.8; Revelation 3.2. They would wear white garments of righteousness, 19.8, but these could be lost or soiled, 3.4. (Remember that it is possible to lose your crown also, 3.11.) It is also possible to be ashamed when Christ comes, 1 John 2.28.

16 Then John learned that these great armies of the world would be gathered together to one place called Armageddon. This word means "the mountain of Megiddo" and the people of Israel fought battles there, Judges 5.19; 2 Chronicles 35.22. God's prophet learned that there will be great sorrow there because God will gather all nations against Jerusalem, about one hundred kilometers south of Megiddo, Zechariah 12.11; 14.2,3.

Perhaps these armies from the east will come first to fight

against the new Roman Empire. They may resist the claims of the first beast to rule over them, but he will persuade them to join his armies in their plan to destroy God's people and reject the rule of Christ as King. In this way Satan would arrange to gather all the armies of the world for his great attempt to overthrow the Lord. The failure of this effort is seen in 19.19-21.

The seventh angel, vs. 17-21

17 The last angel poured his bowl of God's wrath into the air. At once John heard a great voice saying IT IS DONE. This will mean that the very end has come and the Lord will appear almost at once.

18 Then John heard more voices and thunders, and saw lightning flashing. This will be followed by the greatest earthquake since the time of Adam.

19 Cities around the world will be destroyed but the "great city" will be divided into three parts. This may mean Jerusalem, 11.8, or Babylon, 14.8. Today there is no city of Babylon but it may be built again, or the name may refer to the great religious system now being formed. This same verse tells us that God will remember Babylon and punish her, and chapters 17 and 18 give us many details about this judgment.

20 The great earthquake will also cause every island to sink into the sea and many mountains to be flattened. The Lord Jesus said that if we had very little faith we could move mountains, Matthew 17.20, and He surely has the power to do so Himself.

21 Terrible hail will be the last form of torture for sinful men. Each hailstone will weigh 30 kilograms, enough to kill a man. Surely men will give up their impossible fight against God? No, they will continue to blaspheme God and follow the first beast and the anti-christ. So the great heat of the sun will combine with their sores and the hailstones to make them blaspheme God, vs. 9,11,21.

6. Great Babylon, 17.1-18.24

We have read about God's coming judgment on Babylon, 14.8; 16.19, but now the Spirit gives us many details of this event. What does Babylon stand for?

Babylon is called Babel in Genesis and is first mentioned in Genesis 10.10. It became a great city on the banks of the Euphrates river, of which we have read in 16.12. The people of Babylon became a great nation and an empire. They captured Jerusalem and led the people of Judah away as prisoners.

In Genesis 11 men tried to build a tower to heaven at Babel or Babylon. They wanted to make a great name for themselves so they would not be divided and scattered. God had told men to spread out and fill the earth, Genesis 1.28; 9.1, but they refused to obey. God did not destroy men but He mixed up their language so they could not understand each other. Ever since then the name Babel or Babylon has suggested confusion.

Later the Holy Spirit gave the prophet Isaiah a vision in which the king of Babylon is a picture of Satan when he first fell into sin, Isaiah 14.4,12-15. The men of Babylon worshipped idols and false gods, Daniel 3.12,18; 5.4.

In Revelation we can think of Babylon the great prostitute as a false wife trying to take the place of the true Bride, the church of Jesus Christ. She is a picture of religious systems which have always been opposed to God and never give Christ His proper place. They all deny that He is the Son of God or that His death is all we need for salvation. Let us see how the details of chapters 17 and 18 support this view. In chapter 17 we have John's vision, vs. 1-6; then what will happen to this religious system. Chapter 18 is a long lament which shows how much the people of the earth love their sins.

1. The Great Prostitute, her success, 17.1-6

An angel told John about the great prostitute and carried him away to the desert. There he saw this woman riding on a beast, dressed in beautiful clothing, but loaded with her sins.

1 The seven angels had finished their work in chapter 16 but now one of them comes to John to explain more about the judgment on the great prostitute. He said that she was sitting on many waters, a picture of the nations of the world, v.15. So we learn first of her wicked character and her widespread control of men all over the world.

2 Rulers of men have lived with her in a sinful way, and people have been made drunk with her wine and her sins. All levels of society are attracted to false religion. Many religions do offer sex as part of the regular program; others make it easy for sinners by saying that they are forgiven without any real faith in God. But the main meaning is that false religion keeps men and women from Christ. Words meaning prostitute and fornication are found seven times in this chapter, verses 1,2,4,5,15 (twice) and 16; also in 18.3 (twice); 18.9; and 19.2 (twice).

3 John wanted to learn all he could so the angel carried him away into the desert. This world may look very beautiful to unsaved men, but it does not bring forth fruit for God, it is like a desert. There John saw this woman sitting on a red animal. This animal is none other than the first beast, with seven heads and ten horns, 13.1. Before he had the names of blasphemy on his heads; now he is full of blasphemy. This shows how sin gets worse and worse ... even the first beast becomes still more blasphemous. In chapter 13 the first beast is seen conquering all men, but before that he was subject to the power of Religion.

4 The woman was wearing beautiful clothing, purple and scarlet. She is decorated with gold, precious stones and pearls, she is very wealthy. Purple and scarlet are used by kings, and religious leaders who wish to act like kings. John also saw a cup in her hand, made of gold, but full of her special dirty sins, attractive to men but repulsive to God.

5 Her name was on her forehead, just above her eyes. This is where the seal of God will be put, 7.3; 9.4; and where the mark of the beast, 666, will be placed, 13.16; 14.9; 20.4 (or on the right hand). Some believers will have the Father's name there, 14.1; 22.4.

This woman's name is a mystery, which the angel explained to John in verse 7. Her true nature will be revealed at the end. Her name is Babylon the Great, but she is really the mother of prostitutes and many other hateful things, especially idolatry and false religion.

6 Babylon is the great religious system which has always been the enemy of God and His people. It gives her joy to kill God's

children, joy like drinking wine, and she has had many years to do her evil work. Now she is drunk with their blood and the blood of those who have died for the Lord Jesus' sake. John was surprised with what he learned and was filled with wonder.

2. Her end, 17.7-18

The angel had shown John the great prostitute riding on the beast and now offered to explain this mystery. First we read about the beast, v.8, then about the kings that will support the beast, vs. 9-14, and what they do to the woman, vs. 15-18.

7 John should not have wondered or admired this woman. All the world will wonder about the beast, 13.3; 17.8, and worship him. We should properly wonder about God's works, 15.3, and one name of our Lord Jesus is Wonderful, Isaiah 9.6. John was at fault again in 19.10 and 22.8. The angel told John that he would soon know whom this woman really stands for, also the first beast which was carrying her.

8 The beast is said to be one which was and is not. We have seen that the first beast will be a man, a great world ruler. We have also noted that the fourth empire of Daniel has disappeared but will be restored for a short time just before Christ comes. This agrees with the end of verse 8, was and is not and yet is. In Daniel and in Revelation, the leader or dictator is spoken of in the same way as the nation or empire.

Here we read that this beast was about to come up out of the great hole, which is where many evil spirits are kept. This shows that the world empires and their rulers are led and given power by Satan's armies of demons.

The names of unsaved men are not written in the book of life and they will be greatly surprised when the Roman Empire will suddenly gain power after all these years. This book of life belongs to the Lamb of God, and these men will go into the lake of fire, 13.8; 20.15; 21.27. The beast whom they worship will also go to the place of destruction, vs. 8,11.

9 The angel told John that special wisdom would be needed to understand the mystery of Babylon and the beast.

God will give us wisdom for our daily life if we ask Him, James 1.5. It takes special wisdom to understand the great prophecies of this book. We should read, try to understand, and wait for God to fulfill everything when His time comes.

The woman was riding on a beast with seven heads and ten horns. First we are told that the seven heads stand for seven mountains. The city of Rome is built on seven hills and so this suggests that the beast stands for Rome or the Roman Empire.

10 The seven heads also stand for seven kings. When John wrote this book, five of these kings had already died, one was still ruling, and one more was yet to come. This man would only rule for a short time. We know that the Roman Empire has passed away long ago, but we believe that it will be restored at the end time, when the Tribulation period commences. This seventh king may still be future, one who will rule for a short time until the beast of Revelation 13 takes his power.

11 This verse says that the beast was and is not. We have taken these words to refer to the Roman Empire, but they may also mean the great ruler of the future. Then they would suggest that this man also may have some experience which will take him to the point of death, or perhaps his effort to reach the top will be set back for a while, then be successful.

This great ruler will follow in the same way as the seven kings before him, and he too will go into the place of destruction. This shows the sinful customs of the leaders of the Roman Empire and the terrible end they will have.

12 At the end time there will be ten more kings of different countries and the ten horns of the beast are a picture of these kings. So altogether we read of 18 kings or dictators in these verses. Some of them may be ruling already over some of the countries which used to form the Roman Empire. All ten will be given power to rule with the beast for a short time ... only one hour. With God one day is like a thousand years, so one hour would be about forty years. We believe that the Great Tribulation will last for only seven years, so one hour here means a very short time only.

13 These ten kings will agree to give their power and authority to the beast. Perhaps he will force them to do so.

14 In the end they will all unite against the Lamb, as we will learn in chapter 19. Remember that the Lamb has seven horns, which are a picture of His perfect power, 5.6.

Here we are told that He is Lord of lords and King of kings. All of earth's kings and lords will have to obey Him and He will have this grand title written on His clothing when He comes to claim His throne, 19.16.

Also note that He will have faithful followers. He knows how to call and choose those who will obey Him in the great conflict. He refuses those who are not willing to sacrifice everything for Him, Luke 14.26,27,33.

This is instruction for us today. Faithful servants will get a great reward when He comes.

Next we read about the end of the wicked woman, vs. 15-18.

15 The angel went on to explain that the water stands for many people of all nations and different languages. The great prostitute sits on all men all over the world. Today some people say they do not believe in God or spirits but they accept what their leaders teach and obey them blindly, so their atheism is really a religion to them. The prostitute is controlling them also and they persecute God's people just as false religions do.

16 Now the ten kings refuse to let this woman control them any longer and they turn against her. They hate her, make her great buildings like a desert, take away her fine red and purple clothing, her gold and her precious stones and pearls, v.4. Then they eat her and burn her, 18.8.

What does this mean? The kings and the ten nations of the new Roman Empire will destroy the great world religious system. This will be the end of the false world church and will prepare the way for the worship of the first beast, who will set himself up as god and say there is no other God to be worshipped, 13.8.

17 This is all according to God's will. God is still on the throne and He is able to control men and kings as He did when He used the Medes to punish Israel, Isaiah 13.17. These kings will give their power to the first beast and together they will destroy

this religious system which has always been against God and His people. God's word will surely be fulfilled.

18 Finally the woman is said to be the great city which was ruling over the kings of the world. When John heard these words, Rome was the greatest power in the world and today the most powerful church in the world is Rome. In this chapter she is called Babylon the great, the religious system which will rule over men everywhere until she is destroyed during the first half of the Great Tribulation. In chapter 18 we will read how people will feel about it.

3. Sorrow for Babylon, 18.1-24

Babylon was a great city and the first empire seen in the dream of Daniel. In Revelation it also stands for the great religious system of the last days. In chapter 17 we have seen that this system will control the political leaders until they turn on her and destroy her in the middle of the Tribulation period. Her great wealth will then be available to the first beast in his desire to control the whole world.

The first beast will rule the new Roman Empire and set himself up as the only god to be worshipped. This political system was first started by Babylon and the worship of the first beast will again be a form of false religion. So "Babylon" will be destroyed in this second sense at the end of the Great Tribulation. This is suggested also after the seventh bowl of God's wrath, 16.19. Both of these aspects may be seen in chapter 18.

The first angel speaks as though Babylon had already fallen, vs. 1-3. The second angel gives a warning to God's people before her destruction, vs. 4-8. Then we read how men will feel about the end of Babylon, vs. 9-19; and how God's people will feel, vs. 20-24.

(1) Babylon has fallen, 18.1-3

1 Another angel came down, one who has great authority, but this is not Christ, who has all authority. This angel will come from God and will lighten the earth with His glory, Ezekiel 43.2.

2 He cried out loud with a great voice, like the Lord Himself, 10.1. This angel said that Babylon had really fallen hard. This may have been said even before Babylon had actually fallen because God's purposes are as good as completed and are certain

to be carried out. The prophets often spoke about the future as if it were already past, for example, Isaiah 53.4,5.

Babylon has become a place for demons, evil spirits and unclean birds. This was true of ancient Babylon, Isaiah 14.23. It is true of Babylon as a religious system, because it is controlled even now by evil spirits. Isaiah also prophesied that a city of Edom would become a place where only birds could live, Isaiah 34.11. Birds are a picture of evil spirits coming to live in the great tree which stands for the kingdom of heaven as a mixture of good and evil, Matthew 13.31,32. Religion today has taken over many things from heathen idolatry and men worship and pray to beings in the spirit world, 1 Corinthians 10.20.

3 People of all nations have been under the control of Babylon, kings have committed sin with her, 17.2. Now we read also that merchants of the world become rich by helping the great prostitute. Many religions demand money from poor people and use it to buy great luxuries for the priests and sacrifices for the gods. The priests will only buy from those who follow their religion, so many people will join up hoping to get richer. See Acts 19.24.

(2) Warning to God's people, 18.4-8

4 Then John heard another angel calling from heaven. God's people are warned to separate themselves from Babylon, this great religious system. Isaiah used words like these to Israel in Isaiah 52.11 when the Spirit warned them not to take anything from Babylon when they would leave after being captives there. Later Jeremiah also recorded God's command to leave Babylon, Jeremiah 51.45. Much earlier two angels told Lot to leave Sodom with his family before God poured out His judgment on that wicked city, Genesis 19.15.

Even today believers should leave a wicked religious system or any wrong association, 2 Corinthians 6.14-17. We should not try to take anything of value with us even if it means financial loss.

Those who stay are guilty of the same sins as the great prostitute and so they will share also in her punishment.

5 These sins cannot be hidden, God in heaven knows all. He knew about the sins of Sodom, Genesis 18.20; and of Nineveh, Jonah 1.2. He will remember Babylon and punish her when the seventh bowl of His anger is poured out, 16.19.

6 The saints are called upon to join with God in punishing the great prostitute. We have seen the martyrs praying God to avenge them, 6.10, and in 8.3 the prayers of saints were offered to God before the seven angels blew their trumpets. We will be with the Lamb when He comes to judge the first beast, 17.14. Babylon's punishment will be double for the evil which she has done to the saints of God.

7 Like Laodicea Babylon glorified herself and lived in great luxury. She will be punished with an equal amount of pain and sorrow. She told herself that she was a queen, not a widow, and would never have great sorrow. She certainly dressed herself like a queen, 17.4, and for a long time was able to rule over the kings of the earth. The people of Israel were far from the Lord when they followed heathen customs and worshipped the "queen of heaven", Jeremiah 7.18; 44.17. Today many people call Mary, the mother of our Lord, "queen of heaven" but they do not get this from the Bible. We should pray only to the God of heaven and to the Lord Jesus Christ.

8 Belshazzar, ruler of Babylon, was feasting and drinking and laughing at God, and was killed that same night, Daniel 5.1,30. Babylon the great prostitute will also meet her end very suddenly. Three blows will fall on her at the same time: many will die, others will mourn and others have nothing to eat. Babylon will be burned with fire, 17.16, as the Philistines did to one of Samson's wives and her father, Judges 15.6. Babylon the city will escape the terrible plagues of the first six bowls of God's anger, but the seventh will completely and suddenly destroy her and everything she has, 16.19. The Lord God is quite able to do this.

(3) Kings of the earth mourn for Babylon, 18.9,10

9,10 These kings have committed sin with Babylon and lived in luxury with her. They will be very sorry when they see her destroyed and burned with fire. They will not try to help her in the time of trouble, they are afraid and stand far away. Babylon

was great and strong, but her sorrows come suddenly and the kings say, Woe, Woe.

(4) *Merchants mourn for Babylon, 18.11-16*

11 They made great profits selling things to Babylon, now all that is past. Many people love to make money through religion: Gehazi, 2 Kings 5.20-27; Balaam, 2 Peter 2.15; Pharisees were covetous, Luke 16.14; John 2.14-16; and so are false teachers of the last days, 2 Peter 2.3.

12,13 Now we have a list of the things which Babylon bought from the merchants:

precious metals, gold and silver
 precious stones, pearls
 cloth, linen and beautiful colours
 wood, ivory
 other metals, bronze and iron
 marble, a beautiful stone
 spice, perfume
 food and drink, wine, oil, flour, wheat
 cattle and sheep, horses and carriages
 slaves
 souls of men

Some of these things are necessary for ordinary people but most of them are used by rich men who live in luxury. Some religious leaders are extremely wealthy while most of their followers get poorer all the time. But the worst thing about Babylon the great, she buys and sells the souls of men, that is, she tells people they will be saved if they pay money to her. Millions believe this lie and get a false peace in their hearts but they lose their souls, while the leaders get rich.

14 Now the angel spoke directly to Babylon and told her that her good life was over. By now it was too late and she had refused all God's warnings so there was no remedy.

15,16 Then the merchants say about the same as the kings, v.10.

They too stand far away, call Babylon a great or strong city, say Woe, woe because in one hour she has come under judgment

or become nothing. The merchants were thinking of all that wealth now lost and so they lose their business.

(5) *Sailors and traders mourn for Babylon, 18.17-19*

17-19 In these verses the sailors are very sad because they too have lost business. Captains and crew and traders join together but still stand far away. From there they could see the smoke of Babylon burning. They put dust on their heads to show their sorrow because the great city lost everything in one hour. They added their *Woe,woe* for the system which had made them and all sailors rich.

(6) *Joy of believers, 18.20-24*

20 The angel called on all in heaven, the saints, the apostles and prophets to rejoice because God had finally judged the great enemy of His people. It was not for them to try and get revenge for themselves; this God will do when His time comes. They rejoice because God's name will be held in honour, as the martyrs prayed in 6.11.

21 Then another strong angel (5.2; 10.1) threw a large stone into the sea to give a picture of the sudden and complete destruction of Babylon. Jeremiah told a man to throw a book with a stone into the river as a picture of the destruction of Babylon, Jeremiah 51.61-64. Her end will be final and complete; note the words **no more at all** in verses 14,21,22,23.

22 The angel again speaks to Babylon, as in verse 14. **No more music**, no harps, pipes or trumpets. God's people have worshipped God with music since the time of Moses and David, and we are told to sing spiritual songs to help one another, Ephesians 5.19,20. The saints will play on the harps of God in heaven, 5.8; 14.2; 15.2. Many false religions also use music, but it will be all over when the system is judged by God, Isaiah 24.8; Jeremiah 25.10.

No craftsmen. Paul worked with his own hands and we are told to do the same, Ephesians 4.28; 1 Thessalonians 4.11. But in a religious system, men make idols with their hands and so lead others into sin, Acts 19.24.

No grinding in any mill. This was for preparing food, and is no sin, Numbers 11.8. In Babylon ALL WILL BE SILENCE.

23 No candle light. Darkness can be terrible but candles are important in Rome and in Buddhism as religious items. The church should be a testimony and a witness, 2.5, and many still are today.

No voice of bride or bridegroom, **no joy**.

Merchants of Babylon were great, no more. By her witchcraft she deceived all nations, no more. Here we have the two sides of Babylon: the religious and the commercial, both judged and destroyed. Babylon the first empire, will be destroyed in the last, the Roman Empire.

Babylon will also be the great world church, the union of the world's religions. In Chapters 2 and 3, we learned that Thyatira and Sardis will continue until the Lord comes. In Thyatira Jezebel is a prostitute deceiving Christ's servants and teaching them to commit sin, 2.20; Isaiah 47.12. Sardis has a name but is dead. These two will unite in the end of the church age and be judged as Babylon. But there is a remnant in both churches, true believers who should hold fast, 2.25; 3.4.

24 Babylon will be opened and will be seen as responsible for the murder of prophets and saints, and all others. This shows that Babylon is the union of all false religions which from the beginning have attacked the people of God, starting with Cain, 1 John 3.12, including our Lord Jesus, 1 Thessalonians 2.15, and the church of Smyrna, 2.10. The leaders of Israel will share in this guilt, Matthew 23.35. But millions have also been killed by the political systems, the empires and their rulers. God will smash the entire present world system, then set up the kingdom of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

All these things will happen after the true Church has gone and before the Lord comes, in other words, during the Great Tribulation.

3. THE COMING OF CHRIST

Chapters 19 to 22

The first part of Revelation showed us what would take place in the present age, chapters 1 to 3. The second is about the Great Tribulation, chapters 4 to 18. Now we come to the glorious future, the Coming of Christ, chapters 19 to 22.

1. Marriage Supper of the Lamb, 19.1-10
2. King of kings, 19.11-21
3. The Thousand Years, 20.1-15
4. Eternity, 21.1 – 22.5
5. Final messages, 22.6-21

1. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb, 19.1-10

First John heard many people raising praise to God because He had judged great Babylon, vs. 1-5; then because the Marriage Supper of the Lamb had arrived, vs. 6-10. These things will take place in heaven.

1. Praise to God, 19.1-5

1 Everyone on earth was sad in chapter 18, but the angel told God's people to rejoice. Now God heard a great voice of many people in heaven, and there will be thousands of millions there. These cried Hallelujah which means, Praise the Lord! This word is found 24 times in the book of Psalms, usually at the beginning or end of a psalm, for example, Psalm 146.1,10.

In the New Testament this word is found only in this chapter, verses 1,3,4,6. In the Psalms the Holy Spirit often told people why they should give praise to the Lord, for example, Psalm 147.1.

Here also the millions in heaven gave praise to God because salvation and glory and power all belonged to Him. We have seen these things before:

salvation,	7.10; 12.10
glory,	1.6; 5.12,13; 7.12
power,	4.11; 12.10

They call Him “our God”, which He had promised to be, Jeremiah 31.33; Revelation 21.7. *Oh, how good to call Him mine!*

2 These millions will praise God because His judgments are always true and fair and especially because He has now judged the great prostitute. She had made men everywhere corrupt by her fornication and idolatry and false religion. She also had been responsible for killing millions of God’s faithful servants. Now they have been avenged and she has been destroyed. This will be cause for great praise in heaven.

3 So they again cry *Hallelujah* and praise the Lord. But the smoke will rise up forever as evidence that she has been judged. Babylon as a system will be destroyed and kings and sailors will see the smoke, 18.9,18, but the people will be punished without end, including those with the number 666, 14.11.

4 The 24 elders and the four living creatures join in this praise to God. They fall down before God on His throne, worship Him and cry *Amen* and *Hallelujah*. We have not read about the four living creatures and the 24 elders since chapter 14 verse 3. They first were seen at the throne of God in chapter 4, and here in chapter 19 is the last time they are mentioned in the book of Revelation. The Divine Throne-Sitter has been seen many times. See note on 4.2.

5 God the Holy Spirit often commands the saints to praise God but here a voice from the throne calls us to praise our God, which is really the same as singing *Hallelujah*. Before this John heard a voice

from the altar, 9.13
 from heaven, 10.4,8; 11.12; 12.10; 14.2,13; 18.4;
 (and again in 21.3)
 from the temple, 16.1,17
 from the throne, 16.17; 19.5

God sits on His throne, v.4, but this may be the voice of an angel. For example, the four living creatures were first seen in the midst of the throne, 4.6. Here the call is to all God's servants who fear Him, both small and great. All believers should serve Him, even those who think they are not important. If we fear Him we must serve Him because He has commanded us to do so.

2. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb, 19.6-10

6 The great number of saints obey the call to praise God and John heard their voice like the sound of many waters and loud thunder. Again they say *Hallelujah*, the fourth time in this chapter. The great reason for praise is because the Lord God Almighty is on the throne, always has been and always will be. Sometimes Satan seems to have his way but in the end all will know that God has been in complete control. Now it will be plain to all that He has started to rule over the earth.

7 But they have another reason to praise the Lord, to rejoice and to give Him honour. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb has come.. The "wife" is the Bride, 21.9, and the Bride is the Church. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for her. Husbands are commanded to love their own wives and to care for them in the same way, Ephesians 5.25-27. This will be a time of great joy for the Old Testament saints and those saved during the Great Tribulation. How much more for Christ and His Church the Bridegroom and the Bride!

Note that this event will come after the Great Prostitute has been destroyed, which is in the middle of the Tribulation period. The Church will be taken to be with the Lord at the beginning of that period. These 3½ years will allow time for an important occasion, the Judgment Seat of Christ, also called the Award Throne of Christ. The Lord will give crowns and rewards to all who have served Him faithfully while here on earth: See Luke 19.12-27; Romans 14.10-12; 1 Corinthians 3.13-15; 2 Corinthians 5.9,10. This may be a time of sorrow for some but it will be followed by the Marriage Supper.

The Lord Jesus on earth went to a marriage supper in Cana, John 2.1-11. He showed His glory and power and we can believe that He was looking forward with joy to the time when He will be

with His beloved Bride forever. In the Song of Solomon also we read a poem about the joys of the Bride and Bridegroom, just a picture of what is still future for us.

However Babylon is also an empire, a political and commercial system, and as such she will be destroyed at the end of the Tribulation period. So the Marriage Supper of the Lamb may be just before Christ appears on the earth in great glory.

8 Every bride must wear her best clothing and look beautiful.

The Bride of Christ will be given the right to be dressed in fine linen, clean and pure. This is a gift of God to the Church but in verse 7 the Bride has made herself ready and the white clothing here stands for the righteous acts and deeds of the saints.

We are made righteous by faith, Romans 5.1, and it is all by grace, not by works. Still God has planned that we should do what is right, Ephesians 2.8-10. It is God who works in us but we should not prevent Him from doing so, Philippians 2.13. The white clothing is both a gift from God and also the reward for obeying Him.

9 The same voice now commanded John to write some more.

The Lord often told John to write (see note on 10.4) and we can praise Him for this wonderful book. This time John was to record that the guests at the Wedding Feast would also be blessed and very happy. These are believers of other ages, Old Testament and the Tribulation period, saved and in heaven, washed in the blood of the Lamb, but not in the Church, which is Christ's Bride. The angel added that these things are all true, they come from God Himself.

10 John was so surprised at all this that he did a terrible thing, he

fell down to worship the angel. The angel immediately stopped him and said that he too was just a servant of God, no greater than John and other believers who are witnesses to the Lord Jesus. He told John to worship God only. The purpose of all prophecy is to give testimony to the Lord Jesus. He Himself is a Witness, 1.5; 22.20, and He inspires His prophets. True Israel (12.17) and all the brethren have this testimony, 1 John 4.14. We must accept Him as God the Son and never worship any creature.

This is very important here, because the first beast has been

trying to force all men to worship him. In some churches people bow down to images and saints, pray to other creatures, and do not give all the glory to God alone. People often fell down and worshipped the Lord Jesus, but He never refused them ... He is God.

2. King of kings, 19.11-21

The Wedding Feast comes after the judgment of the great prostitute and before the judgment of the first beast and the false prophet. In the second half of chapter 19 the Lord Jesus is seen as the King victorious over all earth's kings. We have another wonderful view of Christ in glory, vs. 11-16, and we read of His sudden victory when He comes, vs. 17-21.

1. Christ the Victor, 19.11-16

11 John saw the door of heaven opened, 4.1; and the temple in heaven opened, 11.19; 15.5, but this time heaven was opened and he saw a white horse and a Rider. The Lord Jesus came to Jerusalem riding on a peaceful donkey, Matthew 21.2, but soon He will come riding on a war-horse, Proverbs 21.31. This chapter tells us about the great battle.

He is called Faithful and True, 1.5; 3.14, as a Witness, but now He appears as Judge and Warrior. He is God the Son and all He ever does is in righteousness, according to the character and nature of God, v.2.

12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, 1.14; 2.18. As the Lamb of God He has seven eyes, meaning He can know and see all things, 5.6. On His head John saw many crowns. The dragon had seven heads and seven crowns, 12.3, and his servant, the first beast, had ten horns and ten crowns, 13.1. These beings are trying to grab control of the world, but our Lord Jesus Christ has many crowns, more than enough authority to defeat all His enemies.

Again the Lord has a name written but John could not read it, and no man can know it. This refers to His mystical relation to the Father, for He Himself said that no man can know the Son except the Father, Matthew 11.27. We can know the Father and the Son, whom to know is life eternal, John 17.3, but we cannot know the nature of the relation between them. This unknown name is not the same as

His new name which will be written on overcomers, 3.12.

13 In 1.13 the Lord wore a long, priestly robe, now His clothing is dipped in blood. It is true that He shed His precious blood for sinners but here He is Judge and Warrior and the blood speaks of His defeated enemies, as in Isaiah 63.1-4. Here we have His third name, Word of God. In John 1.1 we read of the eternal Word, the Logos, who came as a Man, the Man Christ Jesus. Here He is still showing God's character, not His love so much as His righteousness.

It is necessary to remember that God is love and God is righteous. Men have refused His love, they will have to face His righteous judgments. The Son of God reveals both sides of God's character.

14 God by Himself is quite capable of judging all men, but He allows His saints to be with Him when He goes out to war. After the Wedding Feast the Bride will go with the Bridegroom wherever He goes. Here there are armies and they are all riding on white horses and clothed in pure white linen as in verse 8. Angels too are with the Lord in 2 Thessalonians 1.7. However in the rest of this chapter nothing is said about the saints taking any part in the great battle.

These verses are quite different from 1 Thessalonians 4.16,17 and 1 Corinthians 15.51,52, where we learn the truth of the Rapture of the Church. The Lord comes for His saints, here He comes with them. We believe that the Lord will come to earth with power about seven years after the Rapture of the Church. These seven years will be the 70th week of years which Daniel spoke of, called in Matthew and Revelation the Great Tribulation.

15 Here the Lord is seen with a sharp sword going out of His mouth, as in 1.16; 2.12,16. He will use this sword to punish people of all nations. His name is Word of God and He said that His word would judge men in the last day, John 12.48. He will then rule over all men like a Shepherd but with an iron rod. He was born for this purpose, 12.5, and He will share this authority with His people, 2.27. The Lord will also be a Shepherd for His saints, 7.17, but He will have to rule men sternly to maintain righteousness during the Millennium, Psalm 2.9.

First He will “tread the winepress” of God’s anger. He started to reap the harvest of the earth but an angel began to cut the grapes in the vineyard, 14.16,20. This is a terrible picture of God’s anger in the day of judgment. In Revelation there are two words meaning anger, wrath or rage:

- of God, 14.10,19; 15.1; 16.1,19
- of God Almighty, 11.18; 19.15
- of the eternal God, 15.7
- of the Lamb, 6.16 (also see Mark 3.5)
- of the Throne-Sitter and the Lamb, 6.17

Both of these two words are found in three of these verses: 14.10; 16.19; and 19.15, so one occurs seven times in Revelation, the other six times. God is a God of love but the time will come when He must act in anger against those who have rejected His beloved Son and killed many of His people.

16 Finally John saw a name written on His clothing and on the upper part of His leg, where a warrior would wear His sword. What a wonderful name!

KING OF KINGS

LORD OF LORDS

Jehovah is called KING in Psalm 10.16; 24.10; 29.10; 47.2; 95.3; Isaiah 43.15; Jeremiah 10.10. God is called KING in Psalm 47.7; 1 Timothy 1.17; Revelation 15.3, and KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS, 1 Timothy 6.15. The Lord Jesus is the Prince of the kings of the earth, 1.5, and has the full title KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS both here and in 17.14. From these passages we can see clearly that Christ is God and is given the same supreme title to show that He will rule over all earthly kings for ever and ever, 11.15.

2. Christ’s victory, 19.17-21

17,18 Then John saw an angel standing in the sun. Before this he saw Christ whose face was like the sun, 10.1; and Israel, whose clothing was like the sun, 12.1. This angel called to all the birds in the world to come to the great battle. There would be so many men killed that the birds would have a great feast, kings, officers,

horses, riders, slaves and all men. In verse 9 many are invited to the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, but this invitation is to show that the victory was certain. This great battle will be in the land of Israel near the mountain of Megiddo, Revelation 16.16. Birds will be invited to feast on dead bodies as they will be for the earlier battle in Ezekiel 39.17-20.

19 The first beast will succeed in gathering together the kings and their armies from all the earth, as we read after the sixth angel poured out his bowl of God's wrath. The beast and the kings will try to overthrow Christ and His people for good, Psalm 2.2,3. They will suppose that then they will have the planet earth to themselves to do as they please. This will be at the very end of the Great Tribulation. Of course they will not be able to overthrow God.

20 We do not read of a great struggle or a long battle, first one side gaining, then losing ground, then calling in more soldiers to help, as is so common in most battles among men. The victory was certain from the beginning. The two leaders are captured, the first beast and the false prophet. This false prophet had been able to do great miracles and deceive those persons who worshipped the beast and accepted his mark 666 on their bodies. These two leaders were not killed, they were thrown at once into the lake of fire, the first men to enter that place of eternal punishment.

21 All the great armies will be killed by the sword, by the word, of Christ. They will not be judged until the Great White Throne, a thousand years later. At this time Christ will appear in power and great glory. He will call all nations to be judged on the basis of their treatment of the Jews during the Tribulation period. Some like the goats will be sent away to the place of judgment, others like sheep will enter into the kingdom of Christ here on earth, Matthew 25.31-46. The Church, the Bride of Christ, will be with Him wherever He goes.

This is the time to make sure that you really belong to Him.

3. The Thousand Years, 20.1-15

Old Testament prophets often told of a glorious time in the

future when there will be peace on earth and all men will be happy and satisfied. For example, read Isaiah 9.7; 11.1-10; 35.1; 65.20,25. This will be possible because the Lord Jesus Christ will rule as King over the whole world; and because Satan will be bound with a chain for this whole period of time. We are never told how long the age of peace will last until we reach Revelation 20, and the words “thousand years” are found here six times: verses 2,3,4,5,6,7.

In this chapter we see

1. The Millennium, vs. 1-6
 - (1) Satan bound, vs. 1-3
 - (2) Saints reigning, vs. 4-6
2. The last great struggle, vs. 7-10
3. The Great White Throne, vs. 11-15

You will understand that this is one of the most important chapters in the Bible.

1. The Millennium, 20.1-6

Here we have the beginning of the Thousand Years, when Satan was bound; then the saints reigning with Christ during the Thousand Years. In the rest of the chapter we will learn what happens after the Millennium.

(1) *Satan bound, vs. 1-3*

1 First John saw another angel come down from heaven holding two things: the key to the abyss and a great chain. We have seen before that the abyss is like a deep hole in the earth but with no bottom. When it was opened a large number of wicked spirits poured out to hurt men, 9.2-4. The first beast received his power from these demons, 11.7; 17.8. Now God’s angel has the key to lock it.

This one angel had the power and authority to arrest Satan and tie him up for the Thousand Years. (In 2 Kings 19.35 we see one angel who was stronger than the whole army of the Assyrians and in one night he killed 185,000 men. Our Lord Jesus could have asked His Father for more than 40,000 angels if He wanted to save Himself from the cross, Matthew 26.53. They would have been strong enough to kill 7,400 million people, far more than all the

people in the world today.)

3 The strong angel took hold of Satan, threw him into the abyss, shut him in there, and set a seal on the abyss. Jezebel, the false prophet and the great prostitute are active followers of Satan in deceiving people, 2.20; 13.14; 18.23; 19.20. These will all be silenced and Satan himself will be bound. This will be to keep him from deceiving people any more for the Thousand Years but after that he will be set free again.

This will be very important in the Millennium, Satan will not be able to deceive anyone at all. God will test men again under the best possible circumstances, Christ ruling, Satan bound, peace and lots of food for every one. We will see later in this chapter the sad end to this wonderful period of time.

(2) Saints reigning, vs. 4-6

4 Then John saw the government of the world to come. There will be thrones and men sitting on them. These men will have authority to judge in the world. Who are these judges? Here we read only of those who witnessed for Christ during the time of the Great Tribulation and were put to death because they refused to worship the beast and accept his name or number on their bodies. Wicked men had cut off their heads but God raised them from death. They will live and rule with Christ for the Thousand Years. King Herod cut off the head of John the Baptist and another Herod killed James the apostle with a sword, Acts 12.2. Many more died for Christ in the New Testament, especially in the church of Smyrna. Others will reign with Christ: the twelve apostles, Matthew 19.28; overcomers in the worldly church, 3.21.

Believers who die during the church age will rise from death at the Rapture, at the beginning of the Tribulation period. Believers of Old Testament times will also rise then, 1 Thessalonians 4.14-16. Seven years later those believers who die during the Tribulation will rise.

5,6 From the time of Adam, many millions of people have died, and all will rise again. Those who believed in God will rise at the first resurrection, all others a thousand years later. The second death will have no power over these believers who rise in either

part of the first resurrection. God will make them happy and holy. The second death is explained in verse 14 but it will be our joy to worship our Lord Jesus as priests and to rule with Him, 1.6; 5.10.

2. The last great struggle, 20.7-10

You might think that men would love God after He has provided such wonderful conditions on earth for a thousand years. Only born again believers will enter the Kingdom of God, John 3.3,5, but they will live a very long time and many children will be born during all those years. They will be forced to obey the laws of God while Christ is ruling but this is not the same as being born again.

7 For the final test, Satan is set free after the Thousand Years. Of course he has not repented or changed his mind about trying to attack God.

8 At once he will begin to deceive the nations again, people all over the world, north, east, south and west. Gog and Magog are the names of a great leader and his country who will attack the people of Israel during the Tribulation period, Ezekiel 38 and 39. Magog was a grandson of Noah, Genesis 10.2, who became the father of a great Gentile nation. Gog and Magog come from the north to attack Israel while they are not expecting any trouble, Ezekiel 38.14,15. At the end of the Thousand Years Satan will succeed in bringing together people from all over the world. No one will be able to count them all, just as no one could count the number of grains of sand on the sea shore.

So we see that there are three great battles: one described in Ezekiel 38 and 39, during the Tribulation. The second, called Armageddon, will be at the end of the seven years, Christ Himself will win. The third will be at the end of the Thousand Years, when the enemy will be destroyed by fire from heaven.

9 This enormous army will come against God's people and the city of Jerusalem. Satan will deceive them into supposing that they will at last be able to overthrow God and kill all who follow Him. In the earlier battle God will save Israel by sending panic and epidemic and hail to destroy their enemies, and it will take seven months to bury them all, Ezekiel 38.21,22; 39.12. At the end

of the Millennium, He will simply send fire from heaven to destroy them all at one time. The time of testing will be over. Man will have shown that his heart is always God's enemy, unless by grace he repents and bows before God as his only Saviour. No one will ever be able to question God's righteousness or His loving patience.

10 Satan is not a man, he will not die, but he will be thrown this time into the lake of fire which was prepared for him and his angels and demons. His greatest servants, the first beast and the false prophet are already there. They will be tortured continuously for ever and ever.

3. The Great White Throne, 20.11-15

We now come to one of the most solemn parts of the whole Bible, the final judgment of sinful men.

11 John saw the Great White Throne on which God will be sitting, that is, the Son of God, John 5.22. At this time God will destroy the heaven and the earth and so men will have no way of escaping from Him. The Son will fold up what He first created, Hebrews 1.10-12, and in chapter 21 we will see the new Heaven and the new Earth. In the king's dream, the great statue of the nations was destroyed and ground to pieces, blown away, and no place was found for them, Daniel 2.35. Death will flee away from men, Revelation 9.6, and islands and mountains will flee after the seventh angel pours out his bowl of wrath, 16.20. No place was found for Satan and his angels in heaven when they were defeated, 12.8. Now no place is found for heaven or earth.

12 All dead people will be raised to life and must stand before God on His throne. There will be no exception, no escape. The false prophet will make all men, small and great, worship the beast, and all who follow him will be destroyed when Christ comes, 13.16; 19.18. A thousand years later they will be raised with all sinners to stand before God and be judged. Among the saints also both small and great will worship God and receive rewards, 11.18; 19.5.

At the Great White Throne two kinds of books will be opened, the books which contain a record of men's works, and the book of life. There are five different books in Revelation:

1. The book of Revelation itself which John was writing, 1.11; 22.7
2. The scroll which contains the title deeds of the world, 5.1
3. The little book of prophecy, 10.2
4. The record of men's works, 20.12
5. The Lamb's book of life, written before time began, 3.5; 13.8; 17.8; 21.27

God knows the thoughts of all men, 1 Chronicles 28.9; 1 Corinthians 3.20. He will judge all men fairly according to their works, 19.11. The names of all true believers are written in the book of life, Philippians 4.3.

13 All men will rise from death. Hades means the place where the souls or spirits of dead people wait until the resurrection. The rich man was there, Luke 16.23. The Lord Jesus Christ has the keys for death and Hades, 1.18, and in the day of judgment no one will be able to escape. The bodies of dead men are buried in the earth, but some are burned, eaten by birds or wild animals, and some are drowned in the sea and their bodies eaten by fish. God is able to raise up the bodies of men and all will stand before Him as complete men, not just spirits without any body.

It is repeated that they will be judged each individual according to his works. It is sad that some people think they will be saved by their good works, but this is not so, Titus 3.5. God knows what we do and why we do such things.

14 Death and Hades will be thrown into the lake of fire so even if any one were left he would have the same punishment. There is no hope and no way of escape for those who reject Christ and God's offers of mercy. After this there will be no more death, 1 Corinthians 15.26. Believers have eternal life and they will live forever. The lake of fire is the second death and there will never be another resurrection. No true believer will ever be put in the lake of fire. Those who are thrown there will never have any way to get out again. They will not be destroyed but will continue to exist with sorrow and anger forever, in the place prepared for Satan and his fallen angels, Matthew 25.30,41,46.

15 Is your name written in the Lamb's book of life? If not there may still be time to repent and accept God's salvation. The

Bible says whosoever believes in Christ will be saved. It also, says whosoever is not written in the book of life will be thrown into the lake of fire.

Let us warn our friends and neighbors before it is too late.

4. ETERNITY, 21.1-22.5

Eternity means time without end.

Suppose that you could take a piece of string and stretch it from your home to the house of your friend who lives in the next town, ten kilometres away. You could train some very small insect to walk along this string but it can only walk a metre every day. It would take it 10,000 days to reach your friend's house.

Now suppose that your friend lives 1,000 kilometres away and the little insect gets very tired and can walk only one centimetre each day. It would take it a very long time to reach the other end of the string...

Eternity cannot be measured. We cannot say eternity is so many years before it will be ended. There is no end to eternity and no number is big enough to tell us how many years there are left until it is over.

In fact there are two eternities, one past and one future. The past eternity had no beginning and the future will have no end. God has always existed from the eternity of the past, and He always will exist to the eternity of the future. All men have a beginning, but no end. We did not exist in the eternity of the past but we will continue for the eternity of the future. We believers have eternal life, we will never die after the Lord comes. Sinners will also exist forever as we have seen, but in eternal torment, 14.11; 19.3; 20.10. Also see Matthew 18.8; 2 Thessalonians 1.9; Hebrews 6.2; and Jude 7.

This part of Revelation teaches about:

1. The new heaven and the new earth, 21.1-8
2. The new Jerusalem, 21.9-22.5

1. The new heaven and the new earth, 21.1-8

- 1 John saw a new heaven and a new earth and was commanded to write down some of the things which he saw. (Paul was

caught up to the third heaven but was told not to report any details, 2 Corinthians 12.4.) The first heaven and the first earth will pass away, 20.11. Isaiah prophesied that God will create new heaven and earth, Isaiah 65.17; 66.22. God will shake the heaven and the earth for the sin of men, but the new heaven and earth cannot be shaken, Hebrews 12.27. The old earth is defiled with sin and also heaven, 12.3, but righteousness will dwell forever in the new heaven and earth, 2 Peter 3.13.

There will be no seas in the new earth. The planet earth has four times as much sea as land; God will create a new planet without any sea. The sea is dangerous and has always divided men from one another.

2 John also saw a new holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God in heaven. It was very beautiful, like a bride in her wedding dress all ready for her husband — like the Church, the Bride of Christ, 19.8. The old Jerusalem is certainly defiled by sin, 11.8, and will disappear with the old earth. We will read more about the new Jerusalem after verse 8. The Lord Jesus called it *the city of my God*, 3.12.

3 Then John heard a great voice making a great announcement.

The tabernacle of God *will be with men*.

He will *dwell with them*.

They shall *be* His people.

God Himself shall *be with them*,
and *be* their God.

This has always been God's desire, to be with His people. He walked with Adam in the garden until sin came in. He wanted Israel to be His people in a special sense, Leviticus 26.11,12. This will be possible fully and for all eternity only in the new heaven and the new earth.

4 When sin first came in, God told Adam and Eve that they would have sorrow and hard work, Genesis 3.16,17,19. In the new creation there will be no death, 20.14, sorrow, crying or pain. All these are the result of sin and they will pass away with everything else so common in our world today. God Himself will wipe away our tears and give us joy instead of sorrow.

5 Then God said to John three things:

(1) He was about to make all things new. We Christians have already begun to experience what is new:

We have been brought into the new covenant, Mark 14.24; Hebrews 8.8.

God has given us a *new* command, John 13.34; 1 John 2.8.

We are *new* creatures, Galatians 6.15.

We will have a *new* song, Revelation 5.9.

In fact, all things have become *new*, 2 Corinthians 5.17.

(2) God told John to write these things in this book of Revelation, because they are true and faithful words. Of course whatever God says is true, and He is faithful to all His words and promises. All God's judgments and words are true and faithful, 19.9; 22.6. He cannot lie, Hebrews 6.18; Titus 1.2.

We can trust Him fully, in fact, it is an insult to God when we doubt His Word.

6 (3) Then God said *It is done*. This repeats what was said after the seventh bowl of wrath, 16.17, a thousand years before. Then all God's judgments on sinful man were complete. Now all His promises to His people will also be completely fulfilled.

The Speaker was sitting on the throne, that is God Himself. Now He called Himself *The Alpha and the Omega*.

The Lord called Himself Alpha and Omega in chapter. 1, verse 8, the eternal God, the coming One, the Almighty. In 22.13 again He called Himself the Alpha and the Omega, the eternal One, and in the previous verse, the One who will come and bring rewards. Here in our verse He offers the water of life freely to anyone who wants to drink it, as He did in John 4.14 and 7.37. We see that Christ is the eternal God sitting on the throne of the universe.

The Lord offers the water of life NOW and will not offer it again to those who refuse Him today.

In our verse He also called Himself *the Beginning and the End*. This means that He started everything and caused all things to come into being. No one compelled God to do this, He did it for His own pleasure, 4.11, according to His own purposes. He is the

goal or end or object of all things. Everything He created is for His glory. He will also bring heaven and earth to an end and fold them up like a garment, Hebrews 1.10-12.

The Lord gives *freely* the water of life. We are justified *freely* by His grace, Romans 3.24. We also have received the gift of righteousness, Romans 5.17, the gift of the Holy Spirit, Acts 2.38, and various gifts to help others in the Body of Christ, Ephesians 4.7.

The Lord told us, *Freely you have received, freely give*, Matthew 10.8

7 Then there are these wonderful promises:

(1) The overcomer will inherit all things. In the letters to the churches there are seven promises to those who overcome. In 15.2 the overcomers will sing praise to God, and we learn how to overcome in 12.11. Here it says we will inherit all things. This is the only verse in Revelation which speaks about our inheritance but the Spirit has told us that it will be both eternal and incorruptible, Hebrews 9.15; 1 Peter 1.4. In 1 Corinthians 3.21 we learn that all things are ours.

(2) God will be his God, and he will be a son of God. In verse 3 this promise is for all His people but it is very precious to remember that we are all individuals in God's sight. To the believer in Pergamum the Lord promised a white stone with a special name which no one else will know.

8 The wonderful promise to the believer is a great contrast with the terrible warning to all sinners.

1. Fearful and unbelieving people, 21.27; 22:15. Even the Lord's disciples may be like that, Matthew 8.26, but we should not be, John 14.27; 2 Timothy 1.7. We should trust and not be afraid, Psalm 56.11.
2. Abominable persons. Babylon is the mother of the abominations of the earth and those who do not come out from her are also abominable. This word is often used for idols in the Old Testament, but men praise many things which God knows are abominable, Luke 16.15.
3. Witchcraft, sexual immorality and idolatry are all works of the flesh, Galatians 5.19,20.

4. So is murder, which comes from the heart, Matthew 15.19, and is the custom of the Gentiles, Romans 1.29.
5. All liars will be thrown into the same place where the lying-prophet and the father of lies are, 20.10. This is true of all the sinners listed in this verse. They will have no part in the first resurrection, 20.6, or in the Lamb's book of life, 22.19. Their part will be in the lake of fire and sulphur, the second death, 20.14.

2. The New Jerusalem, 21.9-22.5

Some verses in these chapters make us think that the New Jerusalem is a real city on the new earth, but others show that it stands for the Bride, the Church of Christ, the dwelling-place of God.

1. Its nature, 21.9-11
2. Its appearance, 21.12-21
3. Its glory, 21.22-27
4. Its blessings, 22.1-5

(1) *Its nature, 21.9-11*

9 An angel came to John and spoke to him. This may be the same one who showed him the judgment of the great prostitute, 17.1, or one of the other six angels who poured out the wrath of God. This time he had a better message, he offered to show John the Bride, the Lamb's wife. John had heard the voice of millions of people in heaven who were very glad because the wedding supper of the Lamb had come, 19.6,7.

10 The angel then carried John away, not to a desert as in 17.3, but to a great high mountain. Real cities are built on earth, but this one came down from heaven. And the angel had promised to show John the Bride, so we may think of this city as a picture of the Church. In verse 2 John saw the new Jerusalem "prepared" as a Bride, but this could mean it was very beautiful.

11 This city will have the glory of God and light like a precious stone. The throne of God looked like a precious stone, and the sea of glass before Him was clear as crystal, 4.3,6.

(2) *Its appearance, 21.12-21*

Here we read about the gates, walls and the foundation of the New Jerusalem.

12,13 The wall was great and high and had twelve gates. Each gate had an angel and the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. The woman in 12.1 had twelve stars for a crown and she was a picture of Israel. The wall of the city was square and there were three gates on each side.

14 The wall had twelve foundations, each with the name of one of the twelve apostles of the Lord Jesus. Walls are to keep people out, Hebrews 11.30, and gates are to let them in, Revelation 22.14.

In this part of Revelation the number 12 is important: there are 12 gates, angels, tribes of Israel, foundations, apostles, kinds of fruit, 22.2, and the city was twelve thousand measures.

The twelve foundations had the names of the twelve apostles. Apostles and prophets were the foundation of the holy temple, the Church as the dwelling place of God, Ephesians 2.20-22. Abraham looked for a city which had real foundations, which God would build, Hebrews 11.10. So the foundations of the New Jerusalem make us think of a great city and also of the Church or all redeemed people.

15 The angel had a gold reed or rod of a definite length for measuring the size of the city and the height of the gates and wall.

Earlier John himself had been given a reed like a rod and commanded to measure the temple and altar in Jerusalem, and also those people who were worshipping in it.

16 In the Millennium the city of Jerusalem will be about 2.4 kilometers square, Ezekiel 48.30-35. Here the angel measured the New Jerusalem but it is hard for us to imagine how big it was. The city was square, about 2,400 kilometers long and 2,400 wide. If this is a real city, it may be located with the center at the place of the city of Jerusalem today; it would stretch from Tunisia to Iran and from Russia to Ethiopia. It is possible for a city to be that big, but the verse also says it will be 2,400 kilometers high. We cannot imagine a city this size so it seems that the New Jerusalem is a pic-

ture of the Church and all saved people. It will be the same shape as the Most Holy Place, a perfect cube, the length, width and height the same, forever the dwelling place of God.

17 The wall is easier, it would be only 75 metres high. The measure of a man would be from the middle of his body to the end of his fingers when he stretched out his arm, about a metre. But the angel was measuring this city and we do not know how long his arms were.

18 The wall would go around the entire city, so it was very long but not very high. John saw that it was made of jasper, like the light of the city, verse 11. The city was pure gold like pure glass. This is a very beautiful picture but we cannot really think what it would look like.

19,20 There were twelve foundations with the names of the twelve apostles, v.14. Now we learn that each foundation was made from very precious stones, with beautiful colours. At least seven of these stones were used in the breastplate of the high priest, Exodus 28.17-21. These stones had the names of the tribes of Israel. It is not always possible to tell the colour of these ancient stones.

21 The twelve gates also had the names of the tribes of Israel but each one was a single pearl. Again we cannot imagine these gates. Pearls are formed today by a very small animal, the oyster, but the gate of a city would have to be as large as the wall, 72 metres. Most gates are high and wide but not very thick, while a pearl is round like a ball.

There was only one street in the city and it was made of pure gold, like glass. In the Millennium the city of Jerusalem will have many streets like every real city, Zechariah 8.5. The New Jerusalem is a picture of something still more wonderful.

(3) *Its glory, 21.22-27*

22 The holy city should also have a temple but there will be none in the New Jerusalem, because the Lord God and the Lamb ARE the temple. The temple is the dwelling place of God, 2 Chronicles 6.2, and a place where His people can worship Him. The New Jerusalem is a picture of the Bride or the Church and

God will dwell in us, Ephesians 2.21. We may also think of the New Jerusalem as the eternal dwelling place of all believers.

There will be a great temple during the Millennium and this is described in detail in Ezekiel 40-48.

23 This city will also have no need for the sun or the moon. The holy Jerusalem will have the glory of God, v.11, and this will give light to the city. God is light, 1 John 1.5, and the Lamb, God the Son, will be the light of the city.

The Bible does not tell us a great deal about heaven, but there are seven things which will not be there:

- no sea in the new earth, v.1
- no death, v.4
- no temple, v.22
- no need of sun, moon or candle, v.23; 22.5
- no night, v.25; 22.5
- no sinners, v.27
- no curse, 22.3

Verses 24, 26 and 27 give general principles of God's government.

24 Saved Gentiles will be part of the Church and God will dwell in them with all saints of all ages; they will need no other light than that of verse 23. Kings and all people great and small will bring glory and honour to God, 5.13; 19.5.

25 Today many refuse to enter in by the Door, Christ, and they will have already been judged. There will be gates of pearl but they will never be shut. In cities long ago the gates were shut at night to keep out enemies and wild animals, but there will be no enemies and no night in heaven.

26 The Gentiles bring their glory and honour to God and to the Lamb. Believers may seem to be very unimportant in the world today, but in heaven it will be known how great they really are.

27 Then the Spirit warns us again that no unclean person will be there, unless he has been washed in the blood of the Lamb, 1.5. No idol-worshipper, no liar, will be there, only those who have been born again and whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. **Is YOUR name written there?**

(4) *Its blessings, 22.1-5*

Here we have more of the general principles of God's government and also some beautiful things about heaven in eternity.

1 The angel showed John the river of the water of life. This water was perfectly clear, like the light, 21.11, like the sea of glass, 4.6. It flowed out from the throne of God or the throne of the Lamb. It was the Lamb of God who said that He would give living water and promised that if anyone drinks he would never thirst again. The word "never" means "not for all eternity", so here in heaven the river of life will flow forever.

2 The river flowed from the throne of God down the street of gold. We can only think of a wide street and a small river flowing along in the middle of the street. The tree of life was very large, with roots on both sides of the river of life. The tree will produce fruit twelve times a year, once every month. This speaks of the continuing blessing of life in heaven.

Even the leaves are useful for the healing of the Gentile nations. Sickness is the result of sin and in the new earth righteousness will dwell, sin will not occur any more. So it would seem that this promise goes back to the present time, when eternal life may be freely received and the results of sin done away. This is like the promise of 21.4, that God will wipe away all tears. It looks back on man's past and tells us that we will have no sorrow in heaven in eternity.

3 There will be no curse there. True, we were under the curse of sin, but the Lord Jesus took this upon Himself, Galatians 3.10,13. God will rule from His throne, and the Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ, will be with Him. His servants will also be near Him and will have the privilege of serving Him. Daniel had a vision of the eternal God on His throne, Daniel 7.9,10. A hundred million people stood before God but one million were specially close to Him to serve Him.

This is the time to learn to serve Him. Many Christians live selfish lives and do very little or nothing for the Lord. Those who serve Him will have special joy in heaven.

4 His servants shall see *His* face and have *His* name on their fore-

heads. The Lord's face shone as the sun when He was on the mountain, Matthew 17.2, and it appeared again that way in Revelation 10.1. His face will make men afraid, 6.16; 20.11, but little children can always look at the Father's face, Matthew 18.10. When we see Him we shall be like Him.

The 144,000 will have the Father's name written on their foreheads, 14.1. We have read about Christ's names: new, 3.12; unknown, 19.12; Word of God, 19.13; and King of kings and Lord of lords, 19.16.

Today we have His name when we are called Christians.
We do not want or need any other name.

5 Again John wrote that there will be no night in heaven, in the New Jerusalem, 21.25. The Holy Spirit repeats a truth when it is specially important or beautiful. In 21.23 we saw that there will be no need for light from the sun or moon, for the glory of God and the Lamb will be all the light needed. Now more, there will be no need for candles or sunlight, the Lord Himself will give light to all who live there.

Christ will reign as King forever and ever, 11.15. Those who overcome the beast will reign with Christ for a thousand years, and so will all who share in the first resurrection, 20.4,6. His servants will reign with the Lord forever and ever, for all eternity.

5. Final Messages, 22.6-21

The third great section of Revelation, chapters 19 to 22, is divided into five parts: Marriage Supper of the Lamb; King of kings; the Thousand Years; Eternity; and now, the Final Messages of the book.

6 The angel first stated again that the words of this book of Revelation are true and should be believed by all. The Lord Jesus is faithful, 1.5; also true, 3.7,14; 6.10; 19.11. His words are both, 21.5.

God is holy, 3.7; 4.8; 6.10, and so are His prophets, 18.20. They are called His servants, 10.7, have been killed by God's enemies, 16.6; 18.24, but will surely have their reward, 11.18.

God sent His angel to show John future things, and John

showed them to God's servants and to us. In 1.1 God gave the Revelation first to Christ; here only the Lord God is mentioned.

7 Now the Lord Jesus spoke and promised again to come quickly, as He did in 3.11, and does twice more in this chapter, verses 12 and 20. He also promised happiness for all who keep the words of this book, as He did at the beginning, in 1.3.

8 Then John did a terrible thing, he fell down before the feet of the angel to worship him, as he had done before, 19.10. The first time the angel rebuked him and told him never to do such a thing, worship a creature. It is always sad when we fall into sin, and worse still to do the same thing again. John had not learned his lesson the first time, so he fell again.

9 The angel was greater and stronger than John but he called himself a fellow-servant of God, like the prophets, like John himself, and like all who keep the words of this book. **We should never fall down in an act of worship except to God Himself.** Idolatry is one of the sins of the church of Thyatira, 2.20.

Verses 10 and 11 may have been spoken by the angel but it is clear that the Lord Himself was speaking in verse 12.

10 John was commanded not to seal or hide away the prophecies of this book, as Daniel had been told, Daniel 12.4. We are to read and understand these things; we get a blessing if we keep them. The time was said to be near at hand. This means that God was ready to fulfill His great plan for the ages and set Christ on the throne of the world. He has waited all this time because of His grace; He does not really want anyone to be lost.

11 But many will be lost forever. God gives men every opportunity to repent and change their ways while they are alive. After death they cannot change for better or worse. People who have been unfair to others will always be the same. Those who are unclean will never be able to become clean. Some churches teach that men will suffer after death until they repent and become clean, but the Bible says we have this opportunity only while we are alive.

We can praise God because those who are righteous and holy will always be that way through all eternity. Sin cannot again come in and spoil our relationship with God.

12 Again the Lord Jesus promises to come quickly; this time He added that He will bring His rewards with Him, for prophets and saints, 11.18. He Himself is our Reward, Genesis 15.1, and it will be glory just to be with Him. Still He has promised crowns and honours at the Judgment Seat of Christ which will follow the Rapture. These will be according to our works, based on what we have done for Christ during life.

If you have been wasting time, get busy right now and serve the Lord. It is not too late.

13 The Son of God is the Eternal One and He has the right to judge His people. He calls Himself by six names, some of which have been used before.

Some Bibles add four of these titles in 1.8 or 1.1. The meaning of these names are found in the notes about 1.8; 1.17 and 21.6. Jehovah used the name First and Last, but in Isaiah 41.4 He said He was the First and **with** the last. So there will be millions of people with Him through all eternity. The New Jerusalem will be the Church with God dwelling with and in His people.

14 Who can enter that City? The Lord said here that those who wash their clothes will be the happy ones who have the right to enter. The Bride will have pure white clothes, 19.8, and so will a great number of people from all nations, 7.14. They will enter through the pearl gates and never go out again.

Remember that there are twelve gates but only one Way to God, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

The tree of life is in the middle of the gold street of that City, v.2. Only those washed in the blood of the Lamb will have right to eat any of its twelve kinds of fruit. God put angels at the entrance to the garden of Eden so that sinful Adam and Eve could not eat the fruit of the tree of life, Genesis 3.24. Now by grace the Lord promises to overcomers that they will have the right to eat this fruit, 2.7. This is by grace alone, not by our good works in any way.

15 This verse tells us again who must remain outside the City. In 21.27 we read of those who cannot enter, and in 21.8 there is a list of those who have their part in the Lake of Fire, the second

death. The list in 22.15 is much the same as 21.8, except that the word “dogs” is used instead of the fearful, the unbelievers and vile persons. The word “dogs” means unclean Gentiles, Philippians 3.2; 2 Peter 2.22. All three lists include liars. Ananias and his wife were judged for lying, Acts 5, and Christians should not tell lies, Ephesians 4.25; Colossians 3.9. It is worse still to accept false prophets, 1 John 4.1; Revelation 3.9; false teachers, 1 Timothy 4.2; 2 Peter 2.1; or false brothers, 2 Corinthians 11.26; Galatians 2.4.

16 The Lord Jesus called Himself by six names in verse 13, now

He adds some more. Jesus sent His angel to reveal the words of this book to the believers in the seven churches, and to us. In verse 6, it was the Lord God who did this, so Jesus is Lord and God.

Jesus is the Lord’s name as a Man, which He is and always will be, but here He added three other names:

- (1) The *Root of David*. As we saw in 5.5 this means that He is the Creator of David and all men. As God, the Lord is Alpha and Omega, as in verse 13.
- (2) He is also the *Descendant of David*, Isaiah 11.1; Luke 3.31. He is the Man Christ Jesus.
- (3) He is the *Morning Star*, 2.28, the glad hope for all who love Him that He will soon come again.

17 In verse 12 the Lord Jesus promised to come quickly and in verse 16 He said He is the Morning Star, which is the promise of a new day. This should make the Church very glad and we do indeed long for His coming. The Holy Spirit dwells in the Church and He puts in us the desire to see our blessed Saviour. So we respond to the Lord’s promise by saying COME, as in verse 20. This is one way to show that we really love Him.

When will He come? The Father kept the time in His own power, Acts 1.7, and God does not desire that any should perish. In Romans 11.25 we see that Israel will be blessed only when the full number of the Gentiles have been brought in. We can therefore help bring the Lord Jesus back by living holy lives and giving the Gospel to others, 2 Peter 3.11,12. When the Bride is complete, the Bridegroom will come for her.

So we have in verse 17 the invitation of the Holy Spirit and the Church to all men to come, that is, come to the only Saviour of men. The Lord Himself called men to come to Him, Matthew 11.28.

Some will hear and come to the Lord. They too should invite others to come to Him, their family, their friends, and every one they meet.

Many people are sick and tired of the world and the religions of the world. They long for something better and the only thing which will satisfy them is the water of life. All who are thirsty may come. No one will force them to drink but if they want to, they can. There is lots of water for them today, but after they die, they will have no further opportunity. They will not be able to enter the city where the tree of life will be, vs. 1,14,15. **This is the time to invite them.**

18 Then the Lord Jesus added some solemn words for all who hear the words of this book. Some persons try to add their own teaching to Revelation and to the Word of God. They are like the Pharisees who added their own teaching to the Scriptures, Matthew 15.3-6. So do teachers in churches today, men or women like Balaam or Jezebel, 2.14,20. They add their own ideas to the Bible, but this always spoils what is already perfect.

The Lord said that He would **add** to such a person the plagues and judgments of this book: the plagues of the seven seals, of the seven trumpets, and the seven last plagues of the seven bowls of God's wrath, 15.1. Worst of all He will add the torment of the wicked, 14.11; 20.10.

19 Others try to take away from God's Word by saying there are no miracles, the Bible contains many stories and lies, and only parts of it are true and valuable. The Sadducees did that, they did not believe in angels, spirits or the resurrection, Acts 23.8. Many people today accept only those parts of Scripture which they like.

God will take away their part from the tree of life. Christ died for all men and His sacrifice is great enough to save everyone who believes, 1 John 2.2. But the tree of life will be in the city and all sinners will be outside, vs. 14,15, unless they repent before it is too late.

They will never know the joys of the overcomer, chapters 2 and 3, or of throwing their crowns at His feet, 4.10. They will never sing the new song, 5.9, or wear pure, white robes, 7.14. They will never worship God and the Lamb or enjoy God's presence, 7.10,15.

Sinners will not see the 144,000 on Mount Zion with the Lamb, or hear their new song, 14.1,3. They will have no pleasure in seeing Satan cast out of heaven and his two men defeated by the Lamb, 12.9; 19.20. They will never know the joy of the Wedding Feast of the Lord or of His victories over all enemies, 19.11-21; 20.9. Of course they will not enter the New Jerusalem, the beautiful city of God, or have any part in the river of the water of life or the tree of life.

All these blessings will be ours by God's grace and because we have accepted the truth of Scripture.

20 Again the Lord Jesus promises to come and to come quickly, as in verses 7 and 12. This time He says, **Yes** I am coming quickly. We can only pray, May it be so. Come, Lord Jesus.

21 So the apostle John prayed that the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ should be with all who have read his book. He started by praying for grace and peace for all the seven churches, 1.4, but his closing prayer is for all of us.

You can find these Bible references. For example, Genesis 1.20 is mentioned in this book where Revelation 6,12 is explained. INT means Introduction, a paragraph before the verse listed. F means the paragraph following

Gen 1.20	6.12	Exo 16.35	2.17	Num 24.5-9	2.14
.28	17.1 INT	19.6	1.6	.16-24	2.14
2.9	2.7	21.12	13.10	25.1,2	2.14
3.7,10	3.18	23.19	14.4	Deu 29.29	10.4
.16,17	21.4	24.5	4.7	31.30	15.3
.19	21.4	25.8	7.16	32.40	10.5
.22	2.7	.16,21	15.5	33.17	5.6
.24	4.7	27.1	6.9	.27	1.4
9.1	17.1 INT	.2	9.13	Jos 6.13-16	8.2
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10.2	20.8	29.39,42	5.6	Jdg 5.19	16.16
.10	17.1 INT	.45	7.16	7.18	8.2
11.9	17.1 INT	30.1	6.9	6.12-16	10.1
14.22	10.5	.2	9.13	15.6	18.8
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.18	16.12	.33	2.8 INT	1Ki 1.34	8.2
16.7-13	10.1	31.18	15.5	7.21	3.12
18.20	18.5	33.20	1.17	.49	1.12
.25	16.7	.20	4.3	10.18-20	4.3
19.15	18.4	37.17,23	1.12	17.1	11.6
22.15-18	10.1	39.8-14	4.3	.22	1.5
37.9,10	12.1	40.20	15.5	18.19	2.20
40.8	1.9	4.32	5.6	19.2	2.20
49.8-10	5.5	23.19	5.6	.18	2.24
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.14	1.4	25.8-10	8.2	.35	20.2
7.3,4	11.6	26.11,12	21.3	21.10	2.20
.19-21	8.8	Num 6.14	5.6	.25	2.20
7.20	11.6	10.2,8-10	8.2	22.10	1.13
8.22	9.4	11.6	2.17	2Ki 1.19,12	11.5
9.4	9.4	.8	18.22	.14	11.5
.23	8.7	.12	2.17	4.35	1.5
10.4-6	9.2	16.35	11.5	5.20-27	18.11
.21-23	8.12	22.23	2.16	9.22	2.20
.21-23	9.4	23.9,10	2.14	9.36	2.20
.21-23	16.10	.19-24	2.14	18.18	3.7
11.7	9.4			1Ch 5.24	8.2
15.1	15.3			16.36	3.14

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2Ch	4.2	4.6		119.18	3.18; 4.2		65.17	20.1
	6.2	21.22		141.2	8.3		.20,25	21.1 INT
	29.28	8.2		146.1,10	19.1		66.22	21.1
	35.22	16.16	Pro	21.31	19.11	Jer	1.18	3.12
	36.14-20	6 INT		30.30	4.7		2.2	2.4
Est	3.12	5.1	Son	5.2	3.20		5.14	11.5
	8.8	5.1		10-16	1.13		7.18	18.7
Neh	8.6	3.14	Isa	2.21	6.15		9.15	8.10
	.15	7.9		6.2	4.7		10.10	19.15
Job	1.6,7	6.1 INT		.3	4.7		11.20	2.20
	.11	12.10		9.6	3.18		23.15	8.10
	2.1,2	6.1 INT		.6	17.7		25.10	18.22
	.11	12.10		.7	20.1 INT		31.3,33	1.6; 19.1
	2.1,2	6.1 INT		11.1	5.5		32.8-12	5.2
	.3	12.10		.1-10	20.1 INT		44.17	18.7
	38.7	1.20		11.2	1.4		51.45	18.4
	.7	9.1		11.10	5.5		.61-64	18.21
Psa	1.5	6.15		13.17	17.17		52.19	1.12
	2.2,3	19.19		14.4	17.1 INT	Eze	1.5-11	4.7
	.5	6.15		.12	9.1		.10	4.7
	.6,7	5.5		.12-15	17.1 INT		.13,16	4.7
	.8,9	2.26		.13	1.20		.16,18	4.7
	.8,9	19.15		14.23	18.2		.26	4.7
	10.16	19.16		19.14	3.16		8.1,2	1.13
	11.3	6.12		21.9	14.8		9.3,4	7.2
	15.4	1.5		22.22	3.7		10.1	4.7
	24.1	6 INT		24.8	18.22		.12,14	4.7
	.10	19.16		28.21	15.8		10.15	4.7
	29.10	19.16		29.11	5.1		.21	4.7
	35.4-6	6.10		34.4	6.12		14.21	6.7
	40.14,15	6.10		.11	18.2		21.27	5.5
	47.2	19.16		35.1	20.1 INT		38.2	20.8
	.7	19.16		43.15	19.16		.14,15	20.8
	52.5	6.10		44.6	1.17		.21,22	20.9
	56.11	21.8		45.21	1.19		39.12	20.9
	59.13-15	6.10		46.5-7	9.20		.17-20	19.18
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	73.3,12	4.1 INT		48.12	1.17		43.2	1.13; 18.1
	81.3	8.2		52.11	18.4		48.30-35	21.16
	90.2	1.17		53.4,5	18.2	Dan	2.27	1.9
	95.3	19.16		55.1	3.18		.28	1.19
	103.20-22	5.13		.4	1.5		.35	20.11

Dan	.38-40	13.2	Zec	12.11	16.16	Mat	.28	14.20
	3.12,18	17.1 INT		14.2,3	16.16		23.4,7	2.6
	5.1	18.8		.4	14.1		.13,15	2.62
	.3,5	1.12	Mal	4.2	2.26		.31-35	8.6
	.4	17.1 INT		=====			.35	18.24
	.30	18.8	Mat	1.6	5.5		.39	5.12
	7.2	7.1		2.11	2.8 INT		24.5	6.1
	.4-6	13.1		.16	12.4		.6,7	6.3
	.7	13.1		3.16	11.4		.7	6.5,7
	.9	1.13		4.4	2.17		.8	6 INT
	.13	1.7		.23	14.7		.11,12	6,7
	.13	1.13		5.3-11	1.3		.12	3.15
	.13	13.2		.14-16	1.20		.13	7.5
	.13	14.14		.44	6.10		.13	12.17f
	.21	13.7		6.12	6.10		.14	7.1 INT
	.26	12.14		.20	2.9		.14	14.7
	.27	13.2		7.15,20	13.11		.16	12.6
	9.25-27	6.10		8.3,15	1.17		.21	4 INT
	.27	12.14		9.25	1.5,17		.24	13.11 INT
	.27	12.17		.29	1.17		.30	1.7
	10.5,6	1.13		.32	9.5		24.31	8.2
	.8,9	1.17		.37,38	14.20		.35	6.12
	.11,19	1.13		10.8	21.6		.42	16.15
	.13	1.13		10.34	6.3		.43	16.15
	.13	12.7		11.10	1.20		25.13	16.15
	.21	12.7		.23	5.13		.31-46	19.21
	12.1	12.7		.27	19.12		.31-46	20.14
	.7	10.6		12.22	9.5		26.53	20.2
		12.14		13.11	10.7		.64	1.5
	.11	12.14		.30	14.20		27.25	12.17f
Hos	10.8	6.15		.31,32	18.2		.51	11.13
Joe	2.30,31	6.12		.39	14.15		28.2	11.13
	3.12,13	14.20		.49	14.20		.18-20	2.1
Jon	1.2	18.5		5.19	21.8	Mk	1.2	1.20
Zec	1.7	11.4		17.2	1.13		.31	1.17
	.19	5.6		.17	1.17		3.5	19.15
	4.1-3	11.4		17.20	16.20		4.21	2.5
	.2	1.12		18.8	21 INT		5.2-5	9.5
	.10	5.6		19.15	1.17		6.5	1.17
	6.1-8	6.1 INT		.28	20.4		7.33	1.17
	8.5	21.21		20.34	1.17		8.22	1.17
	12.10	1.7		21.2	19.11		9.17,18	9.5
	.10	12.17f		21.8	7.9		.22	9.5

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	.36	1.17		24.27	1.1		20.21	3.21
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	.13	1.17	Joh	1.1	19.13		.8	1.5;
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	12.36,37	5.5		.29	5.6		.9	11.12
	13.26	14.14		.36	5.6		2.20	6.12
	14.24	21.5		2.1-11	19.7		.38	21.6
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	15.23	28 INT		3.3,5	20.7 INT		4.27,30	4.7
Luk	1.11	6.9		.5	5.10		5.3	12.9
	.19	8.2		.34	11.4		.19	1.20
	.32	3.7		4.10	7.16		7.39-43	6 INT
	.35	4.7		4.14	21.6		8.26	1.20
	3.31	5.5		.35-38	14.20		.32	5.6
	4.6	5.2		5.22	20.11		10.22	1.20
	4.17	5.1		.23	7.5		12.2	20.4
	.29	12.4		.29	1.5		.7	1.20
	.40	1.17		7.37	21.6		13.47	1.20
	7.24,27	1.20		8.14	1.5		.50	2.9
	8.31	5.13; 9.1		.29	1.1		14.2	2.9; 3.9
	9.26	3.5		.36	1.6		.5	3.9
	9.52	1.20		.44	9.11		14.19	2.9
	10.15	5.13		.49	1.1		15.12	8.1
	.18	3.21		9.41	3.17		17.5,13	2.9
	.38,42	2.5		10.10	2.7		18.2	2.9
	12.8,9	3.5		.27	3.20		.25	3.15
	.16	3.17		11.44	1.5		19.10,20	2.5
	13.13	1.17		12.13	7.9		.24	18.3
	14.26,27	17.14		.33,34	1.1		.24	18.22
	.33	17.14		.48	19.15		20.3	2.9
	16.14	18.11		13.10	1.6		.24	14.7
	.15	21.8		.23	1.17		.29,30	2.2
	.19	3.17		.34	21.5		.31	16.15
	.23	20.13		14.26	5.6		.32	2.12
	.24	14.10		.27	21.8		.37	2.4
	19.12-27	19.7		15.26	5.6		21.11	2.9
	21.11	6.12		16.33	3.21		.40	8.1
	.27	14.14		17.3	2.10		23.12	2.9
	22.3	12.9		.3	19.12		25.2,3	2.9
	.51	1.17		.11	4.7	Rom	1.20	5.13
	23.34	6.10		19.11	13.7		.29	21.8

Rom	2.6	2.20	2Co	2.12	14.7	Phi	.7	1.4
	.15	6 INT		5.9,10	19.7	Col	1.3-8	2.1
	3.24	1.4		.17	21.5		.6	4.11
	.24	21.6		6.14-17	18.4		.15,16	3.14
	5.1	1.4		.18	1.8		.16	4.7
	.1	19.8		8.9	2.9		.18	1.5
	.9	14.5		9.13	14.7		.18	3.14
	.17	21.6		12.3	1.2		.23	3.21f
	8.17	3.21		.4	21.1		.27	2.26
	.19-22	5.13		.7	1.20		2.1	3.14 INT
	.38	4.7		13.14	1.4		.10	4.7
	9.5	12.2		.14	4.7		.15	4.7
	11.4,5	2.24	Gal	2.9	3.12		4.2	16.15
	12.11	3.15		5.19,20	21.8		.3	3.7
	.19	6.10		6.15	21.5		.16	1.20
	14.10-12	19.7	Eph	1.3	5.12		.16	3.14 INT
	.12	2.20		.4	13.8	1Th	1.3	2.4,19
1Co	1.4-8	2.1		.21	4.7		2.15	3.9
	.7	1.1		2.8	1.4		2.15	18.24
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	3.13-15	19.7		.12,16	12.17f		3.13	4 INT
	.20	20.12		.20-22	21.14		4.11	18.22
	.21	3.21; 21.7		.21	21.22		.14-16	20.4
	7.5	12.9		3.3	10.7		.16	8.2
	9.25	2.10		.6	12.17f		.16	19.14
	10.16	3.20		.10	1.20; 4.7		.17	4 INT
	.18	6.9		4.4	1.4		.17	11.12
	.20	18.2		.7	21.6		.17	14.14
	11.10	1.20		.11,12	2.6		5.2	16.15
	12.26	3.21f		4.28	18.22		.6	16.15
	14.16	3.14		5.19,20	18.22	2Th	1.7	1.1
	.34	2.20		.25	3.19		.7-9	14.19
	15.26	20.14		.25-27	19.7		.10	4 INT
	.51,52	4 INT		6.11,12	2.7		.19	21 INT
	.51,52	8.2		.12	4.77		2.3,4	11.1
	.51,52	10.7		.17	2.16		2.3,4	13.5
	.51,52	19.14	Phi	1.3-7	2.1	1Ti	1.3-7	2.2
	16.9	3.7		.25	11.6		.17	19.16
	.13	16.15		2.10	5.13		.20	2.2
2Co	1.3	5.12		.13	19.8		2.11	2.20
	.20	3.14		.17	6.9		4.11	16.14
	2.11	12.9		4.3	20.12		5.21	1.20
	.12	3.7		.6	5.8		6.15	19.16

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	.16	4.2		.35	14.3		.28	16.15
2Ti	1.7	21.8		12.6	3.19		3.8	3.21
	.15	2.2,4		.27	21.1		.12	18.24
	.15	3.21f		13.7	2.14		4.1-3	13.11
	1.17	2.2		.15	3.8		.14	19.10
	2.12	4.4	Jam	1.5	17.9		.19	2.4
	.26	12.9		.12	2.10		5.4	2.7
	4.6	6.9		.23	1.3		.13	3.5
	.6,7	11.6		2.25	1.20		.20	3.7
	.8	2.20		4.7	12.9	2Jo	v.1	1.9
	.8	3.11		5.9	3.20		v.7	13.11 INT
Tit	1.2	21.5	1Pe	1.3	5.12	3Jo	v.1	1.9
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	.5	20.13		.12	1.20		v.7	21 INT
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	.14	1.6		.10	1.4		.6	15.7
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	.10	2.2		2.3	18.11		.6	20.6
	.13	10.5		.4	5.13		.7	4.7
	.18	21.5		.15	2.14		.7	10.1
	8.1	3.21		.15	18.11		.7	14.14
	.1,2	15.5		3.8	1.1		.8	4.7
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	9.4	2.17		.13	21.1		.8	21.6
	.4	12.1 INT	1Jo	1.1	1.17		.9	1.5
	.11	15.5		.3	3.20		.9	2.2
	.15	21.7		.5	21.23		.9	3.9
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.11	20.12	.18	19.12	.8	1.8
.13	2.1	.19	3.9	.9	4.2
.13	19.13	.20	3.8	.9	7.12
.14	2.17	.20	18.23	.9	11.18
.14	2.18	.20	20.3	.9	15.7
.14	6.11	.25	3.11	.10	4.2
.14	19.12	.25	18.23	.10	5.8,14
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.16	2.1	.3	16.15	.11	7.12
.16	2.12	.4	3.18	.11	19.1
.16	10.1	.4	6.11	.11	21.6
.16	19.15	.4	16.15	5.1	4.2
.17,18	2.8	.4	18.23	.1	20.12
.18	2.8	.5	3.12	.2	10.1
.18	3.7	.5	7.17	.2	14.6
.18	15.7	.5	20.12	.2	18.21
.19	4.1	.7	3.14	.3	5.13
.19	10.4	.7	4.7	.5	3.7,21
.19	10.13	.7	6.10	.5	10.3
.20	1.12	.11	3.21f	.6	4.6
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.5	18.23	.12	19.12	.8	18.22
.6	2.14	.12	21.2	.9	9.18
.7	14.13	3.14	19.11	.9	11.18
.9	2.24	.21	4.2	.9	14.3
.9	3.18	.21	5.6	.9	21.5
.10	1.9	.21	20.4	.10	20.6
.10	4.10	4.1	19.11	.11	7.11
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.11	14.13	.4	3.5	.12	4.9
.12	19.15	.4	4.10	.12	7.12
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.10	9.11	.10	19.15	.16	19.17
.10	16.1	.11	19.3	.17	16.1
.10	19.1,5	.11	21 INT	.17	19.5
.11	1.5	.12	1.3	.17	21.6
.11	6.9	.13	1.3	.18	4.5
.11	21.7	.13	10.4	.18	6.12
.12	6.10	.13	19.5	.18	8.5
.12	8.13	.14	6.1	.19	17.1 INT
.17	6.9	.14	10.1	.19	18.1 INT.5
.17	19.10	.14	14 INT	.19	18.8
13.1	12.3	.15	16.1	.19	19.15
.1	17.3	.16	10.1	.20	6.12
.1	19.12	.16	19.15	.20	20.11
.2	16.15	.19	19.15	.21	11.18
.3	17.7	.20	19.15	.21	13.5
.5	11.3	15.1	14 INT	17.1	17.2
.5	12.14	.1	19.15	.1	21.9
.8	17.8,16	.2	4.6	.2	18.3
.8	20.12	.2	14.2	.3	21.10
.13	14.12	.2	18.22	.4	3.17
.14	6.10	.2	21.7	.4	17.2
.14	16.14	.3	1.8	.4	18.7
.14	20.3	.3	17.7	.5	17.2
.15	14.9	.3	19.16	.8	9.1
.16	17.5	.4	14.7	.8	10.2
.16	20.12	.5	19.11	.8	13.3,8
14.1	3.12	.7	19.15	.8	17.7
.1	7.3,5	16.1	19.5,15	.8	20.1,12
.1	12.17f	.2	13.18	.14	1.5
.1	14 INT	.6	11.18	.14	18.6
.1	17.5	.7	1.8	.14	19.16
.2	15.2	.8	6.12	.15	17.1,2
.2	18.22	.9	6 INT	.16	12.17f
.2	19.5	.9	11.18	.16	17.2
.3	7.17	.9	13.5	.16	18.8
.3	19.4	.9	16.15,21	18.2	16.1
.4	6.11	.11	11.18	.3	3.17
.6	14 INT	.11	13.5	.3	17.2

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.8	17.16	.18	20.12	.7	21.8
.9	17.2	.19-21	16.16	.9	19.7
.9	19.3	.20	13.11 INT	.10	3.12
.18	19.3	.20	13.18	.11	21.23
.21	10.1	.20	20.3	.12	4.4
.23	20.3	20.1	9.1	.14	4.4
19.1	3.8	.1	10.1	.18-20	4.3
.1	7.10,12	.3	9.1	.22	1.8
.1	16.1	.4	5.10	.27	10.2
.2	17.2	.4	14.13	.27	17.8
.2	19.11	.4	17.5	.27	20.12
.3	21 INT	.6	1.3	22.1	4.6
.4	4.2	.6	2.10	.2	2.7
.4	7.11	.6	5.10	.2	21.14
.4	11.18	.6	21.8	.3	3.21
.5	14.7	.7-9	6 INT	.3	7.17
.5	20.12	.10	20 INT	.4	3.12
.6	1.8	.10	21.8	.4	7.3
.6,7	21.9	.11	4.2	.4	17.5
.8	7.17	.11	6.11	.5	4.4
.8	16.15	.11	20.1	.5	5.10
.8	19.14	.12	2.20	.5	15.7
.8	21.2	.12	10.2	.6	21.5
.9	1.3;10.4	.12	11.18	.7	1.3
.9	21.5	.12	13.10	.7	4.7
.10	17.7	.13	2.20	.7	20.12
.11	3.14	.14	2.10	.8	17.7
.11	6.1,11	.14	21.4,8	.12	2.20
.11	20.12	.15	10.4	.12	4.7
.11-15	1.13	.15	17.8	.12	11.18
.12	3.12	21.1	21.23	.13	3.14
.12	14.14	.2	3.12	.13	21.6
.14	3.5	.2	21.10	.14	1.3
.14	7.17	.3	7.17	.14	2.7
.14-21	14.20	.3	16.1	.14	21.14
.15	1.6,13	.3	19.5	.15	21.8
.15	2.26	.4	7.17	.16	1.1
.15	11.18	.5	3.14	.16	2.26
.15	12.5	.5	4.2	.16	3.7
.16	1.5	.6	3.14	.19	21.8
.16	17.14	.6	7.17	.20	4.7
.17	6.12	.7	3.21f	.20	19.10

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.13	7.12	.12	5.12	.20,21	6 INT
.13	15.7	.12	15.7	.20,21	11.18
.13	19.1	.12	19.1	10.1	14.14
.14	3.14	.14	2.17	.1	18.21
.14	7.11	.14	4 INT	.1	19.17
.14	15.7	.14	6.9	.2	20.12
6.1	10.3	.15	4.2	.3	16.1
.8	8.6	.17	4.6	.4	1.2; 8.1
.8	9.18	.17	19.15	.4	19.5
.9	1.5	8.2	10.1	.6	15.7
.9	12.17f	.3	5.8; 6.9	.8	19.5
.10	3.7	.3	9.13	.9	14.6
.10	4.7	.3	10.1	11.1	14.6
.10	8.4,13	.3	14.18	.2	11.18
.10	14.15	.3	18.6	.2	12.14
.10	16.1	.5	4.5	.3	12.14
.10	18.6	.5	6.12	.5	15.7
.11	3.5	.5	14.18	.7	9.4
.11	7.9,17	.7-9	7.1	.7	20.1
.11	14.13	.8,9	16.3	.8	16.19
.12	8.5	.10	6.12	.10	6.10
.16	4.2	.12	6.12	.12	16.1
.16	19.15	.12	16.8	.12	19.5
.17	11.18	.13	11.14	.13	4.9
.17	9.15	.13	14.6	.13	6.12
7.1	10.1	.13	16.1	.15	16.1
.2	10.1	9.1	6.12	.15	19.16
.2	14.6	.1	9.1	.17	1.8; 3.8
.2	16.1	.1	11.7	.18	19.15
.3	12.6	.2,3	6.1 INT	.18	20.12
.3	17.5	.2,3	9.1	.19	4.5; 6.12
.4	14.1 INT	.2,3	11.7	.19	8.5
.9	3.5	.2-4	20.1	.19	19.11
.9	5.9; 6.9	.4	7.3	12.1	15.1
.9	9.18	.4	17.5	.1	19.17
.9	12.17f	.6	20.11	.1	21.12
.10	4.2	.7	6.1 INT	.3	15.1
.10	16.1	.11	9.1	.3	19.12
.10	19.1	.11	11.7	.3	21.1
.11	10.1	.12	11.14	.5	19.15
.11	11.18	.13	6.9	.6	8.6
.12	3.8	.13	19.5	.6	11.3

