



Daniel and Revelation II

International Alpha Bible Course
by Ralph Vincent Reynolds

**DANIEL AND REVELATION
Part II**

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INTERNATIONAL ALPHA BIBLE COURSE

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THE SEALS

Text: Revelation 6

A. METHOD OF INTERPRETATION

Although we believe in a literal interpretation of Revelation, we must remember that there are many symbols in this book. The language and context will determine whether or not each scene is to be understood as being literal or symbolic. In Revelation 6:1 we find the phrase “as it were.” This informs us that what follows will be of a figurative or symbolic nature.

The student of this wonderful book should always keep in mind that John wrote what he saw and heard. The revelation was a panorama that unfolded before him in chronological order. Since much of it was describing the judgments of God in this highly technical age, John did not always understand what he saw. He knew nothing of jet planes, atomic warfare, or electronic computers. John simply recorded what he saw, describing each scene in descriptive terms that were familiar to him.

As we proceed with our studies of this prophetic book, the writer’s views and interpretations of events and symbols are not meant to be a final explanation. They will simply be the writer’s conclusions and are to be considered and researched by the student.

B. CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

With the breaking of the first seal, we begin a study of a period lasting seven years. This period of time is designated by various names in the Bible: the day of the Lord; the day of Jacob’s trouble; the day of darkness; the day of vengeance of our God; the Tribulation; the Great Tribulation.

Fourteen chapters deal with this period (Revelation 6-19). During this time the righteous judgment of God is meted out to the inhabitants of the earth who have rejected Him. These judgments are to be executed in three series: the seals, the trumpets, and the vials. The trumpet judgments issue forth from the seals and the vial judgments issue forth from the trumpets.

The judgments will take place as follows:

Seals: Revelation 6:1-19:21
 Trumpets: Revelation 8:6-19:21
 Vials: Revelation 16:1-19:21

In the text of the Bible there are parenthetical explanations between the opening of the sixth and seventh seal (Revelation 7) and the blowing of the sixth and seventh trumpet (Revelation 12-15). These parenthetical explanations are inserted to illuminate our understanding of the events; but to get a running narrative of the order of the judgments, we could leave these passages out.

The seven seals and six trumpets describe what will take place in the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation. The vial judgments describe what will take place in the second three and one-half years of the Tribulation. This second period is known as the Great Tribulation.

C. FIRST SEAL (Revelation 6:1, 2)

With the breaking of the first four seals we have four riders appearing on different colored horses. Each of these horsemen is announced by one of the living creatures in a thunderous voice. In some translations the words '*and see*' are left out. The living creature is not speaking to John but rather to the rider. He cried with the voice of thunder to the rider, "Come," and the command is literally obeyed. Each of these riders keep on riding throughout the seven years of Tribulation.

The first rider is mounted on a white horse. Many identify this rider as the Antichrist. This seems reasonable, for now that the church is raptured, the restrainer that held the powers of Antichrist in check is gone (II Thessalonians 2:7). The apostle Paul stated, "And then shall that Wicked be revealed." It is reasonable to believe that the first event in the Tribulation will be the revealing of Antichrist.

The rider here should not be confused with Jesus as pictured in Revelation 19. This rider appears at the beginning of Daniel's seventieth week, while Christ appears in chapter nineteen at the end of the week. He has the appearance of Christ, but is wholly counterfeit. He rides a white horse which is a symbol of peace. He carries a bow but has no arrows. He sheds no blood, but he does conquer. His method is that of deception. He will imitate Christ, but will be a false Christ and the peace he offers will be a false peace.

The Writer's Comments

Could it be that this rider is the pope of Roman Catholicism? He is the most well-known man in the whole world and has great influence. It is the opinion of the writer that the description fits.

D. SECOND SEAL (Revelation 6:3, 4)

The second rider comes forth on a red horse which represents bloody warfare. The false peace promised by the first rider is shattered and the entire world is plunged into universal revolution with terrible bloodshed. Murderous hatred breaks out among men and peace is taken from the earth. He is given a great sword and the result is violence and bloodshed.

The devil is called the "great red dragon" (Revelation 12:3). The rider on the red horse will be the devil's representative. It is very foolish to believe that there can be peace as long as godless men are the heads of nations and are controlled by the great red dragon.

The Writer's Comments

We shall study in Revelation 17 the judgment of the apostate church who rides upon a red beast. Could the political-religious system, which will be destroyed at the close of the Tribulation, be introduced here at the beginning of the period?

E. THIRD SEAL (Revelation 6:5, 6)

Famine always follows war. Food rationing of the strictest order is the aftermath of war, for this black horse speaks of famine and inflation.

The balances would indicate that everything must be weighed. A measure of wheat is about a quart. A penny is a day's wage for a laborer. If a man would earn \$10.00 for a day's work, then the price for a bushel of wheat would be \$320.00. The "oil and wine" are luxuries and are not to be measured out to the famine-stricken hungry. The few rich leaders will become richer while the number of the starving will increase. The black day of famine is coming and millions will perish through starvation.

F. FOURTH SEAL (Revelation 6:7, 8)

The pale horse is one representing pestilence and disease. Its color is livid and corpse-like.

The rider is called Death which is the aftermath of war and famine. Hades is the abode of departed spirits between death and resurrection. Hades followed along with Death to gather the souls of the victims that Death claimed.

With the riding of the fourth horseman, one quarter of the world's population will die as a result of war, famine, and pestilence. This will mean, considering the world's present population [May 2009 est.: 6,770,000,000 according to U.S. Census Bureau] that 1,692,500,000 people will die.

G. FIFTH SEAL (Revelation 6:9, 10, 11)

Here we have the first glimpse of the Tribulation saints. In our studies we shall be studying more about these wonderful people who will save their souls by laying down their lives in martyrdom. Some of them could have been among the quarter of the world's population who died with the riding of the fourth horseman. In the latter part of Revelation 7 we have a further description of them.

These martyrs will:

1. Be killed for the Word of God and their testimony
2. Come out of great tribulation
3. Wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb
4. Serve in the roll of servants day and night
5. Cry out for righteous judgment

These martyred saints are both conscious and fully rational. The altar is the place of sacrifice and here they cry for justice. However, there can be no response to their cry until the martyred band is complete.

H. SIXTH SEAL (Revelation 6:12-17)

The judgments from the first four seals are the results of the actions of Antichrist. Here we read of supernatural judgments that come from God. John wrote what he saw and we must accept them as being literal. There was a great earthquake, but it was not to be the end of the world. There are three great earthquakes mentioned in Revelation (Revelation 6:12; 11:13; 16:18-19). This was the first of the three.

The judgments described here will cause men to be overcome with fear and cry out for a

hiding place. They who rejected the Rock of Ages now pray to the rocks.

The Writer's Comments

Could this be a description of atomic warfare? John described what he saw and certainly the description fits a limited atomic war. It has to be a limited one, for an all-out nuclear war would destroy the earth. This cannot take place until after the Millennium.

Lesson Two

THE TRUMPETS

Text: Revelation 8, 9, 10

A. SILENCE IN HEAVEN (Revelation 8:1)

We have been reading that all of Heaven has been resounding with the praises of redeemed men and of angels, giving glory to the Lamb. Suddenly all of this comes to an abrupt halt! For one-half hour, Heaven will have the quietest time it will ever experience. Why does the singing and rejoicing stop? It is because suddenly there is an understanding of the terrible judgments that are about to take place upon earth and there is a breathless gasp of horror! This is a silence of suspense, an ominous calm before the storm. All the hosts of Heaven will hold their breath with suspense and dreadful expectation.

B. PRAYERS OF ALL SAINTS (Revelation 8:3-5)

We should note that it states *all* saints. For centuries the saints have been praying, “Thy kingdom come,” and “Thy will be done on earth.” Now these prayers are about to be answered. It should encourage us to know that God is recording the prayers of the saints and that these prayers have an important place in God’s program.

These prayers are offered upon the altar. As these prayers ascend with the incense, judgment descends. The fire of the altar is hurled to the earth. The sudden awesome silence in Heaven is suddenly broken by lightning and thundering and earthquake! Probably the voices heard here are sounds of horror over the soon coming of the awful trumpet judgments.

C. FIRST TRUMPET (Revelation 8:6-7)

With the opening of the seventh seal, the blowing of the seven trumpets begin. The seventh seal includes the seven trumpets. In the Scriptures, the blowing of trumpets was used for various purposes. Sometimes it called men to worship and, at other times, to war. Only the priests were qualified to blow the trumpets, and there were different sounds for different purposes.

The priests had to blow with accuracy (I Corinthians 14:8). The blowing of the trumpet signified the intervention of God in men's affairs. The seven trumpets of Revelation are warlike in sound and announce divine judgment.

The judgments which follow the blowing of the trumpets must be accepted as being literal. The plagues in Egypt were literal and five of these are repeated in Revelation. In Exodus they were literal and here in Revelation they are also.

The first trumpet brings hail and fire mingled with blood. With this judgment one-third of all vegetation is destroyed. We need not be surprised at this judgment when we remember that God rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom and, in Egypt, God turned the water into blood. With one-third of all trees and green grass burned up, there will be a greater shortage of food and an increase in hunger and starvation.

D. SECOND TRUMPET (Revelation 8:8, 9)

When the second trumpet sounds, an immense meteoric mass, which resembled a blazing mountain, is thrown into the sea. Note, "As it were a great mountain." With this judgment one-third of sea life is destroyed and the third part of ships are destroyed.

Many explanations are given to explain just what this fiery mountain represents. Since we do not know and the Bible is silent on the matter, we shall accept it as it is described, a fiery meteoric mass.

E. THIRD TRUMPET (Revelation 8:10, 11)

With the sounding of the third trumpet there is another meteoric phenomenon. A blazing meteor sweeps down through space; and as it travels along the surface of the earth, it affects the rivers, springs, and wells. It turns one-third of the earth's water into a deadly liquid.

The name of this star, "Wormwood," means "bitterness." Wormwood is the most bitter herb known to man. Not only is it bitter, but it is also poisonous. With the sounding of the third judgment many wicked men will die from drinking bitter water. This is just another part of the bitter fruit of sin. How wonderful to know that God has made available in this day of grace the water of life.

F. FOURTH TRUMPET (Revelation 8:12)

On the fourth day of creation God brought the sun and moon into view in order to provide light. The same God who said, “Let there be light,” is also able to diminish the light by one-third. One-third of each day becomes utter, complete darkness. This will seriously affect the health of men, for it will hinder the growth of fruits and vegetables and will disturb the seasons.

G. THREE WOES (Revelation 8:13)

Three more trumpets are to sound and they are announced by an angel as the “woe” trumpets:

First woe	- the fifth trumpet
Second woe	- the sixth trumpet
Third woe	- the seventh trumpet

The warning regarding the last three trumpets indicate the severity of the consummation of God’s judgments. The phrase, “inhabiters of the earth,” indicate earth dwellers, those who mind earthly things (Philippians 3:19) and live for life on earth only.

The first woe covers a period of five months. It is possible that the second woe could cover a similar period. The third woe, or seventh trumpet, introduces the last half of the Tribulation or three and one-half years.

H. FIFTH TRUMPET (Revelation 9:1-12)

With the sounding of the fifth trumpet a star falls from Heaven unto the earth. The pronouns *him* and *he* let us know that this star is a person. Many teach that this star is Satan, but Satan never has been given the keys to the bottomless pit. The devil will be locked up in this place for one thousand years (Revelation 20:1-2). The writer believes that this star is the same angel that has the key to the bottomless pit in Revelation 20.

The bottomless pit is literally “the pit of the abyss.” It is not Hades nor the lake of fire. It is the place of imprisoned evil spirits and where fallen angels are held in chains of darkness awaiting judgment.

The angel opens the pit and demons resembling locusts come forth to torment men for a

period of five months. They do not kill men. But they cause them to be in such pain that they seek death, yet they are unable to die.

These locusts are described as resembling horses with crowns on their heads, faces like a man, hair like that of a woman, teeth like those of a lion and making a sound like many horses and chariots. They undoubtedly are evil spirits that bring torment to men. These demons have a king whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, is Apollyon. Both words mean “destroyer.” If this king is not Satan, he certainly would be one of Satan’s powerful, fallen angels. However, he could be the devil himself.

The Writer’s Comments

Some have thought that these locusts from the pit could be the modern jet fighters planes. Certainly the description fits. This idea is only being suggested for consideration and research. We should remember that John recorded what he saw as the panorama of the Tribulation unfolded before him. He had to describe the scene in terms known to him.

I. SIXTH TRUMPET (Revelation 9:13-21)

The Euphrates River is very important in biblical history. It was in proximity to the Garden of Eden where man’s first sin was committed. It was here that the tower of Babel was erected and Nimrod built the city of Babylon which became the seat of idolatry. The Euphrates River was also a boundary for the land promised to Abraham.

Four fallen angels have been kept bound. With the sounding of the sixth trumpet these four demonic personages are loosed and proceed to kill one-third of the human race. One quarter had already been killed by the fourth horseman (Revelation 6:8). This means that the same number would lose their lives with the blowing of the sixth trumpet. The world would now have less than half of its original population.

An immense army of 200,000,000 horse-like creatures appear. Their weapons are fire, smoke, and brimstone; and by these, one-third of all men are killed.

The Writer’s Comments

There is no desire to take from the literal interpretation of this scene. Undoubtedly this is a supernatural army made up of evil spirits. However, keeping in mind that John recorded that he saw in terms that he knew, we might ask the question: Could this be a modern army of tanks and

military equipment? Again the description fits.

J. STILL NO REPENTANCE (Revelation 9:20-21)

One would think that these terrible judgments of God would bring men to their knees. Such will not be the case. They will not repent of their sins which are mentioned: idolatry, murder, sorcery, fornication, and theft. Since these sins are all so prevalent today, we realize that we are close to the awful days of God's judgments upon earth.

K. SEVEN THUNDERS (Revelation 10:3, 4)

In the beginning of the tenth chapter, we read of a mighty angel, who is Jesus, placing His right foot upon the sea and His left foot upon the earth and claiming possession of both of these. He cried out with a loud voice like a lion roaring. Here is sounded the voice of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. After He speaks, seven thunders are sounded.

John was about to write what he heard when he was told to seal up what the seven thunders uttered. It should be noted that this is the only part of the Book of Revelation which is sealed. It is folly for anyone to speculate what these thunders said.

L. NO FURTHER DELAY (Revelation 10:6)

The Lord declared that "there should be time no longer." This actually means that there shall be no further delay. In our study we have reached the middle of the Tribulation period, and the Lord is stating that the will of God in His dealings with man will now be consummated. There will be no more mystery, but rather manifestation. God's program in judgment will now reach its completion without delay.

THE VIALS

Text: Revelation 15, 16

A. THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL (Revelation 14:6, 7)

Before we study the seven vial judgments, we must understand that these take place in the latter half of the Tribulation. The ministry of the 144,000 has been completed and beast worship has now been instituted.

At this time an angel proclaims to the whole world, to every nation, tongue, and people, the everlasting gospel. The word everlasting means “ages upon ages without end,” past and future. It reaches back into the infinity of past ages and reaches forth throughout the eternity of the future. It knows no beginning and has no end. This is a message for all dispensations and ages. No angel can preach the message of the new birth. This only can be preached by born again men.

What is this everlasting gospel which an angel will preach in the most critical moment of man’s history? It is found in verse seven:

1. Fear God
2. Give glory to Him
3. Worship the Creator

This message will be especially needed in the moment of gross darkness and beast worship which will prevail in the middle of the Tribulation.

B. PREPARATION FOR THE VIAL JUDGMENTS (Revelation 15)

Revelation 15 is an introduction to the seven vial judgments. The chapter begins and ends with the expression of the “wrath of God.” The vial judgments are described as “the seven last plagues.” This means that with these plagues the judgment upon the earth comes to an end. The expression, “filled up the wrath of God,” means that the wrath of God is completed. The

cup of God's wrath is full.

In this chapter is given a view of the Tribulation martyrs, standing on the sea of glass, singing a song of victory. Through martyrdom, they had emerged victorious from their conflict with the Antichrist. The Song of Moses was the song of victory over Pharaoh, and the Song of the Lamb is the song of victory over Antichrist. This song of triumph clearly identifies Jesus Christ as being Almighty God. The following are attributed to Him:

1. Creation
2. Justice
3. Object of Worship
4. Holiness
5. Omnipotence

John saw seven angels coming out of the temple in Heaven. One of the living creatures gives each of these angels a vial full of God's wrath.

The temple is filled with smoke, which speaks of judgment. From this moment, no angel nor man will have access to God's throne until the end of the Tribulation. These vial judgments or plagues will complete the judgments. The Tribulation will be concluded, ending in the Battle of Armageddon, and the Millennium will begin.

Vial means "bowl." The idea is pictured of these bowls being filled and then being emptied by a pouring out. Today men have the privilege of drinking from the cup of salvation; in that day, they must drink from the bowls of His wrath.

C. FIRST VIAL (Revelation 16:2)

The last seven bowl judgments must be accepted as being literal. There is no scriptural basis for symbolizing these judgments. Four of these judgments occurred among the plagues of Egypt. They were literal then and they will be literal here.

In the middle of the Tribulation, Antichrist becomes the object of worship. This first judgment is directed against beast worshipers. This plague causes men to be afflicted with painful boils. These boils are described as being "noisome" which means, being extremely painful.

D. SECOND VIAL (Revelation 16:3)

At the sounding of the second trumpet, one-third of the sea will become blood. Here, with the pouring forth of the second vial, all the great bodies of water are affected. The water of the sea will become like the blood of a dead man and all living creatures in the sea will die.

It is difficult for us to understand what it will be like when all the creatures of the sea die, float to the top, and begin to decay. The atmosphere will be filled with stench and will breed much disease.

E. THIRD VIAL (Revelation 16:4-7)

Man cannot live without water. When this vial is poured forth, all sources of water are contaminated. The rivers and fountains become blood. Wicked men have shed the blood of God's people and rejected the blood of the Lamb of God. Now they will reap suitable judgment.

Two angels declare the righteousness of God. Apparently there is an angel whose responsibility is assigned to the waters. This angel, along with an angel out of the altar, declares that God is righteous in judging thusly.

F. FOURTH VIAL (Revelation 16:8-9)

The fourth plague is a burning, scorching heat from the sun. Along with the painful sores and the terrible stench from the polluted rivers, this heat wave makes life almost unbearable. The effect of this extreme heat causes men to blaspheme God more than ever, but they refuse to repent. This plague gives men a foretaste of the fires of hell, but it has no effect upon them in causing them to turn to God.

G. FIFTH VIAL (Revelation 16:10, 11)

The seat of the beast will probably be the rebuilt city of Babylon. With this plague God's wrath is concentrated upon the seat of the beast. This plague brings intense darkness. The seat of the beast is full of moral and spiritual darkness. Now God pours forth a physical darkness that brings great pain. They had used their tongues in blaspheming God. Now they bite the instrument with which they had blasphemed. Their tongues are made to suffer because of their great pain.

H. SIXTH VIAL (Revelation 16:12)

The judgment of the sixth bowl resembles the sixth trumpet judgment. Here God dries up the Euphrates River, which is 1,800 miles long and from twenty to sixty feet deep, to prepare the way for the armies of the East. This signifies that the vast armies of the Orient will have part in the Battle of Armageddon.

I. THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS (Revelation 16:13, 14)

John saw three unclean spirits that looked like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, beast, and false prophet. Frogs are very noisy and they are heard at night. They are slippery and slimy. They frequent the swampy quagmires of marshland. These evil spirits are like frogs. They are heard at the night time of man's history. They are noisy and vocal and frequent the quagmires of sin.

By examining other Scriptures we may understand more about the nature of these spirits:

Revelation 12:7—

Out of the mouth of the dragon: the spirit of rebellion

Revelation 13:6—

Out of the mouth of the beast: the spirit of blasphemy

Revelation 13:14—

Out of the mouth of the false prophet: the spirit of deception

These unclean spirits will deceive the nations. They will work miracles and will bring the kings of the earth into a global war. This will be the final conflict known as the Battle of Armageddon.

J. SEVENTH VIAL (Revelation 16:17-21)

This final judgment will bring the world's greatest earthquake. Islands will vanish and mountains will disappear. The whole surface of the earth will be changed. Besides the earthquake, there will be thunder and lightning. Hail stones that will weigh about one hundred pounds will fall. The destruction that will come with this final plague is almost incomprehensible.

Undoubtedly this final bowl judgment will take place at the Battle of Armageddon when Jesus Christ will personally return to set up His kingdom.

K. IT IS DONE (Revelation 16:17)

Jesus cried out from the cross, “It is finished” (John 19:30). There He bore the judgment of man’s sins and finished God’s plan for providing Salvation. Here He will cry out, “It is done.” This will be the completion of God’s plan in the final overthrow of all opposition and the perfection of the judgments of God. Both scenes are accompanied by an earthquake. Man has a choice of what is offered by the proclamation, “It is finished,” or suffer the awful results of God’s pronouncement, “It is done.”

Lesson Four

THE SEVEN PERSONAGES OF REVELATION

Text: Revelation 11, 12

A. THE MIDDLE OF THE TRIBULATION

Revelation 11, 12, and 13 are parenthetical chapters to further explain the happenings during the first half of the Tribulation and what will happen during the last three and one-half years. With the blowing of the seventh trumpet, we have reached the middle of the Tribulation period (Revelation 11:15).

B. THE KEY VERSE OF REVELATION

Revelation 11:15 is the key verse of this wonderful book: “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Although the fact of Christ taking control of the kingdoms of this world will not take place for another three and one-half years, yet the pronouncement is made here as though it already had taken place. At the darkest moment of Israel’s history, when the beast is assuming power, the end result is being announced. The final result is not a doubt. Jesus is the conquering King, and He shall reign for ever and ever.

C. SEVEN PERSONAGES OF REVELATION

Here in the account of the events which take place in the middle of the Tribulation, we are introduced to seven personages. Each of these characters takes a very significant part in the history of Israel at this time. These personages are:

1. The two witnesses
2. The red dragon
3. The woman clothed with the sun
4. The man child
5. The two beasts

The two beasts will be studied in another lesson. The first five personages will be studied in this lesson.

D. THE TWO TEMPLES

Revelation 11 begins with a statement regarding the temple which is to be rebuilt upon earth in Jerusalem. The location of this temple is definitely known because it is the holy city which will be trodden under foot for forty-two months. At the close of the chapter is one statement regarding the temple in Heaven.

In the middle of the Tribulation the temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem. In that temple the Antichrist will appear and claim the right to be worshiped.

“Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (II Thessalonians 2:4). This is the abomination of desolation spoken by Daniel (Daniel 9:2). The religious system of the man of sin will be connected with the temple in Jerusalem.

The eleventh chapter closes with the statement that the temple of God was opened in Heaven. The significant thing to be noted here is that the ark of His testament is seen. This speaks of God’s covenant with Israel in the midst of a judgment scene described as lightnings, voices, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail. The judgment will come, but Israel will be saved.

E. TWO WITNESSES

During the first half of the Tribulation, two supernatural beings will appear upon the earth. They are two persons who speak and preach God’s message. They wear sackcloth which declares the need for repentance. After they are killed by the beast, people will rejoice and send gifts because they claim that these two witnesses have tormented them. The preaching of these witnesses brought condemnation and conviction upon the world. This condemnation tormented them. The same thing is true today. Preachers of righteousness are hated by those who are brought under condemnation. This can bring torment to Christ’s rejecters and the disobedience.

The two witnesses are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before God as prophesied by Zechariah (Zechariah 4:2, 3). These witnesses have great power. They can spit fire and kill their enemies. They have the power to stop rain and send plagues.

After they preach for three and one-half years, they are slain by the beast. However, it should be noted that they will be slain only after they had finished their testimony. They could not be killed before their work was done. Their bodies will lay in the street of Jerusalem for three and one-half days, and the authorities will refuse to permit their bodies to be buried. The whole world will see their corpses lying in the street and rejoice. After three and one-half days a great miracle takes place. Life enters their bodies. A voice is heard saying to them, "Come up hither," and they ascend into Heaven in a cloud. At the same time there is an earthquake which will slay seven thousand men.

Who are these two witnesses?

Most Bible students agree that one of them is Elijah. The reasons for this opinion are:

1. Elijah did not experience physical death (II Kings 2:9-11)
2. It is foretold in Malachi that Elijah would appear on earth to prepare the way for the Lord's second advent
3. The witnesses are given the power to perform the same miracle that Elijah performed, that of withholding rain.

The identity of the other witness is more difficult to determine. The choice is between Enoch and Moses. The writer is inclined to believe that he is Moses. Moses appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration with Elijah. Moses manifested power in Egypt to turn water into blood. He also represents the law while Elijah represents the prophets. At any rate, God will reveal his identity when the time comes.

The Writer's Comments

The fact that the whole world will be able to see the bodies of the witnesses lying in the street of Jerusalem certainly foretells modern international television. It is through this means that the bodies may be seen by the whole world.

It is the opinion of the writer that it is through the ministry of these supernatural witnesses that the 144,000 are converted and sealed.

F. THE GREAT RED DRAGON (Revelation 12:1-17)

The word *wonder*, meaning "sign" or "symbol," is used for the first time in Revelation in

chapter twelve. The second sign in this chapter is the great red dragon (Revelation 12:3).

He is the devil. His seven heads and ten horns identify him with his representative, the beast. He hates the woman clothed with the sun and does his utmost to destroy her child. His character is described by the names given to him:

Verse 3	great red dragon
Verse 9	that old serpentthe devil Satan, which means “adversary”
Verse 10	the accuser of our brethren

In the original fall of Satan (Isaiah 14) he brought rebellion into the presence of God and induced one-third of the angels to fall with him. This is the explanation for verse four, “The third part of the stars of heaven.” The original expulsion of Satan was not a final overthrow; for although his forces have been limited to the atmospheric heaven around the earth, Satan himself still has had access to the throne of God to accuse the brethren (Revelation 12:10). One of the best known instances of this is when he accused Job (Job 1:6-12).

Here, in the middle of the Tribulation, he loses this privilege and is thrown out of Heaven. The devil and his angels fight, but Michael prevails. At this time, a woe is pronounced upon all who dwell upon the earth, for the devil knows that he has but a short time (Revelation 12:12). The devil is extremely angry and directs his wrath against the nation of Israel.

G. THE WOMAN (Revelation 12:1)

The first wonder in chapter twelve is a woman clothed with the sun. This is the nation of Israel. The twelve stars refer to the twelve tribes. The sun and moon would refer back to Joseph’s dream.

Throughout the years of Jewish history, the Jews have looked for the coming of the Messiah. Although the man child (male son) was born at Bethlehem, yet she is still travailing. She is in intense pain, waiting to be delivered. She can only be relieved of this travail when she accepts her Saviour to whom she gave birth two millennia ago.

The vision of Satan standing before the woman ready to kill her child refers to the attitude of Satan ever since Genesis 3:15. The promise was given to the world that deliverance would come through the seed of the woman. Satan initiated the conflict of the ages, attempting to stamp out the seed of the woman from Genesis to Revelation. From the murder of Abel, to

Herod's decree to kill the babies, to Armageddon, the attempt to destroy the seed of the woman has continued.

During the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation, there will be the most intense anti-Semitism crusade of all history. Throughout this persecution, God will protect Israel supernaturally. In spite of Satan's hatred and wrath directed against God's chosen people, there will come a revival to Israel at this time. The term "remnant of her seed" denotes the last generation of Jews living during the Tribulation. This remnant will turn to God in complete obedience. It is written regarding them (Revelation 12:17):

1. They keep the commandment of God.
2. They have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

H. THE MAN CHILD

This is Jesus Christ, who is identified in verse five by the clause, "Who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron."

The Greek text helps us here. The Greek words *arsen huion* are used here which means a "male son." The man child is singular in number. He is literally to be a male; and also literally to be a son.

The dragon was ready to destroy Him at His birth and never ceased this attempt until our Lord's ascension. At this time he no longer can attack the "male son." However, his wrath will continue to be directed against the woman who gave birth to the male son.

I. VICTORY OVER THE ACCUSER (Revelation 12:11)

The remnant of Israel who will turn to Jesus Christ during this time of intense persecution will have victory over the adversary by the following means:

1. By the blood of the Lamb
2. By the word of their testimony
3. They loved not their lives unto death

This is the secret of victory, not only during the Tribulation, but also in this church age. The saints of all ages have overcome the accuser by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

THE ONE HUNDRED FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND

Text: Revelation 7 and 14

A. JUDGMENT HELD BACK (Revelation 7:1-3)

The phrase “And after these things” shows chronological order. Chapter seven is a parenthesis between the sixth and seventh seals. With the breaking of the seventh seal, the trumpets begin to blow and the judgments increase in intensity. Before this happens, judgment is suspended for a brief period and the Tribulation will be held in abeyance until the 144,000 witnesses are sealed.

It will help us to understand Revelation if we clearly keep in mind the order of events. The rider on the white horse is still riding. Wars, famine, and pestilence are still continuing throughout the Tribulation.

At this moment John sees an angel come from the rising sun and delay the trumpet judgments until the servants of God are sealed. In the church age, it is the Holy Spirit within the church who has this staying power (II Thessalonians 2:7). As the church has already been raptured from the earth, an angel comes with this power.

B. THE ONE HUNDRED FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND (Revelation 7:4-8)

In chapter seven are seen two multitudes who are converted during the Tribulation. The first group is the 144,000 Israelites who are sealed to be witnesses. The second group is a great multitude converted out of all nations as a result of their witnessing.

God never leaves Himself without a witness. In Elijah’s day God had seven thousand who had not bowed down in heathen worship (I Kings 19:18). No Bible student would question the fact that God meant exactly seven thousand in number. Likewise, the number of Israelites sealed in Revelation should not be questioned. We should accept that literally twelve thousand will be sealed from each tribe.

They apparently accept Jesus Christ and are sealed in their foreheads. God places a definite mark upon them. The line is clearly drawn. In that fearful hour, people will either take the mark of the beast or God will seal them with a specific mark. We who are members of His bride are sealed with the Holy Ghost, for Paul wrote, “In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise” (Ephesians 1:13).

The experience that these 144,000 will receive will be similar to the disciples before Pentecost. Undoubtedly, it will be similar to the experience of John the Baptist; except, of course, they will not be filled with the Holy Ghost from birth.

The 144,000 will be sealed from twelve tribes in the following order:

Tribe of Judah	sealed 12000
Tribe of Reuben	sealed 12000
Tribe of Gad	sealed 12000
Tribe of Asher	sealed 12000
Tribe of Naphtali	sealed 12000
Tribe of Manasseh	sealed 12000
Tribe of Simeon	sealed 12000
Tribe of Levi	sealed 12000
Tribe of Issachar	sealed 12000
Tribe of Zebulun	sealed 12000
Tribe of Joseph	sealed 12000
Tribe of Benjamin	sealed 12000

It should be noted that Judah is mentioned first. God’s sovereignty places him there. Reuben, the firstborn, is recognized next. The tribes of Dan and Ephraim are left out entirely. Dan was a lover of idolatry and one of the golden calves was erected in Dan (I Kings 12:29).

Joseph had two sons: Manasseh and Ephraim. The tribe of Manasseh takes Dan’s place and Joseph takes Ephraim’s place. However, as we study Ezekiel 48, we learn that both of these tribes will have an inheritance in the Millennial kingdom.

C. DESCRIPTION OF THE ONE HUNDRED FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND (Revelation 7, 14)

The 144,000 appear again in chapter fourteen in a heavenly scene. This chapter gives a

preview of some major events which are about to take place. Included in this preview are the 144,000 before the throne of God, singing a new song which belonged to them exclusively. A very clear description is given of the 144,000:

1. They are all Jews from twelve tribes of Israel. Let us not waste time in speculating where the lost ten tribes of Israel are. God knows who they are.
2. They are redeemed from the earth (Revelation 14:3).
3. They are sealed in their foreheads (Revelation 7:3).
4. They have the Father's name written in their foreheads. This is the name of Jesus! Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name" (John 5:43).
5. They are men (Revelation 14:4).
6. They are "virgins." This undoubtedly means that they are chaste and pure. They are living separated lives similar to that of the Apostle Paul during his ministry.
7. They have no guile in their mouths. They speak the truth and are not guilty of deception.
8. They are without fault; that is, they are blameless.
9. They followed the Lamb. They are in the center of God's perfect will.
10. They are called servants (Revelation 7:3). The saints of the church are kings and priests. The 144,000 are servants. Also the redeemed multitude, the fruit of their ministry, serve God day and night (Revelation 7:15).
11. They are the firstfruits of the Jewish nation, which will accept Jesus Christ, their Messiah (Revelation 14:4).

D. THEIR MINISTRY

The questions may be asked, "What is the Tribulation message? What do the 144,000 preach?"

The everlasting gospel is a message preached throughout all times and ages. Therefore, their message incorporated the everlasting gospel within their message which is:

1. Fear God
2. Give glory to Him
3. Hour of judgment is come
4. Worship the Creator

Apart from this, their main message will be the identity of Jesus Christ. They will preach that Jesus is their long-looked-for Messiah. They will preach the deity of Jesus and identify Him as their God.

Very likely they also will preach a message of repentance similar to that of John the Baptist. The message of repentance may be preached throughout all dispensations and will especially be needed at this time in the history of the Jewish nation.

E. GREAT END TIME REVIVAL (Revelation 7:9-17)

In the latter part of the seventh chapter there is a description of a great multitude of redeemed people from all nations. This multitude of redeemed people is so great that no man can number it. This is one of the greatest revivals that the world will ever see. Not only will it be the largest, but it will take place in the shortest period of time. Today revivals come after years of prayer and preaching the Word. During the Tribulation, the revival will come almost immediately following the witnessing of the 144,000 sealed Jews.

This multitude of redeemed people are:

1. A great multitude that no man can count.
2. They are from all nations, both Jews and Gentiles.
3. They are Tribulation saints who come out of great tribulation.
4. They have been cleansed by the blood of the Lamb.
5. They serve God day and night in His temple.

It would seem that this saved multitude will go into the Millennium and serve God in His kingdom. In eternity, in the new Heaven and new earth, there will be no night. There will be no sun and no days as we know them. There is no temple in New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:22). Therefore, the temple mentioned here will be the temple in Jerusalem during the Millennium.

F. THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

The 144,000 are the firstfruits of the entire nation of Israel, being converted and accepting Jesus as their long-looked-for Messiah. There are many Scriptures which plainly teach that the nation of Israel will be converted during the Tribulation and enter into the Millennium. For example, Paul wrote, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Romans 11:26).

THE TWO BEASTS

Text: Revelation 13

A. ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT

Today's world is in a state of confusion as far as the church is concerned. Wars, rebellion, and terrorism are destroying the political structure of world governments. Many countries are bankrupt, and the banks have lost control of world economy. In the reasoning of most world leaders, the only answer to the world's problems is a one-world government, a one-world church, and a one-world monetary and financial system. The world is ready to accept such a program; and by accepting it, Antichrist will come to power, promising to solve all the troubles of humanity and to bring universal peace.

Such a one-world system is foretold in Revelation 13 where two men, the beast and the false prophet, are in absolute control. Together they will institute a worldwide, political-religious government.

The system had its beginning at Babel where Nimrod attempted to institute such a program. God interrupted the Babylonish system by scattering them. God has always ruled that church and state should be kept separate. However, the idolatrous worship of Babylon has always tried to ride to power by using political means.

During the final three and one-half years of the Tribulation, the beast and the false prophet will bring this to pass. Their power will dominate the world politically, religiously, and economically.

B. THE TWO BEASTS

In Revelation 13, two personages appear who will control the world during the last half of the Tribulation. They are two Satan-controlled men who are called beasts. The first beast comes out of the sea (Revelation 13:1), while the second appears out of the earth (Revelation

13:11).

Nearly every Bible student identifies the Antichrist with one of these men; however, there is not always an agreement which is the Antichrist. Antichrist is in opposition to Christ while at the same time imitates our Lord. In II Thessalonians 2:3 the apostle Paul called the Antichrist “the man of sin,” which translated literally means “the man of lawlessness.” Since his greatest characteristics will be that of lawlessness, rebellion, and blasphemy, we shall accept in our study here the conclusion that the first beast is the Antichrist. It would seem that in verse five he is identified by “speaking great things and blasphemies.”

C. THE POLITICAL DICTATOR

The first beast is the political dictator of this period. It has seven heads and two horns which identify him with the revived Roman Empire. He is the leader of the final Gentile kingdom represented by the feet and toes of Nebuchadnezzar’s image in Daniel 2. The iron in the legs of the image represented Rome. It also will represent Rome in the feet and toes. The clay in the feet is divisive. In this division, we can see the political-religious system of the revived Roman Empire, the combined forces of a one-world government and apostate, ecumenical church, the harlot.

In Daniel 7, the Gentile kingdoms are portrayed as a lion, a bear, and a leopard. The beast in Revelation 13 has the characteristics of these three beasts except in reverse order. The explanation is simple: Daniel looked forward and saw first, Babylon, then Persia and Greece. John, however, looked back after those kingdoms had run their course, and therefore the animals were in reverse order.

D. THE SOURCE OF ANTICHRIST POWER

Many versions of Revelation 13:1 use *he* instead of the pronoun *I* at the beginning of the verse. In other words, it is Satan, not John, who stands upon the sands of the sea. It is the dragon who will give the beast the power and authority to rule the world (Revelation 13:2). The word *seat* means “throne.” The devil’s throne is the world, so the beast is given authority and power over the world.

The devil is seen standing on the sand of the sea as the first beast arises out of the sea. It is the writer’s opinion that the sea refers to the Mediterranean Sea and, therefore, the beast will arise from the Mediterranean area. Some students believe that the sea refers to the multitudes of humanity.

The wound of the beast refers to the apparent death of the Roman Empire throughout the centuries. The wound is now healed and the Roman Empire is revived. For these many years the Roman Empire has not had a king, but now the head is healed. It now has a ruler in the person of the beast.

E. THE FALSE PROPHET

The second beast which arises out of the earth is the false prophet, who is the ecclesiastical head of the church federation. He has the appearance of a lamb, imitating Christ. He has two main sources of power, that of performing miracles and that of deception. The fact that he will speak like a dragon (Revelation 13:11) informs us that it is the devil who will control his speech and give him his power to perform miracles.

He exercises all the power of the first beast; and, in fact, he rides to his exalted position on the political powers of that hour. This fact is clearly stated in Revelation 17.

He will create an image of the first beast and give the image power to speak. He will cause the whole world to worship the first beast. Thus he will institute beast worship.

The Writer's Comments

The image speaking could be a miracle worked by Satan. On the other hand, it could simply be done through electronics and modern technology.

F. THE POWER TO PERFORM MIRACLES

People have always wanted to see miracles; however, it is often forgotten that the devil can perform miracles. The miracles that the false prophet perform, i.e., calling fire down from heaven and making the image speak, are performed by the power of Satan.

The apostle Paul foretold that the man of sin will come with signs and lying wonders (II Thessalonians 2:9-11). Although these miracles will influence multitudes, yet there will be many who will not be deceived.

G. THE MARK OF THE BEAST (Revelation 13:16-18)

It is startling just how accurately this prophecy could rapidly be fulfilled. Computers now

make it possible to assign everyone in the world a number, record his business transactions, and control his ability to buy and sell.

Money could be a thing of the past—especially in advanced countries. A person's number could be laser-tattooed on the forehead or the back of the hand. When buying or selling, a scanner could pick up this number from the forehead or hand and the purchase will be immediately completed with the proper amount reduced from his account at the bank.

When the beast comes to power, he will seize control of such a system. By so doing, he could completely control the economic life of every individual.

We read where this is accurately foretold in Revelation 13:16-18. This is one more proof of the full inspiration of God's Word.

ARMAGEDDON

Text: Revelation 19:11-21

A. ARMAGEDDON

Armageddon comes from two Hebrew words meaning “the hills of Megiddo” and refers to a region in northern Palestine among the hills of Megiddo which surround a vast plain called the Valley of Jehoshaphat. The area is situated on the south side of the Plain of Esdraelon, at the entrance of a pass across the Carmel Mountains. This was the main highway between Asia and Africa, the meeting place of armies from the East and the West. It is claimed that more blood has been shed here than any other spot on earth. It was at Megiddo in World War I that General Allenby broke the power of the Turkish army. Three famous mountains overlook this valley: Carmel, Gilboa, and Tabor.

This area will be the scene of the final decisive battle between Antichrist and Christ. It is here the stone will smite the ten-toed kingdoms as described in the second chapter of Daniel’s prophecy. The smitten Christ of Calvary’s cross will become the smiting stone.

This valley is approximately ten miles wide and forty miles long. It should be noted that in Revelation 14:20, blood is to come out of the winepress for the distance of sixteen hundred furlongs. This is a distance of 184 miles.

To explain this we need to read in Isaiah 63:1 that Christ comes from Bozrah, the capital of Edom, which is about thirty miles southeast of the Dead Sea. From this point, the 184 miles would reach all the way to Tyre. From this we can conclude that the Battle of Armageddon will involve the whole land of Palestine, but the Valley of Jehoshaphat will be the focal point.

It is at this battle that the Tribulation ends and the Millennium begins.

B. ARMAGEDDON DESCRIBED IN REVELATION

1. Revelation 14:14-20

Armageddon does not take place until the end of the Tribulation with the pouring forth of the seventh bowl judgment. However, a preview is given of this final battle. It is a fore-glimpse of what is to come.

Jesus is seen sitting upon a white cloud, wearing a crown of gold and holding in His hand a sharp sickle. Three angels are seen coming out of the temple, each in turn cry to Jesus to thrust in the sickle and reap the ripened clusters of grapes. The nations are likened to grapes to be harvested and thrown into a great winepress.

A winepress is a big vat for the treading of grapes in order to release the juice. Here the wicked are cast into a winepress and are trampled by our Lord Himself. Just as the grape juice stains the clothes of the one who is doing the trampling, so the garments of Jesus are stained by the blood which will splash as high as the horses' bridles or four feet.

2. Revelation 16:16-21

The battle takes place with the pouring forth of the seventh vial judgment. There is a great earthquake accompanied with thunder, lightning, and falling hail stones which weigh around one hundred pounds each. Islands and mountains disappear, and there is a great change upon the surface of the earth.

3. Revelation 19:11-21

Chapters seventeen and eighteen are a parenthesis between Revelation 16 and 19. Therefore, the description of Armageddon found here is simply a continuation of chapter sixteen.

John saw Heaven opened (Revelation 19:11). A door was opened in Revelation 4:1 when Jesus came for His saints. Here a door again is opened when Jesus will come with His saints. This is the revelation of Christ at His Second Coming.

He is seen coming on a white horse, accompanied with the armies of Heaven also riding on white horses and clothed in fine linen. It should be noted that only Christ does the fighting. The armies of Heaven are simply spectators.

Jesus is called Faithful and True and is clothed in a vesture dipped in blood. In the battle Jesus smites the nations with a sharp sword which proceeds from His mouth. He treads the winepress of the wrath of God He shall rule.

The beast and the false prophet are thrown alive into the lake of fire. The rest of the armies are slain with the sword and their bodies are left to rot upon the plain. An angel calls for all the vultures and carrion eaters to come to feast on the flesh of kings, captains, and mighty men. This is called the supper of the great God. What a contrast between this and the marriage supper described earlier in the same chapter.

C. ARMAGEDDON DESCRIBED IN OTHER SCRIPTURES

1. Isaiah 63:1-6

Here Armageddon is likened to a winepress which is trodden by Jesus Christ. It is plainly stated that Jesus alone will destroy His enemies and gain the victory. Although other Scriptures state that He will be accompanied by the saints, He alone fights the battle and gains the victory. It is His garments which will be stained with the blood of His enemies.

2. Joel 3:9-17

Again we are given a picture of a winepress. The prophet stated that the Lord will judge the nations. Also he described the signs that will take place in the sun, moon, and stars.

3. Matthew 25:31-46

It is not the Great White Throne Judgment which is described here but rather the judgment that will take place at Christ's Second Coming. This is known as the Judgment of Nations. It is here that Jesus Christ will return to earth and will set up His kingdom for one thousand years.

4. II Thessalonians 1:6-10

The apostle Paul gave a description of our Lord's revelation of His Second Coming. He shall be revealed:

- a. With His mighty angels
- b. In flaming fire
- c. Taking vengeance on them that know not God
- d. He shall be glorified in His saints and admired by all that believed

D. THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON

At the Battle of Armageddon the armies which come up against Jerusalem will be led by the beast, the head of the revived Roman Empire. Vast army camps will be on all sides. The Plains of Esdraelon will be filled with soldiers and the hills will swarm with armed men. The unclean spirits, working miracles, will have deceived the nations and brought them together to destroy Jerusalem.

The battle is a short one. The Lord appears and there is one mighty blow from above. One flash of glory and the battle is over.

Nebuchadnezzar saw a stone cut out of the mountain without hands (Daniel 2:34) which smote the image upon its feet and broke them to pieces. The accomplishment of this act will take place at the Battle of Armageddon. At this moment, the Gentile kingdoms of the Antichrist will be destroyed.

E. THE FINAL RESULTS OF ARMAGEDDON

There will be several immediate results of this great final battle:

1. The armies of Antichrist which will come up against Jerusalem will be destroyed.
2. The beast and the false prophet will be thrown alive into the lake of fire.
3. The rotting bodies of the slain enemies will be eaten by vultures assembled from far and near.
4. Jesus will come to the earth upon the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4) and the mount shall cleave asunder.
5. The devil is bound and locked up in the bottomless pit for one thousand years.
6. At this time Jesus will institute His kingdom upon earth with Jerusalem being the capital.

Armageddon will be one of the most momentous events that the world will ever see.

BABYLON JUDGED

Text: Revelation 17 and 18

A. THE JUDGMENT OF BABYLON

Revelation 17 and 18 are a parenthesis between chapters sixteen and nineteen. Idolatrous Babylon is a political-religious system which had its beginning at Babel when Nimrod built a city and a tower and called it “the gate of God.” God brought judgment and confusion, and the people were scattered. The spirit of idolatrous Babylon has never ceased throughout the centuries. In the latter part of the Tribulation, it takes a prominent place in beast worship under the leadership of the false prophet. The significance of this political-religious system is of such importance that God has given two whole chapters to describe the judgment and the end of this Antichrist system.

In Revelation, three times the apostle John is bidden to “come hither”:

1. The vision in Heaven (Revelation 4:1)
2. The judgment of Babylon (Revelation 17:1)
3. The bride, the Lamb’s wife (Revelation 21:9)

From this we can see the importance God has placed upon the judgment of Babylon.

B. THE HARLOT CHURCH

The false church which dominates the world at this time is called a whore, a harlot, or prostitute, who sells her purity for monetary gain. There is nothing better in this world than a virtuous woman, and nothing worse than an adulterous one. Likewise, there is nothing better than belonging to the true church, the bride of Christ, and nothing worse than being a part of the apostate body. Upon her forehead is written the word *mystery*. This word means “secret.” Up to this time her true identity is hidden. Now the mask is stripped away and that which has been shrouded in secrecy is to be explained.

This harlot church is clearly identified by the fact that she is situated upon seven mountains. The city of Rome is built upon seven hills, and this would indicate to us that the Roman Catholic Church is being described here. However, let us keep in mind that she is called the “mother of harlots.” In the apostate, ecumenical church we find many of her children. These children are returning to their mother. Together they will compose this final form of religious Babylon whose judgment is described here.

This adulterous religious system is universal. This is known by the fact that she sits upon many waters (verse one) which is explained in verse fifteen: “peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues.” Her power and influence dominate the entire world, all races and nationalities.

This apostate church is wealthy and arrayed in gorgeous attire. However, she has a golden cup which is full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication.

C. THE JUDGMENT OF POLITICAL BABYLON (Revelation 18)

In chapter eighteen the account of the destruction of political and commercial Babylon is recorded. The destruction does not take place until the end of the Tribulation at Armageddon. The judgment of ecclesiastical Babylon will take place prior to this, toward the end of the Tribulation. Let us examine the following facts:

1. The phrase, “After these things” (verse one), informs us that the events of chapter eighteen will take place after the events of chapter seventeen are completed.
2. The clause, “I saw another angel” (verse one), tells us that the angel in chapter eighteen is not the same angel we read about in Revelation 17:1.
3. Both the political and religious systems carry the name “Babylon.” However the religious system is spoken of as being “Mystery, the mother of harlots.”
4. Babylon is destroyed by the political powers (the ten horns), but the Babylon in chapter eighteen is destroyed by the direct act of God.
5. The kings of the earth rejoice when the harlot, apostate church is destroyed, but they lament and weep when political and commercial Babylon meets her judgment.

With the judgment of Babylon in chapter eighteen will come the end of almost everything secular in which men hold so valuable in this world. Power, wealth, financial gain, and pleasures of the world will all come to an end. The judgments of Babylon will come suddenly: “For in one hour is thy judgment come” (Revelation 18:10). In one hour, the following will happen:

1. Politicians shall weep and mourn (verses 9, 10)

2. Businessmen shall weep and wail (verses 11-15)
3. Commerce and travel will fail (verses 17-19)
4. Pleasure and amusement shall cease (verse 22)
5. All craft and manufacturing shall be finished (verse 22)

The conclusion that a person may arrive at is that a life invested in the wealth and pleasure of this world is wasted.

Let us note the final phrase of verse thirteen. The merchants made merchandise of the souls of men. They bought and sold not only spices, wine, and wheat, but also they made profit out of slaves and the souls of men. Knowing this, one must recognize that the judgments of God are just and true.

D. AN EXHORTATION FROM GOD

“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4). Not only should this exhortation be heeded and obeyed in the hour of judgment, but it should be heeded by all men today. We must come out of Babylon and be not partakers of her sins. A life of absolute separation is the only one acceptable to a holy God.

Not only is Babylon drunken with the wine of her fornication, but she is drunken with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. During the Inquisition, the Roman Catholic Church tortured and put to death thousands of Christians. Henry H. Halley, the author of *Halley's Bible Handbook* states that in the thirty years between 1540 and 1570 no fewer than 900,000 Protestants were put to death in the Pope's War for the extermination of the Waldenses (*Halley's Bible Handbook*, p. 777, 24th ed.) Before Rome came into existence, idolatrous Babylonianism also did the same. Then, during the Tribulation, thousands will be martyred for not bowing down to the image of the beast (Revelation 13:15).

E. THE BEAST (Revelation 17:3)

The harlot church is seen sitting on a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. This beast is the first beast in chapter thirteen. Here the apostate-religious system is seen riding upon the political powers of that moment. The beast is described by the following details:

1. **Scarlet in color.** This is descriptive of the red dragon who is controlling and dominat-

ing the beast. It also may refer to the political ideology of the last days.

2. **Full of names of blasphemy.** One of the outstanding characteristics of the beast is that of blasphemy (Revelation 13:5, 6).
3. **Seven heads (Revelation 17:10).** These seven heads are the seven kings which are the great Gentile kingdoms of history. Five are fallen: Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece; one is (in John's day): Rome; the other not yet come: revived Roman Empire; the eighth: the beast or Antichrist.
4. **Ten horns (Revelation 17:12).** These are the ten nations of the revived Roman Empire as represented in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image.

F. THE HARLOT JUDGED

The religious system of Babylon rides to power on a political beast. The political forces of Antichrist will hate the harlot church but permit her to ride to power because it is to the mutual benefit of both.

The false prophet performs miracles and deceives the nations. He causes men to worship the image of the beast and to receive the mark of the beast. However, just as there is no affinity between the clay and iron in the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image, there is no love between the harlot church and atheistic political system. Self interest is the force that causes them to form the religious-political system of the last days.

When the time is right, God will motivate the beast to fulfill God's will (Revelation 17:16, 17) and destroy the harlot church. Shortly before Armageddon, this Babylon the Great, mother of harlots, will be destroyed by the beast upon which she has ridden to power.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

Text: Revelation 19:1-14

A. IMPORTANCE OF THE MARRIAGE

The importance of the marriage of the Lamb may be understood when we remember that it was ordained before the foundation of the world. This great event was planned in the heart of God back in the ages of eternity. The apostle Paul made this clear when he stated that the church was chosen before the foundation of the world: “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4).

This great event is the crowning climax to the eternal purpose of God. The purpose of God in planning the incarnation, atonement and resurrection was that He might present to Himself a glorious church who is His bride. All the events and truths of the Bible point forward and lead up to this beautiful, breath-taking scene.

B. THE HALLELUJAH CHORUS (Revelation 19:1-6)

A wedding is a time of rejoicing. Such a scene is pictured in Revelation 19. “Let us be glad and rejoice” (verse 7). The scene is a heavenly one. The four and twenty elders, the four living creatures, and all the heavenly hosts lift their voices in praise and sing the Hallelujah chorus.

Hallelujah comes from a Hebrew word meaning, “Praise ye Jehovah.” It occurs twenty-four times in the Old Testament and is always translated, “Praise ye the Lord.” It only occurs four times in the New Testament and is found here in Revelation 19. It is the cry of victory over the enemies of the Lord and gives praise to Him.

The scene of rejoicing is witnessed after the destruction of political and ecclesiastical Babylon. The harlot church has been judged. The saints who have suffered and been martyred by her rejoice for righteous and just were the judgments of God.

The second cause for the rejoicing is that “The Lord reigneth.” The saints have been praying for centuries, “Thy kingdom come.” Now their prayers are answered. The kingdom of God has come and the Lord is reigning on His throne.

It should be noted that as in chapter four, there is only one throne and only one upon the throne. The same One who was on the throne in Revelation 9 is still on the throne. This is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One who is reigning, and the Hallelujah chorus is lifting up the anthems of praise to Him.

The third reason for the Hallelujah chorus is stated in verse seven, “For the marriage of the Lamb is come.” The glorious event that the events of all ages were looking forward to is now come. This is the crowning climax of God’s eternal plan, and it is time for all Heaven to be glad and rejoice.

C. THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

We shall study the marriage by asking and answering seven questions:

1. Who Is The Bridegroom?

The Lamb is the bridegroom. This is stated in verse seven, “The marriage of the Lamb is come.”

2. Who Is The Bride?

In reply to this question, we go back to Revelation 2 and 3, to the letters to the churches, and then to Revelation 4:1 where the church is caught away. The bride is certainly the blood-bought, blood-washed, Spirit-filled church who bears the name of Jesus. Paul identified her in his letter to the Ephesians church: “That he might present it to himself a glorious church” (Ephesians 5:27); “This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Ephesians 5:32).

3. Who Are The Guests?

The guests are the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints. Certainly John the Baptist will be one of the guests. He is the friend of the Bridegroom: “But the friend of the bridegroom . . . this my joy therefore is fulfilled” (John 3:29). Also the patriarchs will be there seated at the marriage supper: “When ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the

prophets in the kingdom of God” (Luke 13:28).

4. Where Does The Marriage Take Place?

Undoubtedly the marriage will take place in New Jerusalem, the city foursquare. This is the place of many mansions which Jesus is preparing for His bride (John 14:2). When the church is raptured, she is brought into the presence of God before His throne. There she received the rewards handed out at the judgment seat of Christ. Certainly, as we can see in Revelation 19, the wedding takes place in Heaven, not upon earth.

5. When Will The Marriage Take Place?

After the church is raptured, while the Tribulation is upon earth, she will appear before the judgment seat of Christ. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ” (II Corinthians 5:10). Here she will receive her rewards for the deeds done in the body. All the saints will be judged for their works of righteousness. This is a preparatory part in making herself ready. The marriage will take place just before Christ returns to earth to reign in His Millennial kingdom.

6. How Did The Bride Make Herself Ready?

“And his wife hath made herself ready” (Revelation 19:7). The preparatory work of getting ready for the wedding goes on continually from the moment the Christian is born again. A faithful life of prayer, worship, church attendance, Bible study, and dedication has an important place in this getting ready. Paul stated, “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (II Corinthians 7:1).

7. What Is Her Wedding Dress?

Her wedding dress is described as being fine linen, clean and white. It is clearly stated that this fine linen is the righteousness of saints. When we are saved, the righteousness of God is imputed and imparted to us. Here, while upon earth, we are clothed in His righteousness. However, at the marriage of the Lamb, she will be clothed in the righteous acts and deeds of saints. *Righteousness* here means “righteous acts.” The Greek text shows that the fine linen is her righteous acts performed by living a holy life.

D. THE MARRIAGE SUPPER

The marriage supper takes place after the wedding. This will be such a joyful occasion of feasting upon spiritual and eternal food, heavenly manna, that the angel told John to write. He wanted it written down so that it would be recorded.

“Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:9). All the guests are invited guests. They are blessed to be invited to such a happy and wonderful event. It will be a great privilege to be present and to rejoice with the Bridegroom and the bride.

There is another supper described in this chapter and what a contrast it is. This is a supper of fearful judgment when the flesh of the enemies of God are devoured by the vultures. The fact that it is mentioned here only emphasizes the great joy and blessing of the marriage supper of the Lamb.

E. WHO GETS THE GLORY?

“Let us . . . give honor to him” (Revelation 19:7). The bride is the one who attracts the most attention at all weddings. She is dressed in her white wedding garment and is beautiful to behold. When she enters the wedding, all the guests stand and gasp in amazement when they see her in all of her beauty. However, who really gets the glory? It is actually not the bride. She has spent months to make herself lovely and adorned herself for the occasion when she gives herself to her lover. Why is she attired in such beauty? It is that she might please the bridegroom. All the pageantry is there to give honor to the groom who receives his beautiful bride.

Such it is in eternity. The bride was chosen to the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1:12). At the marriage of the Lamb, His bride will be beautiful beyond what words can describe, but the center of attention will be the Lamb. All honor will be given to Him. Hallelujah!

THE MILLENNIUM

Text: Revelation 20

A. THE MILLENNIUM (Revelation 20:1-6)

Millennium means “one thousand years.” It comes from two Latin words: *mille* - one thousand; and *annum* - year. The plural of *millennium* is *millennia*.

Some people claim that the Millennium is not to be found in the Bible. However, here we find one thousand years mentioned six times in six verses. In recent years, a doctrine which is known as “Amillennialism” has been widely taught. The term amillennialism simply means “no-millennium.” The only way one can reach this interpretation is by the spiritualization of Scripture. This is a very dangerous way of interpreting Scripture, for through this method all Scripture can be explained away. In that case, no man really knows the truth of the Bible, for one man’s idea is as good as the next man’s belief.

Literal interpretation is the only safe way of understanding Scripture. One thousand years means one thousand years. When the Bible states that the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness forty years, it means forty years. When we read the Jesus shall reign on the earth for one thousand years, it means exactly that.

Premillennialism is scriptural and the church, for the first three hundred years, was unanimous in holding this view. The Bible is very clear on the fact that Christ will return to earth to reign for one thousand years.

This is the seventh day in God’s week of seven millennia. During the Millennium the curse is lifted, and the earth rests from the suffering under the yoke of bondage of the devil for six thousand years. In creation, God rested on the seventh day, not because He was weary, but rather because His work of creation was complete. Here God’s work of redemption will be completed when He presents the church to Himself and lifts the curse from the earth.

B. SATAN BOUND (Revelation 20:1, 2)

One thousand years of peace would be absolutely impossible as long as the devil was free to continue his work of deception. To bring in the Millennial reign, the Lord has to purge earth of all opposing forces.

The first act will be to cast the beast and the false prophet alive into the lake of fire. The lake of fire was prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). The beast and the false prophet become the first inhabitants of this dreadful place. Up to this time, the spirits of all the dead who are unsaved go to Hades, the prison house where they wait the final resurrection and the Great White Throne Judgment. Apparently the beast and the false prophet will not appear at the White Throne Judgment, for they are cast alive into the lake of fire. After one thousand years they are still there, proving that the torment of hell fire is everlasting.

Three and one-half years earlier the devil was thrown out of Heaven (Revelation 12:9, 10). Since the very beginning he has had access to the throne of God where he accused the saints day and night (Job 1:6). Now God has the devil bound and imprisoned in the bottomless pit that the earth might enjoy peace and that Jesus might reign supreme.

The name *devil* means “slanderer and liar.” The name *Satan* means “enemy or adversary.” In the Bible he is called devil, Satan, Apollyon (destroyer), dragon, serpent, and many other titles which denote his sinister character. His greatest work is that of deception. During the Millennium he will be unable to deceive the nations any longer (Revelation 20:3).

The Bible does not name the angel which binds the devil, but certainly he must have great power and authority. The angel has power to lay hold of him, bind him, cast him into the bottomless pit, shut him up, and set a seal upon him. Again, it does not describe the chain except to declare it as being great. The fallen angels have been bound by everlasting chains under darkness. It may be a similar chain by which the devil is bound. At least we know the chain is both strong enough and long enough to keep him in bondage.

Amillennialism teaches that the devil was bound at Calvary, and is now bound. The fallacy of this teaching is shown by the fact that when he is bound he will deceive the nations no longer (verse 3). Today he continues to deceive whole nations with atheistic and ungodly ideologies.

C. THE TRIBULATION SAINTS

During the Tribulation hundreds of believers who were not raptured with the church will

be martyred. These are known as being the Tribulation saints. These were described previously in Revelation 6 and 7. In these two references we read that:

1. They are slain for the Word of God and their testimony (Revelation 6:9)
2. White robes are given them (Revelation 6:11)
3. They are a great multitude that could not be numbered (Revelation 7:9)
4. They are from all nations, not just Jews (Revelation 7:9)
5. They are cleansed by the atonement (Revelation 7:14)
6. They serve the Lord continually in His temple (Revelation 7:15)

In Revelation 20 there is more information given concerning these Tribulation saints:

1. They sit upon thrones in judgment (Revelation 20:4)
2. They are martyred by being beheaded (Revelation 10:4)
3. They shall be priests of God (Revelation 20:6)
4. They shall govern during the Millennium (Revelation 20:6)
5. They shall have part in the first resurrection (Revelation 20:6)

Although these Tribulation saints are blessed and holy (Revelation 20:6) and have an active place in governing during the Millennium, yet it would seem that they will be guests at the marriage of the Lamb, not part of the bride. They shall govern during the Millennial kingdom, but it does not declare specifically that they are both kings and priests. These two offices can only be combined in Jesus Christ, and only those who are in Christ can be both kings and priests (Revelation 5:10). The Tribulation saints have not experienced the new birth, but they have qualified through their knowledge of God's Word and their testimony by laying down their lives because they refuse to take the mark of the beast.

D. THE SHORT SEASON

During the Millennium the length of men's lives will be extended and the earth will be populated again. Millions of people will be righteous and law abiding because Satan is bound. However, they are not regenerated and human nature will not be changed.

Satan will be released from his prison and for a short season will again tempt and deceive the nations. Many might ask the question, "Why loose him now that he is bound?" This short season of testing must take place for the same reason that the tree of knowledge of good and evil was placed in the garden. God is not interested in having puppets in His eternal kingdom. Only those who voluntarily choose Him and love Him will qualify to enter the new heaven and

new earth. No spirit of rebellion, no carnal self-will may be allowed to remain. Therefore all men must be given a free choice.

When Satan is loosed he deceives the nations once more and leads a rebellion against God. He assembles a tremendous army and surrounds Jerusalem. God judges and destroys them with fire from Heaven. Planet earth is purged with fire (II Peter 3:10-13), and life as it is now known upon earth comes to an end.

At this judgment the devil is thrown into the lake of fire to join the beast and the false prophet (Revelation 20:10). He shall be tormented for ever and ever.

E. THE RESURRECTION

In Revelation 20 two resurrections are mentioned. The first resurrection is before the Millennium begins; the second resurrection is at the close of the Millennium. It should be clearly kept in mind that the first resurrection is the resurrection of life, but it takes place in three distinct stages:

1. Jesus and the Old Testament saints (I Corinthians 15:23; Matthew 27:52, 53). It should be noted that these Old Testament saints arose after Christ's resurrection. They will be in the kingdom with the church but will have a subordinate role. They will be guests at the marriage of the Lamb.
2. The church (I Thessalonians 4:16-17). The church is the body of Christ and is the bride at the marriage of the Lamb.
3. The Tribulation saints (Revelation 20:6). These will serve and govern in the Millennial kingdom, but like the Old Testament saints, will be guests at the marriage of the Lamb.

The term "first" in relation to the resurrection has no reference to actual order but only as it is contrasted with the general resurrection. If one were to object to this logical conclusion, then it would have to be known that the first resurrection had already taken place at Christ's resurrection which would rule out entirely the church and the Tribulation saints. This, of course, is not correct.

The second resurrection will take place just prior to the White Throne Judgment. Everyone who has not been resurrected will be raised at this time.

It is interesting to observe that there are at least four individuals who will not be resurrected in either resurrection.

1. **Enoch and Elijah.** They were translated and were caught away into the presence of God without having to await resurrection in Paradise.
2. **Beast and false prophet.** They were thrown alive into the lake of fire without experiencing natural death and going to Hades. They are the only two lost souls who apparently will not appear at the White Throne Judgment.

F. THE WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT (Revelation 20:11-15)

This is the final judgment of all men who have no part in the first resurrection. From Adam to the last man killed in the final battle of Gog and Magog, none shall escape. All men, small and great, shall appear; kings and peasants, wealthy and poor, all will be there. The throne is described as being great and white. All will stand before a great Judge and none will escape. The judgment will be righteous, just, and fair. The greatness and whiteness suggest power and purity.

There are at least three different books opened here (Revelation 20:12). These books are:

1. The Word of God
2. Book of remembrance, where a record of man's life is kept
3. Book of Life

There are two things considered in this final judgment:

1. Works: Every man judged according to his works
2. Book of Life: If a person's name is not found in the Book of Life, he is thrown into the lake of fire.

It is at this time that two things come to a complete end: death and Hades. Death is end of life here upon earth as far as a man's body is concerned; Hades is the prison house for the spirits of lost souls awaiting resurrection. Both are destroyed at this time, and it will mean the end of all enemies of man. It is clearly stated that the last enemy to be destroyed is death; therefore, there will be no more enemies (I Corinthians 15:26).

Lesson Eleven

NEW JERUSALEM

Text: Revelation 21

A. A PREPARED PLACE (John 14:2, 3)

“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2). It is often said that Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. This is true. While the bride, the church, is making herself ready on earth, Jesus is preparing her eternal home. This eternal home is New Jerusalem.

Abraham looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11: 10). God’s people are only strangers and pilgrims here on earth. They look forward to a better country. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God and hath prepared for them a city (Hebrews 11:16).

B. DESCRIPTION OF NEW JERUSALEM (Revelation 21:2-27)

New Jerusalem is a literal city. However, the residents cannot be disassociated from the actual city. A city is usually described and designated by the character of its people.

There are those who would spiritualize New Jerusalem and claim that the description is that of the church. They refer to the statement of one of the seven angels, “Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife” (Revelation 21:9). In reply to this it might be pointed out that Babylon was an adulterous religious system (Revelation 17), but Babylon was also a city (Revelation 18:10). Hence Babylon was both a literal city and an apostate religion represented by a harlot. Likewise, New Jerusalem is a literal city, the dwelling place of the bride, but also the bride herself. When the city is seen, one will also see the bride, the church.

The description of New Jerusalem is given too much in exact detail to spiritualize. If gold doesn’t mean gold and exact measurements do not mean real dimensions, then the Bible cannot be counted on to give anything reliably.

Apparently the city is a giant cube, twelve thousand furlongs to each side. There are approximately eight furlongs in a mile, making the size of the city fifteen hundred miles. This means that the city is fifteen hundred miles long and wide. It is also fifteen hundred miles high.

The walls are 144 cubits thick. A cubit is the distance between the elbow and the finger tip which is approximately eighteen inches. This means that the walls are 216 feet thick.

The city will possess a dazzling beauty. In this world, precious gems are used in jewelry for the purpose of display in adorning a person. There, the street will be paved with gold and the twelve foundations, laid one above the other, will be made of precious jewels. Each gate will be covered with a magnificent pearl and the walls between the foundations will be jasper. All the colors of the rainbow will be seen in the foundations: gold, blue, green, red, violet, purple, and yellow. The walls of clear jasper will give a beauty in keeping with the glory of God. Never has man seen in this world anything that can compare to the glory of New Jerusalem. There is no way in which mortal man, earth-bound and restricted by the limitations of the flesh, can understand the glorious beauty of New Jerusalem. This will be a brand new dimension which man has not yet experienced (I Corinthians 2:9).

C. THE PRESENCE OF GOD IN THE CITY (Revelation 21:3)

The greatest characteristic of the city is that of God's eternal presence. "The tabernacle of God is with men." The ancient Tabernacle in the wilderness represented God's presence and glory in the midst of Israel. Tabernacle means "the place where God dwells." This means that God will dwell with His saints for all eternity.

D. THE RESIDENCE OF NEW JERUSALEM

New Jerusalem is prepared as the eternal dwelling place for the bride, the church. Therefore, the chief residents of the city will be the saints. Those who have been redeemed from sin by the blood of the Lamb and been born again of water and spirit, will dwell there eternally.

However, the throne of God will be in it. This means that the angelic hosts will be there praising the Lord. It also means that the inhabitants of the new earth will have access to the city. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it (Revelation 21:26). The kings of the earth will bring their glory into it and the gates will never be shut (Revelation 21:25).

In spite of the fact that the dwellers of the new earth will have access to the city, the fact remains that it is the place prepared with many mansions to be the church's eternal home.

E. THE NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW JERUSALEM

The nature of the city is explicitly expressed by the statement of many negatives. The absence of things that bring pain and distress to us now, let us know the unspeakable joy of the eternal city:

1. No tears (Revelation 21:4)
2. No death (Revelation 21:4)
3. No sorrow (Revelation 21:4)
4. No pain (Revelation 21:4)
5. No night (Revelation 21:25)
6. No lies (Revelation 21:27)
7. No curse (Revelation 22:3)
8. No candle (Revelation 22:5)
9. No sun (Revelation 22:5)

Man's worst enemy, death, will have already been destroyed. Sin and death will be a thing of the past. In this life there is much suffering and sorrow. Many are mourning, and there is great heaviness of heart. In New Jerusalem, grief, pain, distress, travail, and weeping will not be found. This means that in the city will be perfect joy, laughter, singing, and rejoicing.

The first Paradise was perfect until sin entered and God had to pronounce a curse. In New Jerusalem there will be no sin and the result of sin will not be found.

The nature of the city is also shown by the absence of the following wicked men:

1. *Fearful*. All those who because of fear and cowardice refuse to live for God here will be shut out of the holy city.
2. *Unbelieving*. The sin of unbelief will cause them to be banished from the presence of God.
3. *Abominable*. These are polluted and contaminated with the filthy evils of this world.
4. *Murderers*. There is a growing disregard for the value of human life. All murderers will be shut out.
5. *Whoremongers*. These are fornicators who regard lightly the ruin of virtue. There is no place for them in the city.
6. *Sorcerers*. All persons who practice witchcraft and demon worship shall not gain entrance to the city foursquare.

7. *Idolaters*. Those who worship false gods will not be found in the presence of God.
8. *Liars*. God condemns all liars and has ordained that no liars will be found there.

In the last verse of Revelation 21 is a repetition emphasizing the fact that anything that defiles, works abominations, or makes a lie, will not gain entrance to New Jerusalem. All of this lets us know that the eternal home of the church is holy and absolutely pure in every respect.

F. THE FINAL DESTINY OF THE HOLY CITY

It would seem as we study the Scriptures that New Jerusalem is seen coming down accompanying Jesus Christ as He returns to reign during the Millennium. If this is true, then there are two areas that the holy city will be seen: during the Millennium and its eternal location.

The Writer's Opinion

It is the opinion of the writer that during the Millennium, the reign of Christ upon earth, New Jerusalem will descend and be suspended above earth like a satellite. In all probability, this position will be in the air over the city of Jerusalem in Palestine.

Concerning the eternal location, the Bible is more specific. In the new heaven and the new earth, after the White Throne Judgment, New Jerusalem will descend and rest upon the new earth.

Following the short season, which is terminated with the destruction of the earth, there will be a horrifying scene where the elements will melt and the earth will be burned up. The apostle Peter has described this in his second epistle. During the terrible conflagration of judgment, New Jerusalem will withdraw into outer space. It will then settle permanently upon the new earth. It will become the capital city of the new earth and the throne of God will be located in the city.

Lesson Twelve

THE EPILOGUE

Text: Revelation 22

A. NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH (Revelation 21:1)

As far as the chronological order of events is concerned, Revelation closes with the statement, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth.”

With Revelation 22:2, eternity begins. In eternity God has chosen to reveal very little to us beyond the fact that there will be a new heaven and a new earth. Before there can be a new earth, the old planet must be destroyed. The apostle Peter has described this in his second epistle, “But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men” (II Peter 3:7).

There are three heavens: the atmospheric heaven; the stellar heaven, which contains the great galaxies; and the third Heaven, where God’s throne is located.

The atmospheric heaven is Satan’s domain. He is the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2). When God destroys the earth in judgment, the heaven also must be consumed. No trace of evil must remain to contaminate the new heaven and new earth. The Bible does not indicate that the stellar heaven will be destroyed. In all probability, the galaxies and stars in outer space will remain untouched; however, it is certain that this world will be purged by fire, and nothing that is unclean and impure will remain.

In the new heaven and new earth all things become eternal. Here we live in a changing, transitory world measured by time. In the new earth there will be no night, no moon, and no sun. Therefore, there will be no days, no months, no seasons, nor years. There will be no more seasons with the burning heat of a summer sun nor the frigid blasts of a winter blizzard. Eternity will not be measured by the clock or calendar. It will be measured by the ceaseless cycles of unending ages.

We are not told the location of the new earth nor its size. To discuss its size would be only speculation. We only know that it will be large enough for New Jerusalem to rest upon it as the capital city. We also know that the entire earth will be habitable. Two-thirds of the present planet is covered with water. A large part of the remainder is useless because of mountains and deserts. The new earth will consist of one large, beautiful garden.

B. RIVER OF LIFE (Revelation 22:1)

On the new earth there will be no more sea (Revelation 21:1). There will be, however, a river of life flowing out from the throne, watering the whole earth. The river will contain no impurities and will be clear as crystal. It will be pure and clean.

The throne will be located in the capital city, New Jerusalem. The fact that the river of life flows out from the throne would mean that New Jerusalem will be situated upon the point of highest elevation.

On both sides of the river will be growing the Tree of Life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit. There will be fresh fruit ripening continuously. The leaves of the Tree of Life will have healing properties. The fact that they are for the healing of nations informs us that the new earth will be inhabited with nations.

We should always keep in mind that the church's eternal home is New Jerusalem, which will rest upon the new earth. This literally will be "Heaven on earth."

C. EPILOGUE (Revelation 22:6-21)

An epilogue is a postscript which is added to a book to give more information and further explanation concerning the facts and characters of the book. The wonderful prophecy of Revelation has an epilogue which begins with Revelation 22:6. This epilogue contains a grand finale which begins with Revelation 22:11.

In this epilogue, there is a recapitulation of some facts of the joys of Heaven. We find also written here some solemn warnings and some glorious promises. The student should study this epilogue very carefully and even memorize portions of it.

D. THE GRAND FINALE (Revelation 22:11-20)

In the final verses of Revelation, there is a burst of praise, promise, and warning. It is

sounded forth with great emphasis, undoubtedly to leave an indelible impression upon the hearts and minds of the reader of Revelation.

Here we find the finality of it all. There will be no further changes and no opportunities to repent and get right with God. “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still . . . let him be holy still” (Revelation 22:11).

Those who enter eternity unrighteous will remain unrighteous; those who enter eternity holy will be holy throughout eternity.

E. THREE INVITATIONS (Revelation 22:17)

The gospel message has always been an invitation to come: “Come unto me, all ye that labour” (Matthew 11:28); “Come unto the marriage” (Matthew 22:4). In Revelation 22:17, we have the gospel call sounded forth in a triple call. It is the heart throb of our Lord that all men hear and heed the invitation. As in a great anthem that is heralded forth in the finale of the Revelation, the gospel message is repeated three times. This call goes forth from the Holy Spirit, the bride (the church), and all who hear. It is concluded with a special invitation to all who thirst. It should be noted that it is not just the “whosoever” that may drink freely from the water of life, but rather it is the “whosoever will.” The Bible opened with a choice being given to Adam and closes with a choice. Man was created a free will agent and always will remain as such. The “whosoever will” may come and drink freely.

F. A SOLEMN WARNING (Revelation 22:18-19)

The importance of not tampering with the Word of God is seen in this final solemn warning: If a man shall add unto the prophecy, God will add to him the plagues written in the book; if a man shall subtract, he shall lose his part from the book of life.

The grave seriousness of changing God’s Word is emphasized here. We see the inviolability of the things recorded in this book. So important is the message in the Revelation that God solemnly warns every man not to tamper with its contents.

G. THE LAST PROMISE (Revelation 22:20)

As the book comes to a close, our Lord assures the church that He is coming again:

1. “Surely, I come quickly” (Revelation 22:20).

2. “Behold, I come quickly” (Revelation 22:7).
3. “And behold, I come quickly” (Revelation 22:12).

With the promise is given an exhortation to obey the Word and keep the sayings of the prophecy. The assurance of a final reward is also given. Payday is coming. When He comes, He will reward every man according to his work. At that moment, faithfulness will receive its due reward.

The emphasis placed upon this last promise should cause all of us to realize that the promise will be fulfilled. The word *quickly* means “speedily, rapidly.” When our Lord comes for His own, it will be with lightning-like speed. He will come with such suddenness that the unprepared will have no time to get ready. He will not come for a church who is getting ready, but for a church who is ready.

H. THE LAST PRAYER (Revelation 22:20)

Apart from the benediction in verse twenty-one, the final prayer of the Bible is found here, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

John’s last words are a fitting climax to the Revelation. This undoubtedly was John’s prayer for the Lord to come for the church and to come speedily. In writing these words by divine inspiration, the apostle was uttering the prayer of the entire church. As our Lord repeats His promise three times, “I come quickly,” the church everywhere and throughout church history, from John’s day to our day, cries out with joyful anticipation, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Daniel and Revelation II

Lesson Two

Mark the following statements true or false.

1. _____ Trumpets were blown for various purposes.
2. _____ The blowing of the first trumpet brings hail and fire mingled with blood which destroys one-third of all vegetation.
3. _____ The blowing of the second trumpet has no effect on the sea life.
4. _____ One-third of the earth's water becomes a deadly liquid as the result of the blowing of the third trumpet.
5. _____ The forth trumpet results in total darkness on the earth.
6. _____ The fifth trumpet restores peace and joy on the earth.
7. _____ The sixth trumpet results in one-third of the human race dying.
8. _____ Because of the judgments resulting from the sounding of the trumpets, the inhabitants of the earth bow in repentance.
9. _____ John recorded what he heard the seven thunders utter.
10. _____ In Revelation 10, the Lord declares that "time should be no longer."

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Daniel and Revelation II

Lesson Four

Mark each of the following statements as true or false.

1. _____ Revelation 11:15 is the key verse for this wonderful book.
2. _____ The temple will be rebuilt upon earth in Jerusalem.
3. _____ During the latter half of the Tribulation, two supernatural beings will appear on earth.
4. _____ The two witnesses are John the Baptist and Peter.
5. _____ The great red dragon is the devil.
6. _____ The woman clothed with the sun in chapter 12 is the United States of America.
7. _____ The man child of chapter twelve is Jesus Christ.
8. _____ During the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation, there will be intense anti-Semitism.
9. _____ A remnant of Israel will turn to Jesus Christ during the Tribulation period.
10. _____ Saints of all ages have overcome the accuser by the blood of the Lamb and the world of their testimonies.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Daniel and Revelation II

Lesson Five

Fill in the blanks.

1. The phrase, "And after these things," shows _____ order.
2. God never leaves Himself with a _____.
3. _____ will be sealed from the _____ tribes of Israel.
4. The angel delays the judgments until the servants of God are _____.
5. The tribes _____ and _____ are left out of the listing of the twelve tribes of Israel.
6. The latter part of chapter seven describes the great multitude of redeemed people from _____.
7. The 144,000 are the firstfruits of the nation of _____.
8. The multitude of redeemed people has been cleansed by the blood of the _____.
9. The redeemed serve God _____ and _____ in His _____.
10. The 144,000 accept Jesus as their long-looked for _____.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Daniel and Revelation II

Lesson Six

Fill in the blanks.

1. A _____ system is foretold in Revelation 13.
2. In Daniel 7, the Gentile kingdoms are portrayed as a _____, a _____, and a _____.
3. The apostle Paul call the Antichrist “the _____.”
4. The two personages who will control the world during the last half of the Tribulation are two Satan-controlled men who are called _____.
5. _____ is in opposition to Christ while at the time imitates our Lord.
6. The _____ will give the beast power and authority to rule over the world.
7. The false _____ is the head of the church federation.
8. The miracles that the _____ will perform are by the power of Satan.
9. _____ now makes it possible to assign every one in the world a number.
10. Bible prophecy is one more proof of the _____ of God’s Word.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Daniel and Revelation II

Lesson Seven

Mark the following statements as true or false.

1. _____ Armageddon refers to a hilly area in North America.
2. _____ The Battle of Armageddon ends the Tribulation and begins the Millennium.
3. _____ The battle takes place with the pouring forth of the seventh vial judgment.
4. _____ Jesus is seen coming on a white horse, accompanied with armies of Heaven also riding on white horses and clothed in fine linen.
5. _____ Armageddon is likened to a winepress which is trodden by Jesus Christ.
6. _____ At the Battle of Armageddon, the armies which come up against Jerusalem will be led by King Nebuchadnezzar.
7. _____ Jesus will descend to earth upon the Mount of Olives.
8. _____ The devil will be bound and locked up in the bottomless pit for two thousand years.
9. _____ The Gentile kingdoms of the Antichrist will continue throughout the Millennium.
10. _____ The beast and false prophet will be thrown alive into the lake of fire.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Daniel and Revelation II

Lesson Eight

Mark each of the following statements as true or false.

1. _____ Nimrod built the original tower of Babel.
2. _____ The false church which dominates the world at this time is called a harlot.
3. _____ The harlot church is identified by the fact that she is situated on seven mountains.
4. _____ The judgment of ecclesiastical Babylon will take place after the Millennium.
5. _____ Babylon is drunk with the wine of her fornication and the blood of the martyrs.
6. _____ The ten horns of the scarlet-colored beast represent the ten nations of the revived Roman Empire.
7. _____ The political forces of Antichrist will admire and embrace the harlot church.
8. _____ One of the outstanding characteristics of the beast is blasphemy.
9. _____ In regards to the harlot church, the word *mystery* means “secret.”
10. _____ The adulterous religious system is universal.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Daniel and Revelation II

Lesson Nine

Fill in the blanks.

1. The marriage of the Lamb is the crowning climax to _____ purpose of God.
2. *Hallelujah* comes from a Hebrew word meaning “_____”
3. The Lamb is the _____; the _____ the bride.
4. The wedding guests are the _____ saints and the _____ saints.
5. The marriage takes place just before _____ re turns to earth to reign in His _____.
6. “And his wife hath made herself _____” (Revelation 19:7).
7. The bride’s wedding dress is described as the fine _____, clean and _____, which is the _____ of the saints.
8. The marriage supper takes place after the _____.
9. The center of attention will be the _____; all honor will be given to _____.
10. The _____ was chosen to praise of the Bridegroom’s glory.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Self Help Test: Daniel and Revelation II

Lesson Ten

Mark each of the following statements as true or false.

1. _____ *Millennium* means one thousand years.
2. _____ Premillennialism is scriptural and was the unanimous view of the church for the first three hundred years.
3. _____ The Millennium will be a time of war and great hardship on earth.
4. _____ During the Millennium Satan will be unable to deceive the nations any longer.
5. _____ The earth will be populated during the Millennium.
6. _____ Satan will be loosed for a short season following the Millennium.
7. _____ The second resurrection will take place just after the White Throne Judgment.
8. _____ Enoch and Elijah will be raised in the first resurrection.
9. _____ The beast and false prophet were thrown into the lake of fire.
10. _____ The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

