

- c. Little do they realize that they are about to do battle with the King of Kings and all His resources and followers (all they would have to do is pick up a King James Bible in any Wal-Mart and read the Revelation; anything but believe the Book!).

### 3. Declaring war on the Lamb Who is the Lord: v.14a

- a. The outcome of this battle is pre-ordained and written in advance: *"the Lamb shall overcome them..."*
- b. These nations and their armies are delivered to the Beast for his purpose, but they are delivered by the Lamb according to His purpose!

4. Declaring war on the saints who are His subjects: v.14b *"(the) called, chosen and faithful..."*— Greek: *kletos, ekletos and pistos*); perhaps many other believers are left behind in glory who were not faithful!?!?

**ILLUS.:** Remember how the Lord narrowed down Gideon's army from 22,000 to 10,000 to 300? (The "called, chosen and faithful!") All believers are His children, some of them are chosen by Him for specific ministries, and a few of them remain faithful to Him throughout their life and ministry.

### G. Her Unavoidable Purging: vv.15-18

#### 1. Practical hatred for the Whore of Babylon: vv.15,16

- a. These kings hate the whore because she represents a threat to their own power and position.
- b. This parasitic religious whore has boasted of her control over the nations for centuries and has claimed that she and she alone is the "one true Church."

**QUOTES:** Pope Gregory VII: "It is laid down that the Roman Pontiff is universal bishop, that his name is the only one of its kind in the world. To him alone it belongs to depose or reconcile bishops...He alone may use the ensigns of the empire; all princes are bound to kiss his feet, he has the right to depose emperors, and to absolve subjects from their allegiance. He holds in his hands the supreme mediation in questions of war and peace, and he alone may adjudge contested successions to kingdoms – all kingdoms are held as fiefs under Peter (Pope)...and the Roman Church never errs...The pope is above all judgment."

Pope John Paul II: "(People) need to know which of these churches (Protestant or Catholic) is that of Christ, since He founded only one Church – the only one capable of speaking in His name."

On salvation: "There is no salvation outside the Roman Catholic Church."

On Scripture: "Catholic tradition has divine authority, and is to be equated with the Word of God...the Apocrypha is also the Word of God."

The teaching authority (the Magisterium) of the Church is the final and only correct interpreter of the Bible."

On Mary: "Mary was born without sin, is sinless, ascended bodily into heaven and is a 'co-redemptrix,' 'mediatrix,' and 'Queen of Heaven' in God's plan of salvation. She is to be venerated, worshipped, and offers all the graces of Christ to men who adore her, whether in the Church or at thousands of her shrines and altars throughout the world. She is necessary for the salvation of the world."

- 1) She is detested: "these shall hate the whore..."
- 2) She is despoiled: "shall make her desolate..."
- 3) She is disgraced: "make her...naked..."
- 4) She is devoured: "shall eat her flesh..."
- 5) She is destroyed: "burn her with fire..."

#### 2. Providential hatred for the Whore of Babylon: v.17

- a. The most demonic, daring, devilish, insolent, powerful, and blasphemous coalition of nations ever brought together by godless, wicked men is shown to be a mere tool in the hands of a sovereign God to wreak His vengeance towards that which has provoked His wrath for centuries.

**ILLUS.:** Men and nations are given certain freedoms and autonomy, but everything is subject to the limits of God's Word and His will, since "the Scriptures cannot be broken..." History is in fact, "His-story"! God's unfolding plan for man is like a drama being played out with a pre-written script. The actors may have certain freedom of expression and may ad lib, but they cannot change the outcome.

The tension in a good mystery may have many twists and turns and the outcome seems uncertain at any point in time, till all the "suspects" are gathered "into the drawing room" and one by one they are eliminated and Sherlock Holmes reveals the culprit. Finally everything falls into place and it is "elementary, my dear Watson."

- b. These religionists will no longer be needed once the Beast becomes world Emperor and declares himself to be God and men worship him!
- c. These kings jump at the chance to destroy and devour the great whore who has been a parasite over the centuries, bleeding them of their wealth and power.

#### 3. Political hatred for the Whore of Babylon: v.18



- a. They hate her because she claimed to have the absolute right to rule over all nations.
- b. The popes of Rome wear a triple crown declaring their sovereignty over all realms: sacred, temporal & political.

**ILLUS.:** The Whore will be shocked at her overthrow by the Beast she has been riding; the Beast will be shocked at his overthrow by the Lamb he has been opposing, and the kings will be shocked at their overthrow by the King of kings and the knowledge that they have been doing God's will, when they were openly rebelling against God's will.

## **XIX. A TALE OF TWO CITIES: Rev. 18**

**ILLUS.:** There is a definite link between economics and ecclesiastical power in the rise and fall of nations and kingdoms. The amalgamation of church and state and of government and religion is seen in every world power in history. Each uses the other for mutual benefits and control. (This is what has made America unique, in that from its inception there has been a recognition that government should never favor a particular religion.) These two "cities" are **Papal Babylon** (Rome) and **pagan Babylon** (the rebuilt city), or **religious Babylon** and **commercial Babylon**, or as someone described them, **symbolic Babylon** and **literal Babylon**.

In World War II, Nazi Germany under the leader of the maniacal Fuehrer, Adolph Hitler, the Church of Rome entered into an agreement called a Concordat so that Catholicism would "look the other way" while Hitler marched into one country after another, in exchange for protection of its cathedrals, churches, priests and people.

**QUOTE:** Hunt, p.220-222, A Woman Rides The Beast. "One of the benefits of the Concordat was that hundreds of millions of dollars would flow to the RCC through the Kirchensteuer (church tax) throughout the entire war. In return, (Pope) Pius XII would never excommunicate Hitler from the Catholic Church (!), nor would he raise his voice to protest the slaughter of six million Jews...Leading Catholic prelates...were ecstatic at the signing of the 1933 Concordat...The Vatican was so appreciative of being recognized as a full partner (with Nazi Germany) that it asked God to bless the Reich...(and) ordered German bishops to swear allegiance to the National Socialist (Nazi) regime. The new oath concluded with these words: 'In the performance of my spiritual office and in my solicitude for the welfare and the interest of the German Reich, I will endeavor to avoid all detrimental acts which might endanger it.'" ("On Hitler's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday special votive masses were celebrated in every German [Roman Catholic] church 'to implore God's blessing upon the Fuehrer (Hitler) and people'...nor did the Pope fail to send his congratulations.")

### **A. The Announcement of Babylon's Fall:**

**NOTE:** Some believe that the "Babylon" in this chapter is **economic Babylon**, not **ecclesiastical Babylon**, as in chapter 17. Thus "A Tale of Two Cities." If that is so, the Babylon in this chapter is the actual city of Babylon rebuilt during the Tribulation (This is the author's view). The other option is that this is dealing with the commercial aspects of MYSTERY BABYLON or the Roman Catholic Church.

The term "after these things" in v.1 suggests the destruction of "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS" has already taken place in chapter 14-18. "Another angel" in v.1 is different than "one of the seven angels which had the seven vials." THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS is destroyed by the kings of the earth (17:16) whereas the Babylon the Great of ch. 18 will be destroyed by the judgments of God. The kings of the earth destroy the MOTHER OF HARLOTS, but the kings and merchants of the earth weep and lament over the destruction of Babylon the Great. (18:9-15)

1. The unusual angel: v.1
  - a. He is unique, powerful, and his glory is so bright it lightens the entire earth!
  - b. Darkness has prevailed, and there is at least momentary relief because of the light of this angel, but it is short lived when the people realize its source.
2. The unprecedented announcement: v.2
  - a. This announcement is the fulfillment of an ancient prophecy concerning the total destruction of Babylon.

**Isaiah 13:19-22** And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

- b. The literal city of Babylon may be rebuilt on the ruins of ancient Babylon and becomes the great commercial capital of the world during the Tribulation period.

**ILLUS.:** Saddam Hussein saw himself as the reincarnation of Nebuchadnezzar and attempted to literally rebuild the ancient city of Babylon. I have seen photos of this new city and of Hussein posing in front of its gates as its King.

3. The ungodly activities: v.3
  - a. Financial power is greater than political or even military power.
  - b. The "love of money is the root of all evil" and the money lovers of this world have lived with the spirit of Babylon dominating their lives for centuries and have literally controlled the nations of the earth.



## B. The Appeal to Babylon's Saints: vv.4-6

1. God thunders from heaven and warns any of the remnant of believers still associated with this monstrous, and ungodly mess, to desert her before her final destruction. Vv.4-6

**QUESTION:** Just who are these "people"? Tribulation saints? (Unlikely since they would be severely persecuted by the Antichrist.) Tribulation Jews? (Possibly since Jews have been involved in commercial business ventures over the centuries and dealing in high finance. Apparently God has a remnant of His people whom He desires to save before the final judgment upon Babylon.)

### a. Separate from the sins of Babylon.

- 1) God's people are always to be separatists, both religiously, politically and personally.
- 2) The sins of Babylon are the love of money, covetousness and materialism.

### b. Separate from the sentence of Babylon.

- 1) Separation, not compromise or cooperation, is to be the action of God's people in every age.
- 2) Cooperation with sin or compromise with sinners is always wrong and identifies God's people with the wrong crowd.
- 3) For these people it is God's final and forceful call.

## C. The Assessment of Babylon's Sins: vv.5-8

1. The "tower" (like the ancient tower of Babel) of her sins: v.5
2. The terror of her judgment: v.6

### a. Here the law of double punishment is stated.

**Exodus 22:4,7,9** If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore *double*. If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house; if the thief be found, let him pay *double*. For all manner of trespass, whether it be for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, or for any manner of lost thing, which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay *double* unto his neighbour.

### b. The long suffering of God is over; the time for double judgment has come.

3. The tragedy of her pollution: v.7
4. The totality of her destruction: v.8

**ILLUS.:** This is no ordinary fire. Possibly the great earthquake belches fire and brimstone, or maybe the great reserves of nuclear missiles (WMD's) stored in Babylon or Baghdad (50 miles to the south) detonate. Or perhaps God just rains fire from heaven. In any event God triggers the destruction! ("...for strong is the Lord God Who judgeth her.")

## XX. THE DAY OF RECKONING: Rev. 18:7-20

**ILLUS.:** The continuing saga of the destruction of commercial or literal Babylon continues. In chapter 17 the kings of the earth rejoiced over the destruction of the symbolic or religious whore called "THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS." Here in chapter 18 the kings of the earth mourn the destruction of literal Babylon.

**NOTE:** During the early part of the Tribulation the governments of the earth strike deals with the Antichrist which pay off handsomely in wealth, luxury, security, and power. "Mystery Babylon" (the religious whore) sits astride the Beast (the head of the commercial whore) who will rebuild literal Babylon, which apparently will become the world's greatest city controlling the wealth of the world. (Even now – after the war against Iraq, it remains the most oil rich country in the world). The great ecumenical prostitute is then overthrown (cf. 17:16), and the Beast assumes total control of the world's governmental leaders, who derive great riches and power with him.

The nations who have aligned themselves with the Antichrist continue to hope that he will use his demonic hosts and tremendous supernatural powers to finally overcome the Lord and His hosts. So they join forces with him militarily and march toward Armageddon for a final showdown. Meanwhile back in Babylon God unleashes fantastic power to destroy the Antichrist's earthly headquarters...

**TRANS.:** The Antichrist's arrogance prompts an imprecation (prayer for judgment) against her (v.6,7), so verse 8 begins with "therefore..." - God's response to this prayer for vengeance.

## A. The Great Day of Judgment: v.8

1. Catastrophe that seemed impossible.

**ILLUS.:** Judgment is always surprising! Everyone believes they will somehow be exempt. They think it won't happen to them. Every person who rejects Christ believes in their heart that hell is not real and that there is no day of reckoning coming.

- a. The judgment is sudden: "one day," (v.8), "one hour," (v.10), "one hour," (v.17)
- b. The judgment is severe "death, mourning and fire...burned with fire..." (v.8)

2. Catastrophe that is scripturally imperative:

- a. Because of Babylon's wickedness, Antichrist's leadership and God's justice.
- b. Men often mistake God's long-suffering with weakness; they think that because punishment is not swift, it will never come.

B. The Great Day of Mourning: vv.9-16

1. The world's monarchs mourn. vv.9,10
2. The world's merchants mourn. vv.11-16

**ILLUS.:** John gives us a veritable "catalog of opulence" describing the "merchants" i.e., the real powers behind the thrones of this world. He lists 28 commodities, most likely representative and not intended to be exhaustive. (28 = 4 X 7; four being the number of the earth [N.S.E.W.], and seven being the number of completeness) The list begins with gold and ends with the souls of men. Both religious and commercial Babylon are most interested in gold and least interested in souls. The emphasis of God's Word for God's people is reversed! "No Catholic priest ever attempts to win a soul to Jesus Christ, he always tries to convert a family to the Roman Catholic Church." - Ruckman

3. The world's mariners mourn. vv. 17b-19

C. The Great Day of Rejoicing: v.20

1. Holocaust on earth.
2. Hallelujahs in heaven.
  - a. The monarchs, merchants and mariners wept on earth.
  - b. The saints, apostles and prophets rejoice and shout in heaven.

**NOTE:** This is not a picture of believers rejoicing over others sufferings, it is rejoicing that Satan is conquered, sin fails and God triumphs. It is rejoicing that vengeance for the blood of the saints and martyrs has finally come. What the world rejoices in then they will weep over then. What believers weep over now they will rejoice over then.

D. The Great Day of Vengeance: vv. 21-24

1. The judgment is swift and severe. v.21

**Jeremiah 51:63-64** And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: And thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary. Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

**QUOTE:** Morris: "Suddenly the whole Mesopotamian plain will drop down, as a great chasm opens in the deep crust. The entire Euphrates valley will be inundated as the waters of the Persian Gulf roar into the gaping hole. Babylon will thus sink into both the Euphrates and the encroaching sea, and all her proud buildings will lie unseen far below the waves as long as the world endures."

**Jeremiah 51:41b-42** How is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof.

2. The judgment is complete and just. V.22 **"no more..."** (this phrase or its equivalent occurs 8 times in this passage)
  - a. The world's music will be stopped: "harpers...musicians...pipers and trumpeters" v.22a **"no more!"**
  - b. The world's machines & millstones will halt production: "craftsman...millstone..." v.22b **"no more!"**
  - c. The world's sneering mirth will be drowned out: "bridegroom...and bride" v.23a **"no more!"**
  - d. The world's rich merchants will become poor: "merchants..." v.23b **"no more!"**
  - e. The world's manipulators will be finished: "great men...sorceries" v.23c **"no more!"**



- f. The world's murderers will be killed: "the blood of prophets, and of saints and of all that were slain upon the earth..." **"no more!"**

## **XXI. THE HALLELUJAH CHORUS: Rev. 19:1-6**

**NOTE:** This chapter is divided into two distinct sections. The first speaks of joy in heaven and the other speaks of judgment on earth; it begins with alleluias in heaven and ends with Armageddon on earth. The first section deals with the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (v.7) and the second section closes with the horrible and ghastly Supper of the Great God (v.17). It opens with a wedding and closes with warfare...

### **A. The Hallelujah of Redemption: v.1 (*Praise for the salvation of God*)**

1. The great choir: "...a great voice of much people..."

**ILLUS.:** The reason for this time of unparalleled praise to God is that the saints finally see things from God's unique perspective. From the human viewpoint Christ's crucifixion is the greatest event in history, but from God's vantage point Christ's Second Coming is the most important event in His program! All heaven breaks out in praise to the Lord in the light of Who He is and what has been and what will be happening...

- a. The human ear is capable of hearing a very limited ranges of sounds, so the thunderous voice of the great choir must have been deafening to John or God supernaturally equipped him to handle the volume & intensity
- b. Heaven will be a noisy place, but it will not be the inharmonious din of rock, rap, and country music, but the sweet sounds of the saints and angels in heaven praising the Lord.
- c. The subject of all this praise is the salvation He has provided.

**NOTE:** This is the first mention of the word Hallelujah ("Alleluia" – praise to Jehovah) in the New Testament and it is interesting and instructive that its subject is salvation. Only "people" (the saint of the Tribulation, I believe) are included here – others get involved later (v.4 "elders" and v.6 "a great multitude").

### **B. The Hallelujah of Retribution: vv.2,3 (*Praise for the severity of God*)**

1. The great whore:

- a. God has finally dealt with both the religious whore and the commercial whore, Mystery Babylon and monstrous Babylon; both of whom have harassed, persecuted, tortured and slain the saints over the centuries.
- b. Heaven is ecstatic over the justice and judgment of God; finally believers are vindicated via God's vengeance.
- c. The permanence and severity of the judgment is emphasized in v.3: "...and her smoke rose up for ever and ever".

### **C. The Hallelujah of Realization: vv.4,5 (*Praise for the sovereignty of God*)**

1. The great King:

- a. The twenty-four elders apparently represent both Israel (the 12 patriarchs) and the Church (the 12 Apostles).
- b. This "hallelujah" is a recognition and realization of God's greatness.
- c. To worship means to bow down to the will of God, acknowledging that what He says is true and what He does is right.
- d. Jesus is seated on the throne holding the title deed to the planet and all His purchased possessions in the universe. (Cf. chapter 5)

### **D. The Hallelujah of Christ's Reign: v.6 (*Praise for the supremacy of God*)**

1. The great Ruler: "...Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!"

- a. The great choir in heaven – saints and angels – all the beings in glory sing His praises because the prayers of God's people: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven..." is very near fulfillment.
- b. This is the moment all heaven has been waiting for; when every knee shall bow" and submit to their King...

**Psalms 24:8 Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.**

## **XXII. THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB: Rev. 19:7-9**

**NOTE:** Weddings are often lavish affairs, but by far the most lavish wedding ever will be the one in our text! The Wedding will not only be fantastic, but every detail will be cared for. What a beautiful ceremony it will be. The Reception (The Marriage Supper) will be a catered affair; the food and drink will be the best ("...I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. Mt.26:29) The guests will be practically innumerable. The date, time and place has been fixed and will be announced later. Some details are spelled out in our text...

#### A. The Marriage: vv.7,8

1. The joyous occasion – the wedding:
  - a. The place is heaven. cf. v.1
  - b. The false suitors are eliminated. v.2
  - c. The formal wedding music has been played. vv.4-6
  - d. The guests and participants rejoice. v.7

**ILLUS.:** The Lord has been planning for this event since creation. He had originally married Israel, but she became unfaithful. When she finally returns He will gladly receive His erring wife back into His loving fellowship. (Hosea 2:7,19,20) In the meantime the Lord's Son has espoused Himself to the Church, the Bride of Christ.

#### 2. The jubilant Bridegroom – the Lord:

**NOTE:** At this wedding it is the Groom, not the bride who is prominent: it is "the marriage of the LAMB."

#### 3. The justified bride – the Church:

- a. The bride's preparation – she is ready! V.7
- b. The bride's apparel – she is robed! V.8

**ILLUS.:** The bride wants to be introduced to the friends of the Bridegroom and to her Groom in the best possible light. She wants to be seen and welcomed into this new society and circle in which she will live clothed in her finest apparel. She adorns herself in that which she will appear with her Bridegroom in public to honor Him – her Head and her Husband. What a tragic thing if she were only to find moth-eaten garments – no fine linen. Or worse still, what if she shows up naked at her wedding! (Rev. 3:18; 1 Jn. 2:28)

The bride of Christ gets to heaven by being clothed in His righteousness, but will adorn herself with "the righteousness of the saints" – her own works which have passed through the Judgment Seat of Christ! What kind of garments will YOU wear at your wedding?

- c. The bride's treasures – rewards: (cf. 1 Cor.3:11-16)

#### B. The Marriage Supper: vv.9,10

**NOTE:** First came the bonding, then came the Bridegroom, next comes the banquet! If the wedding was glorious, the reception is fantastic!

1. The wedding consummated in heaven.
2. The reception commenced on earth (?).
3. The guests called: v.9a

**QUOTE:** Philipps: "Attention is drawn to the blessedness of the King's invited guests. The church is the bride, the redeemed of other ages are the wedding guests, the friends of the Bridegroom. In they come, rank after endless rank – the patriarchs, the prophets, the princes, the priests, the seers, the scribes, the sages and the saints – all whose names are written down in glory. They greet the Groom and the bride and take their places at the table; they are full of joy; they are blessed of God."

- a. The friends of the Bridegroom are present (O.T. saints, including John the Baptist).

**John 3:29** He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

- b. The wise "virgins" are present (Tribulation Jews).

**Luke 12:35-37** Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

**Matthew 25:10-11** And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.



c. The guests are present (Tribulation Gentiles)

**Matthew 22:8-10** Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.  
**10** So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

1) The time of this event is at the outset of Christ's earthly (Millennial) Kingdom.

**Matthew 26:29** But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

2) The theme of this event is the blood shed by Christ on Calvary.

**Matthew 26:27-28** And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

**NOTE:** John is so overwhelmed with all that He has been privileged to see, that he makes a giant blunder. He falls down at the feet of the angel presenting this vision in an act of worship. (v.10) He is immediately rebuked. All attention and worship must be directed solely to the Lamb, the Bridegroom, the Savior... **"Jesus"** (The Son of God in His **humanity** is the spirit, sum and substance of prophecy).

### **XXIII. THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON: Rev. 19:11-16**

**NOTE:** Armageddon! The word sends shivers down the spines of the unsaved. The world know that it will be the literal "War to end all wars" and that mankind will be the losers. That same word thrills the believer for he know that the final triumph of the Lord over the forces of Satan and the ungodly will finally become a reality.

Make no mistake, "...the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, but is longsuffering." Armageddon is on its way. Oh yes, Jesus is coming "...in flaming fire taking vengeance upon them who know not God and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

#### **A. His Matchless Names:**

1. His name of ministry: *"...Faithful and True" v.11*

- a. He came the first time to offer His Kingdom and salvation and was rejected and crucified; He will come again to impose His Kingdom and to "judge and make war" and He will be crowned victorious.
- b. He has proven Himself faithful and is truth personified and always acts in righteousness.

2. His name of mystery: *"...a name written that no man knew" v.12*

- a. Those under His judgment here scorned His precious Name when they could know Him, now He bears the name of mystery and they cannot know Him even if they would.
- b. Only the Father will ever know all about our Savior, though He is revealed to us in hundreds of names and titles.

3. His name of might: *"...the Word of God" v.13, cf. v.15a*

- a. Here is His name of power: *"...the Word of God is quick and powerful..."*
- b. When Armageddon arrives it will be a "no contest" war since Christ as the Word of God simply speaks to destroy the armies of Antichrist: *"...a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations"*

4. His name of majesty: *"...KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS..." v.16*

- a. Finally at Armageddon He is seen not just as the lowly "King of the Jews" but as He is truly, the King of the Universe!
- b. Now the government will finally be *"upon His shoulder..."* and all will see Him and bow down to Him, because of His matchless Name above every name.

#### **B. His Majestic Countenance:**

1. A Man of war: v.11b

**Exodus 15:3** The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.

- a. Here comes the KING OF KINGS riding on a supernatural white horse for "the spirit of the beast goeth down-



ward to the earth" and that 's the end of it.

- b. In His ministry on earth He reported to Pilate: "...*My Kingdom is not of this world: if My Kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight...but **NOW** is my Kingdom not from hence.*" Jn. 18:36
- c. Our Savior as King is about to declare war on the self-proclaimed king of the earth and all unbelief and will come out victorious in the most bloody battle in the history of the planet!

## 2. A Man of wonder: v.12a

1. His eyes are ablaze "...as a flame of fire" – no one will escape His judgment.
2. His head wears "many crowns" (diadema), possibly those usurped by the kings of the earth.
3. His "...*vesture (is) dipped in blood*" not the blood of Calvary as some suggest, but the blood of the battle of Armageddon.

**ILLUS.:** The Man of war and of wonder is seen riding through this vale of slaughter which extends from Edom, north to Jerusalem and on to Jerusalem.

**Isaiah 63:1-2** Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

**Revelation 14:20** And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

4. His mouth has a "*sharp sword*" coming out of it with which he shall "smite the nations" i.e., the Gentile nations for the "*times of the Gentiles*" have now come to an end.
5. His hand holds a "*rod of iron*" which becomes the King's scepter of just rule, demanding absolute obedience - a benevolent dictatorship.
6. His feet tread out the "*winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God...*" - this is a harvest of judgment and blood will run like the "*blood of the grape*" in a winepress.

**Proverbs 1:24-27** Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

## C. His mighty armies: v.14

### 1. Subjects of the King of Kings:

**Jude 14-15** And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

### 2. Soldiers of the Lord of Lords:

- a. Note that the troops are wearing "*fine linen, clean and white*" – unlike their Commander-in-Chief."
- b. His is "*dipped in blood*" while He protects His soldiers.

**Isaiah 63:3-4** I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.

**Joel 2:1-11** Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations. A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run. Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble, as a strong people set in battle array. Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining: And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?



**Zephaniah 1:15** That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,

**NOTE:** When Armageddon finally arrives, as horrible as it sounds, all God's people will rejoice. Unbelievers may say "Oh, no!" but God's people will say "Amen!" We will go up as the Church, but will come down with the Lord as a mighty army.

#### **XXIV. THE CONFRONTATION OF THE SUPERPOWERS: Rev. 19:17-21**

**NOTE:** Keep your eyes fixed on the Holy Land! It is the focal point of God's present and future dealings in judgment. It is the leading indicator of what time it is on God's prophetic clock.

The world fears a confrontation of superpowers on earth now, because of nuclear, biological and chemical arsenals stockpiled by nations, capable of destroying every person on the planet several times over. But there is coming a **"CONFRONTATION OF THE SUPERPOWERS"** far more powerful than any presently living. The Antichrist and False Prophet and their armies of devil-possessed followers and deceived disciples will march against the "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" at Armageddon.

An invitation to the redeemed saints of the ages had been issued by the Lord and they came to feast at the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb." Another invitation is issued for all the birds of prey and carrion-eating fowl from all over the world to feast on the flesh and blood of the slain multitudes at Armageddon...

##### **A. The Birds At Armageddon: (*The Vulturous Fowls*) vv.17-18**

###### **1. The gathering of the birds: v.17**

- a. The invitation is issued to the carrion-eating fowl worldwide to Armageddon since the outcome of this warfare is predetermined!
- b. What an awesome spectacle this must present to the armies below as the skies become darkened with circling birds of prey hovering overhead. *"THE BIRDS! THE BIRDS!"*

**QUOTE:** Phillips: "As the armies, assembled at the cockpit of the earth, stare in amazement at the appearing of the King of glory, their gaze is momentarily directed to the sun. There, standing in its glare, is an angel; at his summons, enormous flocks of birds appear, circling and wheeling around the armies of the earth, croaking to one another in anticipation of the coming feast, dipping low over the horrified troops...With each passing moment the sky grows darker with these birds of prey. There cannot be a vulture, an eagle, a raven, left on earth that has not obeyed the summons and come to the supper of God. Satan's armies are doomed; the fierce fowls know it and have come to bury the dead in the name of the living God."

###### **1. The gorging of the birds: v.18**

- a. It is ironic that as the armies of devils (symbolized in Scripture as birds) gather at Armageddon, God summons literal birds to eat their remains.
- b. These birds make no distinction among the victims; they feast on kings and generals, horses and horsemen, slaves and freemen, *"small and great."*

##### **B. The Battle of Armageddon: (*The Vanquished Foes*)**

###### **1. Mobilization of the armies: v.19,20a**

**Psalms 2:1-3** Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

**Acts 4:24-29a** And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

- a. Armies march across the plains of Galilee to deploy on the fields of Megiddo.
- b. Military equipment is stockpiled on the hills with weapons trained on the heavens.
- c. Fleets of ships ride at anchor in the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf.
- d. Miracles wrought by the False Prophet have encouraged the troops. v.20a
- e. The command is given to make war with *"Him that sat on the horse, and against His army..."*

###### **2. Destruction of the Supermen: v.20**

- a. The slashing of the *"sharp sword"* out of the King's mouth destroys the armies in a blood bath unequalled in human history. Cf. v.15



- b. With just the "Word of His power" the armies are destroyed.
- c. But a different fate awaits the two "supermen" who led those armies; they are cast alive into the lake of fire, the first to inhabit that eternal place of pain and torment, suddenly realizing they have been stripped of all power and are helpless before the Lamb of God.

### 3. Invasion from outer space: v.21

- a. Leaders and troops and even any remnant have been permanently dispatched.
- b. And the winged "clean up crew" takes care of the carnage – "...and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

**NOTE:** The long awaited and dreaded Battle of Armageddon and the CONFRONTATION OF THE SUPERPOWERS will be over in a matter of minutes! The Victor is the all-time, undisputed, Champion of Love, now revealed as the undefeated, KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS!

**TRANS.:** Before proceeding to the next chapter a few comments are in order. The King of kings has just conquered Satan and his armies at Armageddon. It is at this juncture that He sets up His earthly Kingdom, called **the Millennium**. So that you can't miss the subject the Holy Spirit mentions the Millennium (mille = 1000, annum = year) by the phrase "**thousand years**" which is mentioned *6 times* in the first *seven verses*.

Because of confusion among non-dispensationalists and/or those who refuse to take the Bible literally, several conflicting views have arisen. Biblical eschatology (the doctrine of future events) hinges on your view of these "thousand years."

1) First there is "**Premillennialism**" (*our view*) which takes a fully literal approach to the interpretation of this passage. This view states that Christ will personally return to the earth in glory, as in chapter 19, followed by the literal binding of a literal devil in the bottomless pit, while He and His saints reign on earth for this 1000 year period.

2) Next there is "**Postmillennialism**" which states that Christ will reign through His Church, which will have won the world to Him through its world-wide ministry of evangelism and teaching under the Great Commission. He will then show up after this "thousand years" (which they do not take literally, and see only as a symbolic time period). Satan's binding during this time is also spiritualized.

3) Then there is "**Amillennialism**" (no literal Millennium) which equates the Millennial Age with the Church Age. They say Christ will come back at the end of the Church Age for some kind of general judgment.

**ILLUS.:** The Millennium is the long awaited and hoped for period of "paradise on earth." It is the fulfillment of mankind's dream of Utopia; but man has never been able, nor will he ever be able, to bring about this idyllic world. Only when our Savior establishes His righteous rule on earth can the "heaven on earth" concept become a reality. But it will come and it is possibly only seven short (but bloody) years away...

**QUOTE:** John Philipps, *Exploring Revelation*, p.237 "The golden age has come. The armies of the nations have been (defeated and) disbanded, and the great military academies have fallen into ruin and decay. The machinery of war has all been smelted down and converted to the implements of peace ("...swords into plowshares"). Jerusalem has become the world's capital. The throne of David is there, and the twelve apostles are there judging the twelve tribes of Israel, for Israel rules the world. The millennial Temple has been built to crown Moriah's brow, and the nations of the earth come there to worship the living God. Prosperity is evident from pole to pole and from the new river, which now graces Jerusalem, to the ends of the earth. Poverty is unknown. Every man has all that heart can desire. There are no prisons, no hospitals, no mental institutions, no barracks, no saloons, no houses of ill repute, no gambling dens, no homes for the aged and infirm. Such things belong to a past and lesser age. The bloom of youth is on everyone's cheek, for a man is a stripling at a hundred years of age. Cemeteries are crumbling relics of the past, and tears are rare. The wolf and the lamb, the calf and the lion, the cow and the bear, the child and the scorpion, all are at peace. Jesus has come, and the Millennium is here...(He) rules with a rod of iron. His reign is righteous, and the nations obey. The principles of the Sermon on the Mount are the laws of the kingdom, and men obey them because infractions are not allowed. Sin is visited with swift and certain judgment. The era lasts for a thousand years."

[The popular song "*WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD*" could now be the theme song for this period in earth's bloody history.]

## XXV. THE ARREST AND IMPRISONMENT OF SATAN: Rev. 20:1-3

**NOTE:** The 1000 year reign of Christ begins when Satan is apprehended, arrested, bound and imprisoned. Postmillennialism is obviously false since Satan is anything but "bound" during this age!!!

**1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour...**

A. The Period of Satan's Imprisonment: vv. 1,2 "*...one thousand years*"

### 1. The Millennium:

**QUOTE:** Henry Morris, *The Revelation Record* "...with Satan bound for 1000 years, the world will be freed from its most virulent of source of evil. The awful physical trauma through which the earth had just passed during the seven years of its tribulation will not only have purged it of its human and demonic corruption but also, in considerable measure, of its natural deformities. Thus it will be prepared to serve appropriately as the physical setting of the great millennial messianic kingdom."

- a. The dispensational test involved with Satan's imprisonment is to see if man, without the direct or even indirect influence of Satan and his cohorts, will love, serve, and obey God.
- b. This will be a strange and unique period on earth with mortals and immortals dwelling together: those who survived the Tribulation – the believing Gentiles, the remnant of Israel (Rom. 11:26), and the resurrected



saints in glorified bodies who return with the Savior to begin His kingdom.

**ILLUS.:** All who inhabit the planet at the outset of the Millennium will apparently be saved. However, millions will be born during this 1000 year period who will need to be saved. That all do not get saved becomes obvious when Satan is loosed at the end of the Millennium and he finds a ready following to march against the Lord. vv. 7,8

- c. This will be a glorious and wonderful period when longevity of life will be restored, "peace on earth" becomes a reality, paradise lost is regained and violence, crime, and open rebellion, disappears.

**Isaiah 65:20-25** There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

- d. It will be a time when pre-flood conditions will prevail; the topography and geography of earth will have been dramatically altered during the cataclysm of the Tribulation.

**Isaiah 40:4** Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:

## B. The Place of Satan's Isolation: vv. 1,2 "...the bottomless pit"

### 1. The mysterious abyss:

**QUOTE:** Morris, IBID., "Somewhere deep in the center of the earth a prison cell has been reserved for a special prisoner, a cell in the remotest recesses of the bottomless pit. The Greek word for this central cavity is *abussos*, meaning literally 'without depth' or 'bottomless.' Modern translations call it the 'abyss' but 'bottomless' is a more precise derivation. Located at the very middle of the earth, one could not fall any deeper down, and every boundary is a ceiling. It seems that such a place will be Satan's confine during the millennium, as far removed from human beings as is possible to be on this planet.

- a. The Keeper: "an angel" – either Satan has been stripped of his powers so that an ordinary angel can now apprehend and arrest him (cf. Rev. 12:7), or this "angel" is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. (cf. Rev. 1:18)

### 2. Satan's identity: cf. Rev. 12:9

- a. "Dragon" identifies him as the wild beast and the power behind the Antichrist and the False Prophet and as the one who has been terrorizing the planet for ages.

**NOTE:** Biblical "dragons" are not mythical beasts, but real animals which are now (probably??) extinct. Owls, donkeys and other animals are linked with dragons in several passages of Scripture. There is no reason to think that dragons are not just as real as these other beasts. "Behemoth" and "levithan" described in Job may be two of the "dragons" which we now call "dinosaurs."

- b. "That old serpent" is the same one who deceived Eve in Eden in his role as the tempter.
- c. "The devil" means "slanderer" and reveals him as the one who blasphemes the Name of our God, and slanders and accuses believers. (Job 1 & 2)
- d. "Satan" is the "adversary" – the supernatural being who seeks to devour believers, by neutralizing their testimony through sinful activity.

### 3. Satan's incarceration: he is "bound," "shut up," and "sealed" for 1000 years.

- a. The keys and chain are literal but not physical; Satan and God are spiritual, but literal beings.
- b. The keys and chain are literal but are designed to bind "the strong man" (Mark 3:27), a spiritual being.

**ILLUS.:** Hordes of devils were unleashed on the earth during the Tribulation and they apparently came out of this kingdom of darkness (Rev. 9:1,2), and this is apparently the place where the devils in the maniac of Gadara did not want to be sent when Christ cast them out. (Mark 8:31)

## C. The Purpose of Satan's Incarceration: v.3 "...deceive...no more"

1. The motive is not punishment – that comes later.
2. The motive is restraint – so he cannot actively deceive the nations of the world during the reign of the KING OF

## KINGS.

**ILLUS.:** Here is revealed the answer of the age-old question of why wars, famine, suffering, etc. Satan has been behind-the-scenes of governments and powers on earth to lead them into conflict. He is the usurper of power, the "god of this world" and he controls all the "kingdoms of the earth."

### XVI. THE REIGN OF THE KING AND HIS CABINET: Rev. 20:4-6

**ILLUS.:** The world has always been fascinated with royalty. It couldn't seem to get enough of Princess Diana when she was alive and will not back off now that she is dead. Her pictures, clothing and memorabilia sold for tens of thousands of dollars. There seems to be some vicarious satisfaction in RUBBING ELBOWS WITH ROYALTY! But all who have faithfully served the KING OF KINGS will be "joint heirs" with Him in the Millennium and will rule and reign with Him. (Someday I may be known as "King Paul"! ) You and I may one day sit on a throne. There are some conditions however, and your royal position is not automatic because you are saved.

#### A. Reigning Saints: (Coronation)

**NOTE:** Identifying these saints who sit on thrones, and judge others "shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him for a thousand years. (v.1a, 3b) These are they who have part in the "first resurrection."

##### 1. The Apostles:

**Matthew 19:28** And Jesus said unto them (*the apostles*), Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

a. Israel will be the leading nation in the Millennium.

**Micah 4:2** And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

b. The other nations will be expected to honor Israel and to center worship there.

**Zechariah 14:16-17** And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

##### 2. Church-age saints:

a. We know that Christ was the "firstfruits" in that "first resurrection."

**1 Corinthians 15:20** But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

**1 Corinthians 15:23** But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

b. His "coming" in v.23 above, speaks of the rapture of the Church – that's us!

##### 3. Tribulation saints: v.1

- a. The souls of the saints who gave their lives for Christ in the early part of the Tribulation and cried "How long?" have now been avenged and are crowned and seated on thrones.
- b. The saints who refused the mark of the Beast in the latter part of the Tribulation and were beheaded for the witness of Jesus" are also enthroned.

**NOTE:** The question which arises is: where are the OLD TESTAMENT saints? Are they not a part of the "first resurrection"? Logically we would say yes. Scripturally we need to be careful. More later.

#### B. Ruling Sovereigns: (Administration)

##### 1. Thrones (crowns, authority, subjects, etc.)

**NOTE:** With the depleted population at the outset of the Millennium an interesting question arises: who will constitute the subjects over which these "kings" will reign? Not every believer will receive a throne and instead will "suffer loss" at the Judgment Seat of Christ and their Millennial service will be given to others. Whereas the faithful during this age may have multiple responsibilities.

**Luke 19:26** For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.



## **Luke 19:17**

**And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.**

The ministries of those on the thrones will be needed for those who died while very young or were recently saved and never reached maturity; thus the Lord may assign tutoring responsibilities to some -?

If we include the OLD TESTAMENT saints among those resurrected a conservative estimate might be around four billion, a figure roughly equal to the world's present population and about 10% of the total who have lived and died since Adam (40 billion?). This figure will exceed the number who survive the Tribulation on earth, but with the conditions on earth resembling Paradise human fertility and longevity will shortly provide plenty of "subjects" for those on the thrones.

### **2. Judgment: v.4a**

- a. The Apostles will sit on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel.
- b. King David resurrected may be the overall sovereign of the entire nation – along with David's "greater Son" the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Ezekiel 37:24-25** And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.

**Jeremiah 30:9** But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.

**Hosea 3:5** Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.

- c. The resurrected saints of the Church-age will judge the world at large, and angels.

**1 Corinthians 6:2-3** Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

- d. Perhaps we will also share in the judgment of the nations with our King, but it would seem more fitting and ironic that the Tribulation saints be involved in this.

**Matthew 25:31-32** When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats...

- 1) The "goat" nations are those who refused to aid the Tribulation saints.
- 2) The "sheep" nations are those who had shown compassion to them.

**Matthew 25:34-36** Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

### **3. Spiritual ministry: "...they shall be priests of God" v.6b**

- a. All who are enthroned are referred to as "blessed" (v.6a) or happy!
- b. They are also spoken of as "holy" and will finally be completely sanctified.

**NOTE:** Holiness and happiness always go together! A saint can't be happy unless he is living holy and serving the Savior.

### **C. Ruined Sinners: (Damnation) v.5**

#### **1. The second resurrection:**

- a. The details of this resurrection are found at the end of this chapter. vv. 11-15
- b. Here is a resurrection for all the unsaved of the ages at the Great White Throne of God!

#### **2. The second death: v.6a**

- a. Those who miss out on the first resurrection experience the second death.
- b. This is spiritual and eternal death.

**ILLUS.:** The word "resurrection" literally means "to stand up again" and always refers to the physical body. So the resurrection of the wicked dead will be in some kind of a putrid, decayed body which they will go to hell with and live in for eternity. They will be called out of the grave to "stand up again" to face God and judgment and their final, everlasting sentence.

The saints will also "stand up again" after having their bodies placed in the grave and they will become Kings. When you fellowship with the saints you are RUBBING ELBOWS WITH ROYALTY! Are you living as the King of kings would have you to live? There are many restrictions and much discipline required of those who are the heirs of a throne. So it is with those who would "rule and reign with Him."

## **XVII. THE SECOND COMING OF SATAN: Rev. 20:7-10**

**ILLUS.:** Paradise has been restored to earth. Animals are docile, the climate is no longer hostile, man has ceased from learning warfare, peace has reigned for 1000 years; thorns, thistles, weeds and blight no longer hinder food production, deserts and polar ice caps have disappeared, world wide evangelism takes place, and disease, sickness and death are all but abolished. The long blissful years roll by, but as with every dispensation a test must be given to bring to light the secrets of men's hearts. External obedience and obeisance are not enough for Him Who looks on the heart.

So Satan is given a final reprieve (v.7). Imagine the fury of this malignant being during his incarceration. Picture a mighty jungle cat (roaring lion) in solitary confinement when suddenly the door of his cage swings open. He shakes his mane, bares his fangs dripping with saliva, lashes his tail and glares about seeking revenge to vent his wrath. He knows exactly what he will do. He has been plotting his vengeance for 1000 years! He knows men are still men, in spite of their Paradise environment. He still hates God and Christ. He will make a mockery of this Millennium and show it to be another pious fraud of mankind. He is back and sin will once more blaze in human hearts. The kindling is there and he has the fire!

### **A. The Return of Satan: v.7**

#### **1. The time of his probation: "...when the thousand years are expired"**

- a. Note that he does not escape...he is loosed!
- b. The Lord is in control, but Satan is such a deceiver that he even deceives himself as to his power and no doubt reasons he will be finally victorious.
- c. Verse three reminds us that "(Satan) must be loosed..." - evidently to give men an opportunity to vent the rebellion seething in their hearts. (Possibly the fallen angels and hordes of devils will also be set free to assist him in aligning his forces and convincing the nations to rebel against Christ and the saints. More later.)

#### **2. The terror of his person:**

- a. Satan's nature hasn't changed in 1000 years of imprisonment, teaching us that confinement doesn't change a being's nature.
- b. He is still the raging beast he has always been and is on a rampage (the Millennium also proves that environment doesn't determine man's nature or destiny. Only a proper relationship to the Lord can change that and that demands a new birth. A dog always returns to his vomit and a pig to the mire! 2 Pet. 2:2).
- c. Though he continues to deny his ultimate destiny, Satan, who knows the Scriptures, must have the gnawing realization that his time is short – imagine his rage and new reign of terror!

### **B. The Revolt of Society: v.8,9**

#### **1. The alignment of nations: v.8**

- a. In spite of 1000 years of paradise and righteous rule by the Savior-King (Who is now visible! Faith is replaced by sight!), man again proves his depravity by following Satan.
- b. Satan will find and assemble those who have secretly harbored hatred and rebellion against the Lord.

**Psalms 72:8-9** He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.

**Psalms 110:2** The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

**Psalms 66:3** Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.

- c. Remarkably Satan is able to assemble a vast and uncountable army of rebels (with longevity of life restored and mortality rates decreased the planet's population – dramatically reduced in the Tribulation – will explode to unprecedented numbers).
- d. Men seem eager to escape "the bondage of righteousness." (Morris)
- e. The mention of Gog and Magog here seems to suggest a connection with Ezekiel 38 & 39, and the age old enemy of Israel, Russia!



**QUOTE:** Morris, p.423 "...Russia had soon again become a great millennial nation, possibly even adopting its ancestral name of Magog. One can suppose that after several generations the younger Magogites had begun to rankle over the history of the destruction of their forefathers, and especially to resent the Israelites, both because it was in Israel that Gog's empire had been destroyed and because the Israelites now occupied the premier place among the nations. The armies of the other nations had been destroyed in Israel earlier, at Armageddon, and now their descendants also began to share the same resentment. But the new Magogites and their new God (leader) were the readiest of all to rebel. Therefore Satan and his demons will use them to organize and lead one last army against the Lord."

## 2. The assault on the saints: v.9a

- a. Satan no longer needs to hide behind puppets or earthly leaders.
- b. He has used a serpent, men, devils, fallen angels, kings, world leaders, the Antichrist and the false prophet, but now he stands revealed as the one in control of all evil men and movements and leads the assault personally.
- c. Apparently when the dimensions of the rebellion reach global proportions, all the redeemed and reigning saints will join their Lord at the beloved city of the great King (those in natural bodies, the resurrected saints, and the holy angels together near Jerusalem).
- d. No doubt the assembled armies of Satan and even lost spirits will look to Satan for a masterfully brilliant stroke of diabolical cunning to deliver them and defeat the Lord and His hosts.

## C. The Realization of Sovereignty:

### 1. The deceiver defeated: v.9b,10a

- a. Satan's followers finally realize how deceived they have been – too late!
- b. God sends a ring of fire spreading outward from the Holy City and instantaneously vaporizes his armies.

**ILLUS.:** It is possible that this fantastic explosion culminates in the "New Heavens and the New Earth" which was prophesied in both the O.T. and N.T.. Peter says *"the elements (basic structure, i.e., the atoms) shall melt with a fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up..."* When this thing goes off with ear shattering noise (the real "Big Bang!"), Jupiter, Mars, the moon and the stars will likely be going off at the same time! Then suddenly the Great White Throne of God will be revealed to all. (v.11) What an awesome spectacle. It will make all the Hollywood special effects look like child's play.

- c. The irony is that not only the willing dupes of the great deceiver, but the deceiver himself is jarred into the reality that he has believed his own lie.

### 2. The devil doomed: v.10

- a. As he hurtles towards hell he is jarred into the reality waiting for him since the Lord created this place for "the devil and his angels."
- b. When he arrives he finds his evil cohorts still there in torment after 1000 years (not annihilated!), which also may be a jarring revelation since he and his minions have been attempting to debunk and deny hell's reality and permanence for centuries; but the lake of fire is a place of torment not extinction or annihilation.

## XVIII. THE SHOCKING REALITY OF AN ETERNAL HELL: Rev. 20:11-15

**ILLUS.:** The atheists, agnostics, evolutionists, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists, Christian Scientists, New Agers, intellectuals, scientists, and all other "no hellers" realize that what they perhaps thought was only a temporary "purgatory" is in reality, an eternal lake of tormenting literal fire! They will also realize that the one who deceived them has now become a permanent resident.

### A. The Awesome Scene: vv.11,12a

#### 1. A terrible force: v.11

**2 Peter 3:10** But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

#### 2. A terrifying Figure: v.11

- a. While the galaxies explode and a universal conflagration is set in motion, this gigantic (Great) White (purity, holiness) Throne (sovereignty, omnipotence) appears, and along with it Someone even more awesome appears, and it is from His face that everything decides to flee!
- b. Since we are told in several places in the N.T. that all judgment is given unto the Son, this is undoubtedly



our Savior (with all the power and authority of the Father given unto Him), and now He is no longer manifest as the Lamb, but as He is in truth *"all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."* Col. 2:9

**John 5:22** For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son...

**ILLUS.:** Some say they will be disappointed if they don't get to see the Father in heaven. Believe me, when we see the Son in all His majesty, glory, sovereignty, and awesome power and Person, it will be more than we can handle!

Back in chapter 4 when a throne showed up, there was a rainbow surrounding it (speaking of God's grace) and the One Who sat on it was like a Lamb in its gentleness, because there He was ministering to His own. Here He is about to judge all those who rejected Him and His love for them.

### 3. A tightening fear: v.12a

- a. We have previously learned of a "first resurrection" which included the saved, but nothing was said then about this "second resurrection" of the lost.

**Acts 24:15** And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

**Daniel 12:2** And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

- b. They just suddenly show up to keep the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of their appointment with God.

**Hebrews 9:27** And as it is *appointed* unto men once to *die*, but after this the *judgment*...

- c. You can only imagine the fear squeezing their hearts now that they see Him as Judge; they have already experienced something of His power in Hell, but now the truth about their wickedness and unbelief is about to be exposed and they will have to kneel before Him and agree with their eternal punishment!

### 4. A tragic fellowship: v.12b

- a. We have all heard jokes of the unsaved about being with their friends in hell, but now God peels away the "humor" and the stark and devastating reality set in.
- b. The "small and great" will appear together – there is no class, racial, or sexual distinction here.
- c. People who would have nothing to do with each other on earth will appear together, stripped of all their social, financial, racial, and ethnic distinctions and stand naked before Him in their rotted "filthy rags" of the self-righteousness and good works which they were deceived into believing would keep them from hell.

## B. The Awe-inspiring Scrolls: v.12b

### 1. The book of life: v.12 & 15

- a. Some believe that at birth (or conception!) everyone's name is recorded in the book of life and that after the age of accountability, and later, final rejection of the Savior, the name is removed.
- b. One thing is absolutely certain – if your name isn't found there – at the Great White Throne Judgment, your soul is irrevocably lost! No one's name is inserted at that time! TOO LATE!

**NOTE:** It is possible that the believers still living on the Millennial earth along with any believers who have died during the Millennium may also appear at this time. Their names would be found in the "book of life" so they would not be judged out of the "books of works."

### 2. The books of works:

- a. Some have suggested that these "books" are the records stored in our own brains and now replayed for all the universe to view, so that God will be just in His judgment and men will be judged by the records they themselves have kept.
- b. Obviously since God is omnipotent He doesn't need books to remind Him of anything, so whatever these records are, they are for the universe, not for Him.

**Luke 8:17** For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

**Matthew 12:36-37** But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

**QUOTE:** Philipps, *Exploring Revelation* "Nothing can save the man who is determined to stand on his record; who insists, 'I'm doing the best I can.'"



Judgment is always according to works. Salvation is always by faith. The sinner can ask God for a free pardon or demand a fair trial based on his works. If he prefers a trial it will land him in the lake of fire! His works will send him there!"

### C. The Awful Summons: v.13

#### 1. A gruesome 'resurrection' –

- a. Those in the 'sea' come out first, i.e., when the earth and heaven are blasted away the 'sea' goes with it, and there they are: those buried in Noah's flood, those buried at sea, those drowned, etc. – out come their "bodies" to be reunited with their pitiful souls.
- b. Then "death and hell" deliver up their corruption to stand before the Almighty Creator of the universe.

**Matthew 7:22-23** Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

### D. The Abysmal Sentence: vv.14,15

#### 1. The second death:

- a. Death (the believer's last enemy) is cast into the lake of fire, but unfortunately one death is only replaced by another or 'second death' for the lost.
- b. Hell (the temporary holding place for unsaved souls) is cast into the lake of fire (the permanent place of torment for the unsaved dead).

**NOTE:** Though in His mercy for us now, the Lord doesn't give any further details of this horrible place. He has given sufficient warnings throughout His holy record. Here is just the naked narrative, the bare sentence.

Nothing is said about the location of this "lake of fire." It is not located on planet earth, since the earth has "fled away." It cannot be on the new earth for that will be the home of the Lord God Almighty (Rev. 21:22). Some have suggested the location of a distant star (stars are literal lakes of fire), and scientists tell us that some stars burn without giving off light in the visible part of the spectrum – eternal darkness.

## XVIX. THE WONDERFUL REALITY OF HEAVEN ON EARTH: Rev. 21:1-4

**TRANS.:** The greatest chapters of the Bible are the first two chapters of Genesis and the final two chapters of Revelation. The Bible is a circle, an infinite Book. Genesis deals with creation and Revelation deals with re-creation. The book of Revelation runs us right back to the book of Genesis. In Genesis there was "paradise lost" and in Revelation there is paradise restored. In Genesis there was the "tree of life" and it shows up again in Rev. 22. Genesis begins with the slaying of a lamb by Abel and in Rev. 21 we have "the Lamb of God" appearing. God begins with a man in Genesis and ends up with a man in Revelation. In the beginning "God created the heaven and the earth" and in Rev. 21:1 we see a "new heaven and a new earth." In fact in Rev. 21 we have "HEAVEN ON EARTH."

### A. A New Creation: v.1

#### 1. A new heaven:

- a. This is obviously the atmospheric and planetary heaven, not the third heaven or place of God's abode; nothing needed to be replaced there, for no corruption enters there.
- b. The atmospheric heaven was the place of Satanic activity and his "home base of operations."
- c.. Now that he is gone his former base has been cleansed and "replaced" with a "new heaven."

#### 2. A new earth:

- a. This "new earth" replaces the former abode of corruption, death and sin.
- b. It is distinct from the old earth in that "there was no more sea."

**NOTE:** There is divided opinion as to which "sea" is spoken of here; the oceans of earth or the "waters above the firmament" (which make the oceans of earth appear as puddles by comparison). However Psalm 148:4 & 6 seem to indicate that the "waters that be above the heavens" will remain "forever." Also there is a direct link between the "first earth" and the fact that there will be "no more sea." This means that there will be a completely different topography and climate on the new earth with the entire planet becoming habitable. (There will be water there – just no sea – for the "pure river of the water of life" will flow eternally from the throne of the lamb. (Cf. Rev. 22:1)

### B. A New Capital: v.2

## 1. The new Jerusalem:

- a. For the last 2000+ years the Lord Jesus has been building this city as He promised in John 14, and in keeping with His infinite Person, it is a fantastic place. (Much more later in the chapter!)
- b. This is the "capital city" of heaven, which now comes down to earth and is either suspended over the planet as a satellite or becomes a part of the earth and the Lord's headquarters.
- c. Since Israel is an earthly people with an earthly inheritance, it is assumed that the new earth will be inhabited by redeemed Israel, and the New Jerusalem will be the home base of the Church, a heavenly people with a heavenly inheritance.

## 2. The new Bride: cf. vv.9,10

- a. This concept is strengthened by the fact that the Church is the Bride of Christ but John here identifies the New Jerusalem as Christ's Bride.
- b. A city and its inhabitants are often closely identified with each other; in Galatians 4:26 the New Jerusalem is called the "mother of us all" (i.e., church age saints).
- c. The New Jerusalem will stand out as the "jewel of the earth" with all its beauty and brilliance and will attract all the peoples of the planet by its sheer dazzling and fantastic dimensions and construction.

**ILLUS.:** I personally view it sparkling with the light that the Lord Jesus "the Light of the world" will impart to it. With the jewels of its construction reflecting His light it will mesmerize with the unlimited array of the colors of the spectrum (and perhaps colors beyond the visible spectrum as we know it)! Truly it will be HEAVEN ON EARTH."

## C. A New Communion: v.3

### 1. God dwelling with men:

- a. As fantastic as the new heaven, new earth and New Jerusalem will be, only the very presence of God on earth, will truly make it "HEAVEN ON EARTH."
- b. The word "tabernacle" means "dwelling place" and comes from the concept of a tent and relates to the Tabernacle in the wilderness, where God met with Moses and dwelt with Israel in a visible presence.
- c. When Jesus showed up on earth He was called "Emmanuel" i.e., "God with us" and John wrote "the Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernalced) among us..." - now He is back!

### 2. God dealing with men:

- a. All will now be subject to Him and He will deal with them as His children and His Bride, with all the wonderful connotations both relationships suggest.
- b. But He will be more than their Father and Bridegroom, the verse says He will be their God! (One Who can provide anything His family wants or may need.)

## D. A New Condition: v.4

### 1. No more tears!

- a. Only one other time on the planet was there a tearless time – in Eden before sin entered.

**ILLUS.:** Adam and Eve know only bliss and joy as they fellowshiped with the Lord and ate of His bounty. They never knew anything of death, caskets, cemeteries, pain, trials, sickness, sadness, doctors, nursing homes, aging and sorrow. No tears!

- b. Even in heaven Satan appeared to accuse the brethren before the Lord and cast his dark shadow.
- c. But now He and all his unholy followers are banished forever and his dark shadow never again appears and all is bliss and joy as God now wipes away all tears and the four primary sources of tears: death, sorrow, crying and pain, because the Lord of heaven is on earth and He alone has the power to remove all sickness, sadness grief and death!



**POEM:** There's no disappointment in Heaven,  
No weariness, sorrow or pain;  
No hearts that are bleeding and broken,  
No song with a minor refrain.  
The clouds of our earthly horizon  
Will never appear in the sky  
For all will be sunshine and gladness  
With never a sob nor a sigh.  
We'll never pay rent for our mansion,  
The taxes will never come due;  
Our garments will never grow threadbare,  
But always be fadeless and new.  
We'll never be hungry or thirsty,  
Nor languish in poverty there,  
For all the rich bounties of Heaven  
His sanctified children will share.

There'll never be crepe on the door-knob,  
No funeral train in the sky;  
No graves on the hillsides of Glory,  
For there we shall never more die.  
The old will be young there forever,  
Transformed in a moment of time  
Immortal, we'll stand in His likeness,  
The stars and the sun to outshine.  
I'm bound for that beautiful city  
My Lord has prepared for His own;  
Where all the redeemed of all ages  
Sing "Glory!" around the white throne;  
Sometimes I grow homesick for heaven,  
And the glories I there shall behold:  
What a joy that will be when my Savior I see,  
In that beautiful City of gold!

## XX. THE WONDERFUL PLACE CALLED HEAVEN: Rev. 21:5-8

### A. It Is A Spectacular Place: v.5

1. Because of its King: *"...and He that sat upon the throne...said...Write..."*
  - a. What John sees that thrills his heart and dominates his vision is none other than the Creator, Savior, and now King of Kings seated on His throne.
  - b. Since John is a mere mortal and could not possibly describe the breathtaking scenes before him, the Lord Himself speaks and tells him what to write.
  - c. He states that "these words are true and faithful" – not apocalyptic, obscure, and inscrutable and only capable of understanding or interpretation by the 'scholars' and religious gurus!
2. Because of its completion: *"...Behold I make all things new"*
  - a. Our Savior not only bore the curse for us, He was made a curse for us (Gal. 3:3), so He alone can remove the curse forever. Cf. Rev. 22:3
  - b. The times of the restitution of all things (Acts 3:21) has arrived, so there is a New Heaven, a New Earth, a New Jerusalem, a New Song and a New Name; now all things are to be made new.
    - 1) The law of entropy (decay, disease, deterioration, and death) will be repealed.
    - 2) Nothing will wear out, age or atrophy anymore; all things will remain eternally young, fresh, and new – just as in the initial creation itself before the fall.

**QUOTE:** John Morris: "...the apparent age of each person in the resurrection may be in, say, his or her early thirties. (Hello, Dr. Ruckman! Ruckman teaches that we will all be 33 ½ years of age, just like our Savior at His death) When Adam and Eve were created they were mature adults, capable of raising children...(and) they would presumably remained at the same 'age' as that at which they were created if they had not sinned. At the same time, however, they were commanded to have children (Gen. 1:28), and these would have grown to a similar maturity before their 'age' would have stabilized, as it were."

It is interesting that the priests and Levites in service of the Tabernacle had to be 30 years old; Joseph (a type of Christ) was 30 years old when he was made ruler over Egypt. David (a type of Christ) became king over Israel at age 30. We will serve as kings and priests in the Millennium, so it is likely that our resurrection age will be of the same order. Even the Lord Jesus began His earthly public ministry at age 30 and we will be "like Him" in glory.

### B. It Is A Satisfying Place: vv. 6,7

1. Satisfying resources: v.6 *"...the water of life freely"*
  - a. Having made all things new, Christ as the Alpha and Omega, will maintain the glorified bodies of the saints in eternal health and strength by the fruit of the tree of life and the river of the water of life, created anew by One on the throne.
  - b. There will be no charge for His services ("freely" - the first word of God ever corrupted or misquoted) money doesn't count in heaven – where the streets are paved with pure gold!

**Genesis 2:16** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

**Genesis 3:2** And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat (*"freely" omitted*) of the fruit of the trees of the garden: (*This is how it is still done today in the new versions!*)



## 2. Satisfying responsibilities: v.7a

- a. The believer will “inherit all things” and will be charged with the administration of that inheritance.
- b. We are overcomers when we learn to put our bodies into subjection, and there seems to be a connection with being an overcomer and our inheritance.

## 3. Satisfying relationships: v.7b

- a. Part of our heavenly inheritance will be the Father/son relationship with the Lord we will enjoy.
- b. Though we will have access to the infinite resources of the space/time cosmos, our greatest joy will be intimate fellowship with the Lord Himself.

## C. It Is A Safe Place: v.9

### 1. Because of those who are forever banned.

**NOTE:** Notice the revealing list of those who will be banned. Everyone from the fearful to the liars! Along with the filthy crowd in between. The “abominable” are those who practice the most vile sins. God uses this terminology for homosexuality, lesbianism, and cross-dressing. (One public school district was recently seeking to ban teen boys wearing dresses to school! Why this should shock us any more than girls wearing boys pants, is a mystery!?)

Aren’t you glad you don’t have to live next door to anyone on this list forever in heaven? (This condemnation is specifically for those who die in their sins and who are therefore seen, not in Christ, but in the stark reality and ugliness of their sins.) Aren’t you glad that our heavenly neighbors are the redeemed of the O.T. and N.T., the holy angels, the seraphim, the cherubim, and God Himself?!

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11** Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. *And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

### 2. Of course Satan, the false prophet and the antichrist will also be banned from heaven.

## XXI. THE PLACE THE REDEEMED WILL CALL “HOME”: Rev. 21:9-14

**TRANS.:** I would not like to move into a place I would call home, without knowing at least some of the details. That’s why the Lord gives us this wonderful chapter. He wants us to be at least a little familiar with our eternal surroundings. He doesn’t spoil the surprise, but gives us a few details. The problem the Lord has is how to describe heaven to earthbound humans who have no frame of reference (like describing an electric stove to a native in the jungle who has never seen anything but a wood fire, or a color TV to one who has only seen his reflection in a lake). So the Lord must use a comparison of the known with the unknown. What John reveals is literal, but his description is also limited by human vocabulary, experience and comprehension of heavenly truths with a finite mind...

### A. The Lamb’s Wife: vv. 9,10

**ILLUS.:** Previously John had an angel whisk him away to view Babylon and the woman and people associated with it. Here it is not the scarlet woman, but the Bride; not Babylon, but the New Jerusalem. Before he saw “the Great Whore,” now he sees the spotless wife of the Lamb. In both cases John was shown a great city (Babylon and Jerusalem). One he saw thrown down with violence to disappear forever – the other he saw coming down in glory, to endure forever.

#### 1. The bride (Church):

- a. The people and a city are often spoken of synonymously, e.g., Jesus wept over Jerusalem – not the city, but its people.
- b. Back in ch. 19 we saw that the marriage of the Lamb was to the Bride, the Church, so the Bride is not a city, but closely identified with the city.

**NOTE:** There is definitely accommodating language used here in v. 10 (e.g., “a high mountain”), since the topography of earth no longer contains mountains. The reference is to a strategic and exalted vantage point where John would have an unobstructed view of this spectacular event and place – “the Holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”

#### 2. The wife (City):

- a. Someone has suggested that the bride symbol refers to the matchless beauty of this place and its people, and the wife image refers to her intimacy with the Lord.
- b. Earlier the marriage of the Bridegroom and the Bride has taken place, now He shows John the beautiful home He had built for her.



**ILLUS.:** This is no mere "honeymoon cottage" but a mansion! This union is not just "till death..." but forever. It has been calculated that each mansion will have a minimum of ten rooms, lavishly (or sparsely) furnished by our works after salvation. The place is fantastic! Using the figure of 100 million Christians dying every year since Pentecost, and the dimensions given in the passage, this city will have 41 trillion rooms, 15 ft. square. There will be room for all the babies who have died in infancy (or were aborted!) and every believer who has died since Pentecost, with plenty of rooms and mansions left over! (So much for Calvinism!) When John called it a "great city" he wasn't kidding. It's a whopper!

- c. Previously the angel revealed the harlot to behold the worst in man; now he is invited to behold the "wife" – the best God has produced in man.

## B. The Light's Wonder: v.11

### 1. God's glory:

**ILLUS.:** This wonderful place is called the "Holy Jerusalem" – there is no sewage or garbage disposal problem, no city waste sites, no graft, no politicians, no traffic problems, no beer cans, no cigarette butts, or cigar smoke or auto pollution, no hospitals, graveyards or bills in the mail! We won't even get a light bill...

- a. God's glory lights up this fantastic city, just like the Shekinah glory was the only light in the Tabernacle and Temple in the holy of holies.
- b. The light is likened to "a jasper stone, clear as crystal."
- c. Later we are told that this light emanates from our Savior.
- d. What John sees is a dazzlingly bright city, with the Savior on His throne producing the light which is so powerful as to light this gigantic metropolis.

**ILLUS.:** The last time the glory of God appeared on earth was when Jesus "dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, as of the only begotten of the Father..." - that was temporary and veiled; this is permanent and dazzling!

On the Mt. of Transfiguration Jesus' glory showed through the veil of His flesh and "His face did shine as the sun" and even His clothing was as bright as lightning. But it was only fleeting and momentary and He soon returned to His veiled humanity. To bask in His light was such a fantastic experience that Peter and the others wanted to build tabernacles or a worship center and just live there. But Jesus had something better and more permanent in mind.

### 2. God's greatness: *"I am the Light of the world..."*

**ILLUS.:** Many believe that Adam and Eve were clothed with His light and glory in Eden before the fall and that's why there was no shame connected with their nakedness; they were not naked as we speak of nakedness, they just had different garments.

## C. The Layout's Witness:

**ILLUS.:** Everything in this description of the layout of the walls, the gates, the names and the foundations of this wonderful city is a witness to God's grace and power. Nothing here is accidental or meaningless.

### 1. The walls: v.12a

- a. Walls speak of protection and security – eternal security!
- b. The walls are described as "great and high" – perhaps to the topmost height of the city.
- c. The walls make this city impregnable and unassailable (of course all enemies are gone).

### 2. The gates: vv.12b,13

- a. The gates and angelic guards are not to keep intruders out, but to serve as greeters and helpers, since all enemies are gone.
- b. The fact that there are 12 gates suggests that there is adequate access into the city for all who belong there.

**NOTE:** Notice the repetition of the number 12 (Israel's number), suggesting that O.T. and N.T. saints have access to this city. The names on the 12 gates are the names of the 12 tribes and the arrangement of the gates is similar to the arrangement of the encampment of the 12 tribes surrounding the O.T. Tabernacle. Later (v.21) we find these gates are made of pearl.

There are 12 gates, 12 angels, 12 tribes, 12 foundations, 12 precious stones and 12 Apostles (who are all Jewish, though founders of the Church). The first Jew (Abraham) shows up in Genesis 12 and the focus is on Israel throughout the Bible. And of course, our Savior was Jewish in His humanity.

### 3. The foundations: v.14

**ILLUS.:** God obviously enjoys beauty. Even with the fallen world around us, there is great beauty. He doesn't need it, but we do so He apparently creates it solely for our pleasure and enjoyment. He delights in dazzling His children. Imagine the fantastic colors of these 12 foundations stones as the



brilliant light of His glory streams through them! What a sight! What a city! What a Savior! Imagine a city of shimmering crystal clear gold with diamond walls and reflecting and refracting the glorious light of our Savior in its every structure. Truly it will be HOME SWEET HOME!

## XXII. THE WONDERFUL CITY CALLED 'GLORY': Rev. 21:15-21

**ILLUS.:** When a believer wants to praise the Lord he often shouts "glory!" The Bible speaks dozens of times of the "glory of God." His "glory" filled both the Tabernacle and the Temple. Christ was the glory of God incarnate. In this chapter (v.11) the holy city is depicted as "having the glory of God," and later verse 23 says "the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." He is the Source of all brightness, majesty, honor, power, and perfection. No wonder this city is called "GLORY!"

### A. The Fantastic Dimensions: vv.15-18

#### 1. The "man" who measures: vv.15a, 17b

- He is really an angel and speaks with John to describe what he is about to do.
- It is interesting that angels are apparently able to speak any language.
- Angels are always depicted as male (men), look like people, and do not have wings or other unusual appendages.

#### 2. The measurements:

- They are made with a "golden reed" – even rulers are made of gold in glory!
- These measurements are fantastic even if you use the human "cubit" (about 18 inches) or the angelic cubit which could be considerably larger.

**ILLUS.:** This city's 1500 cubic mile size (a cube or possibly a triangle?), would actually cover all of Ireland, England, France, Spain, Germany, Austria, Italy, European Turkey and ½ of European Russia! And that is just its base. It also reaches upward 1500 miles! Since we will have glorified bodies, not subject to gravitational or electromagnetic forces we will just as easily travel vertically as horizontally. WELL GLORY!!! John Morris says that if just 25% of the city is used for our "mansions" with the rest of the city given to streets, parks and public buildings, etc., there would still be one cubic mile assigned to each of the ten billion residents. WELL GLORY!!!

- The wall (v.17) measures 216 feet and if that is its thickness rather than its height, it would have to be the thickest wall ever built! (The assumption would be that it would be the same height as the city: 1500 miles!)

### B. The Spectacular Construction: vv.18a, 18,21a

#### 1. The diamond-like wall: "...jasper"

- Most commentators and scholars say that "jasper" is nothing less than diamond! (And Liz Taylor thought her diamonds were huge!!!)
- The hardest material known to man is used in the construction of these giant walls, suggesting impenetrability
- The most precious and rarest stone sought and fought after by mankind will be used just in the walls of this fantastic city – our eternal home!!
- The walls will glisten and sparkle with all the colors of the visible spectrum (and then some?!), as the light and brilliance of our Savior seated on His throne will shine through those walls to capture the attention and admiration of the planet's inhabitants.

#### 2. The garnished foundations: "...garnished with all manner of precious stones"

- Visualize diamonds decorated with glittering jewels.
- These foundations, with the names of the 12 apostles are even more brilliant displays of God's love of beauty.

**ILLUS.:** God obviously loves beauty and He knows that we respond to it as well. He has no inherent need of beauty, but apparently wants to please us! Beautiful sunrises and sunsets and other natural beauty serve no other purpose but God's desire to please His creatures and to place us in awe of His power and majesty. You can't eat it or use it for currency; it is just there because God loves beauty and paints His creation for His pleasure and ours!

Many of these stones match those on the breastplate of the High Priest in the Old Testament. The Lord takes the clarity of the azure waters in the South Pacific and mimics that purity in the first foundation of **jasper**. He takes from His palette of colors and paints the next foundation with the beautiful blue of the **sapphire** waters over the canyons of the Atlantic. The **chalcidony** picks up the color of **copper** mined from the earth. The **emerald** of the next foundation is a brilliant, translucent green to match the plant life of our planet. The foundation of **sardonyx** is a variety of onyx with the scarlet color of the beautiful rose, and yet another brilliant red **sardius** stone foundation follows and reminds us of His blood shed for us on Calvary! **Chrysolyte** is the gold stone and shines like the sun itself. Then comes the **beryl**, another yellow stone and the **topaz** is likewise a yellowish orange stone known also as "frozen fire." The **chrysoprasus** is a gold-tinted green gemstone that reminds us of the beautiful, almost florescent colors on some tropical fish, while the **jacinth** is an aquamarine or turquoise colored stone reflecting the colors of the waters God created for those tropical fish



to live in. Finally the last foundation stone is the **amethyst**, a beautiful *purple stone* fit to be worn by His *royal Highness, the King of kings!* Well, GLORY!

Imagine some holy angel or glorified saint on some mission of exploration or development to some distant galaxy for the King, going "where no man has gone before" – after a long absence returning home to earth. Traveling at angelic speeds, far greater than the velocity of light, he enters the milky way galaxy and soon approaches the (now) green planet earth. He catches his breath as he stops to savor the beauty of the holy city gleaming over or upon the earth. Well, GLORY!

### 3. The pearly gates: "...*twelve pearls*" v.21a

- a. Pearls are jewels made by a wounded animal and without the wound the pearl is never formed.
- b. Heaven is entered through suffering and travail, through redemption and blood, through the agony of the cross, so we enter heaven through gates of pearl.

### C. The Amazing City: vv. 18b, 21b

#### 1. The pure gold city: v.18b

- a. Finally inside the gates we are amazed to see the basic structure of the city and find it to be "pure gold like unto clear glass."
- b. Here is gold so refined that it is transparent; it may appear to have a golden color from a sharp angle, but when viewed differently it appears clear.

#### 2. The pure gold streets: v.21b

- a. What men fight, live and die for down here, we will walk on up there!
- b. This pure gold will be unstained and unclouded and there is no defilement here!
- c. We may grieve and quench the Spirit here, but when we get our new bodies and pass through the Judgment Seat of Christ where every spot and wrinkle and stain is removed and we move into our mansions, we will not only be positionally clean, but practically and perpetually clean as well.

## XXIII. THE MISSING ELEMENTS IN HEAVEN: Rev. 21:22-27

**TRANS:** As John continues our tour of the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, he now invites us to step inside. He not only explains what is present but what elements will be missing in heaven. The breathtaking beauty of this city viewed from outside is dazzling and fantastic, but inside it is even more wonderful. What we will see and not see is instructive and inspiring...

### A. No Temple – But the Lord: v.22

#### 1. A city without a Temple:

- a. Temples are places for worshipping an invisible God.
- b. Here God is visible in all His might and majesty: "the Lord God Almighty" – the title suggestive of the Trinity is used here - the One Who was, is and is to come.
- c. In the O.T. there was a Temple, in the Church age we are God's Temple, in the Millennium there will be a memorial Temple, but in eternity all prophecies have been fulfilled, there is no need for memorial ceremonies and the Holy Spirit will be forever united with the all-pervasive reality of the personal glory of the triune God.

**Hebrews 11:8-10** By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

#### 2. A city with the presence of the Lord:

- a. Finally the fellowship Adam had before sin entered the race is re-established; the habitation of God is with men. "Emmanuel" – "God with us."
- b. What a fellowship, what a joy divine – perpetual intimacy with the Creator and Redeemer.

### B. No Light – But the Lamb: vv.23,24

#### 1. The city of perpetual light:

- a. This city has "no need of the sun...or the moon..." though they will be present and will endure forever.
- b. It is just that they will be insignificant sources of light compared to the Light of the Lamb in this city.

**Isaiah 60:19-22** The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the LORD shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time.

## 2. The city of perpetual blessing:

- a. Outside the city the "nations" and "kings" reside, but since only the redeemed survive the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Millennium, the question is who are these people?
- b. Perhaps they are those who have mansions in the city, but have estates and governments and activities outside the city.
- c. Perhaps they are humans in an innocent state like Adam before the fall continuing on the earth after the Millennium (if so they would have had to have been "raptured" off the planet before it was purged by fire, and glorified).
- d. This would place a very literal interpretation on the Abrahamic Covenant which promised that his seed would be as the sand upon the seashore and as the stars in the heavens.
- e. It would help us envision the fulfillment of the Messianic promise in Isaiah 9:7, that "of the increase of His government and peace shall be no end."
- f. Also, if the nations of the saved were to continue to multiply, as would Adam and Eve – if they had not fallen – God's command to "fill the earth" and "subdue it" would be finally accomplished.
- g. Think of the productivity and promise of the planet where sin has been banished forever and where the nations of the earth can develop and expand infinitely, since there is no more death.
- h. Neither the kings of the earth nor the nations will seek their own glory, but "bring their glory and honor" into the city to the Lord of glory!

## C. No Barriers – But Blessings: v.25a,26

### 1. A city with open gates:

- a. O.T. cities had gates that were shut to keep out intruders and invaders as well as closed after dark.
- b. These gates are not barriers, but entrances where the nations of the new earth shall bring their honor.

## D. No Night – But Rest: v.25b

### 1. A city which radiates light:

- a. Since the Lamb is the Light of this city, darkness can never enter.
- b. The light here will be brighter than that of the sun, moon and stars combined.
- c. The fact that there is no night suggests the fact that sleep will be unnecessary - & we will never be tired!

**NOTE:** Did you ever contemplate what a waste of time sleep is? We sleep away 1/3 of our lives. But now it is to regenerate the body and to enable us to function. Then we will have glorified bodies which need no regeneration. Heaven though, will be a place of perpetual rest. We will never grow weary or become fatigued, even while perpetually serving the Lord. Believers enter into faith-rest when they trust in Christ and that trust eventually becomes eternal rest in heaven.

## E. No Defilement – But the Cleansed: v.27

### 1. A city without pollution:

- a. Sin and sinners pollute!
- b. This city has no sinners, hence no sin, hence no pollution.
- c. This shining city and the new earth upon which it rests as well as all the cleansed universe (except the infinitely removed hidden corner containing the lake of fire) provides a perfect environment for the redeemed of the ages.

**ILLUS.:** As the song declares: "Just think of stepping on shore and finding it heaven; or taking a hand a finding it God's, of breathing new air and finding it celestial; of waking up in glory and finding it home!"



Not only will we enjoy all the benefits that will be waiting for us, but we will enjoy it more for what is missing there! No Temple. No Light (but the Lamb). No barriers. No Night. No defilement.

#### **XXIV. THE VIEW FROM THE INSIDE OF GLORY: Rev. 22:1-5**

**NOTE:** God opens His revelation with a description of His perfect creation of the heavens and the earth. He closes His revelation with a description of His perfect re-creation of a New Heaven and a New Earth. The conditions on earth in Eden are re-created on the New Earth with the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem, setting the standard for heavenly and earthly existence in the eternal state.

##### **A. The Life Of That City: v.1**

###### **1. A pure river of water of life:**

**ILLUS.:** Most cities on earth are born near a river, ocean or some other large body of water. The water that gives birth to that city is soon polluted by its child! Not so in this fantastic city. The water will never become polluted. It originates with the Lamb of God and proceeds out of His throne, crystal clear and perpetually clean. This never will run dry.

- a. The Source of the river is located for us and may be the most prominent feature as cascades from the center and apex of the city.
- b. It may be that like the river in the original Eden it will have four tributaries proceeding north, south, east and west.
- c. Someone has even suggested that it may have as many as twelve branches flowing out each of the gates of the New Jerusalem.
- d. No doubt this river will supply not only the trees that grow on its banks, but luxurious herbs, fruits, and vegetables and will resemble the Garden of Eden itself!
- e. Its crystal clarity speaks of the ecological purity on the New Earth and Heaven and speaks of the character of its Creator.
- f. This river is not dependent upon the hydrologic cycle of the present earth with its evaporation and precipitation system, but rather proceeds "out of the throne of God and the Lamb."

##### **B. The Luxury Of That City: v.2**

###### **1. The tree of life:**

- a. This is obviously not a single tree, but a species of tree, for it is prolific.

**Ezekiel 47:12** And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

- b. These trees bear twelve different fruits in a year which will no doubt be delicious.
- c. They also produce leaves which are for the "healing (or health) of the nations."

**NOTE:** Food for thought: the indication is that the only people who get glorified bodies like Christ are Church-age saints. Those surviving the Tribulation and entering the Millennium have natural bodies. The eternal state is a continuation of the Millennial state and the health of those with natural bodies who will be born will require the leaves of the trees for their health and longevity or perhaps if their parents partake the children will have eternal life, health, and perfection automatically. There may be twelve nations as "...the Most High divided the nations...when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel (12)." Deut. 32:7-9 There are 12 gates, 12 foundations, 12 fruits, in 12 months, for 12 nations in 12 geographical locations or continents on the New Earth. ???

##### **C. The Loyalty Of That City: v.3**

###### **1. His servants shall serve Him:**

- a. We will not be sitting around on clouds playing harps, but will be serving the Lamb.
- b. Eternity is before us and infinity surrounds us and we will no doubt be able to explore and discover the secrets of an infinitely varied and limitless universe.

**QUOTE:** Morris, IBID. "With the force systems of the known universe (it is a universe, not a polyverse!) [the idea of space travel] will always be mere science fiction. The four basic types of forces known to be (are) the gravitational force, electromagnetic force, nuclear force, and 'weak' subnuclear force. All matter must operate in force fields of gravity and electro-magnetic force, and these are such as to render it impossible for sizable bodies of matter to move from one body to another at velocities even remotely approaching the speed of light...But these limitations do not apply to spiritual bodies. They will not be constrained by (such forces) but as in the case of angels, can 'fly swiftly'."

#### D. The Lord Of That City: v.4

##### 1. His face...His name:

- a. It is the Lamb we will serve and it will be the Lamb to Whom we will report.
- b. Though He is the King of the universe He will always be accessible to His servants.
- c. He will never hide His face from them, nor will they fear entering His presence.
- d. They will see His face, i.e., the face of the One identified as the Lamb. V.3
- e. "His name...in their foreheads" identifies the servants as His possessions.
- f. His name will become our name and we shall be joint-heirs with Him of all creation.

#### E. The Light Of That City: v.5a

##### 1. The Lord God giveth them light:

- a. Those in that city will live in perpetual Sonlight!
- b. They will experience perpetual rest in stark contrast to those in the lake of fire who "have no rest day nor night." Rev. 14:11
- c. Even inside the mansions there will be ample illumination: "...no need of candle" (artificial illumination), "neither light of the sun" (natural light).

#### F. The Legacy Of That City: v.5b

##### 1. They shall reign forever and ever:

- a. Those who have gained residence in that city through the shed blood of the Lamb, will rule with Him eternally.
- b. This seems to suggest that, unlike the conditional service during the Millennium, based on faithfulness here, those who are saved will be able to serve with Him and reign with Him in the eternal state; but we should not be presumptuous!

**NOTE:** Think of it – "DOWNTOWN HEAVEN" for all eternity! The beauty of it. The glories of it. The service of it. The wonder of it! The Savior of it! The hymn writer puts it succinctly: "Face to face with Christ my Savior; face to face what will it be?  
When with rapture I behold Him, Jesus Christ Who died for me.  
Only faintly now I see Him, with the darkling veil between,  
But a blessed day is coming, when His glory will be seen.  
Face to face, O blissful moment! Face to face – to see and know;  
Face to face with my Redeemer, Jesus Christ Who loves me so!"

### XXV. THE BOOK IN THE LIBRARY OF HEAVEN: Rev. 22:6-10

**NOTE:** Three times in just five verses the phrase "THIS BOOK" is used. It refers to the book of the Revelation in the narrow sense, but applies to the entire Bible in the wider sense. (This is implied by its strategic location at the close of the last chapter of the last book in the canon of Scripture. It is interesting that the term is used exactly seven times [completion or perfection], if you include the words "the book" which matches it in v.19. Also the warnings about "THIS BOOK" do not appear at the close of any other book of the Bible!)

#### A. The Accuracy Of "This Book": v.6

##### 1. His Word is faithful:

- a. John is saying that its prophecies must be fulfilled.
- b. He knows that the Scriptures cannot be broken.

**NOTE:** A further suggestion in this verse that the whole Bible is in view here is alluded to by the words: "...the Lord God of the holy prophets." He is equating the words John wrote with the words of other prophets of God, both Old and New Testaments. This author believes that John was aware that the revelations he had received were the final ones which would be given, thus closing the canon of Scripture. Remember he had written of the Rapture, the Tribulation, the Revelation, hell, heaven, the new heavens and the new earth, and finally the eternal state. What more could be given?

##### 2. His Word is true:

**ILLUS.:** John realizes that what he has written is fantastic and seemingly incredible, so he adds that he was an eyewitness to these events. He wasn't dreaming, this was not an allegory, myth, fanciful story, fairy tale or anything less than direct revelation from God. This is a book of revelation, not mystification; of apocalypse not apocrypha.



- a. Truth is static and unchanging.
- b. Truth is reliable and proves itself to be true.
- c. Truth is infallible and contains no error.
- d. Truth is consistent and never varies.
- e. Truth is inflexible and doesn't change with time or circumstances.

#### B. The Authority Of "This Book": v.7-9

1. Defending the Truth: v.7
2. Demeaning the Truth: v.8
  - a. John is so overwhelmed by all he has seen and heard that he spontaneously repeats a mistake he made earlier (19:10), and falls down at the "feet of the angel."
  - b. But in so doing he was demeaning the very truth he told others to defend; for God's Word (the Truth) warns again and again against worshipping anyone or anything but the Lord Himself.
3. Declaring the Truth: v.9b
  - a. The angel quickly rebukes John.
  - b. God alone deserves and demands worship.

**ILLUS.:** People are often tempted to worship what they admire or what causes a religious euphoria in them. (Knowing this, men dress up in costumes to cause reverence of their persons and encourage worship or they manufacture objects that stimulate reverence which leads to veneration or worship. God hates this! So here the angel gives two strong warnings: "do it not" and "worship God!")

- c. The angel identifies himself with John as a "fellowservant" and thereby implies that angels are not exempt from keeping God's Word ("them which keep the sayings of this book").

#### C. The Accessibility Of "This Book": v.10

1. The preeminence of God's Word:
  - a. Over angels and ages.
  - b. Over visions and voices. (All of which John had experienced)
2. The prophetic nature of God's Word:
  - a. Daniel was told to seal up his prophecy (the time was not right).
  - b. John is told not to seal up his prophecy (the time is right).
  - c. Note the words "the time is at hand" – i.e., John's revelation is timely, true and about to unfold.
  - d. Note too the words in v.6b: "shortly to be done..." which suggests the same thing. Cf. 1:1 "...to show his servants things which must shortly come to pass."

**Luke 21:28** And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

**NOTE:** "This book" not only saves us and keeps us and instructs us, but it also educates us as to end time, future events which "must shortly come to pass." The Rapture of the Church is imminent and when that takes place all the other events prophesied in "THIS BOOK" will be triggered.

#### **XXVI. THE DAY TIME RUNS OUT: Rev. 22:11-15**

**NOTE:** In some sports, like basketball, the time clock is always visible. You can watch the minutes and seconds diminish. Finally the buzzer sounds and "TIME'S UP!" The participants nor the spectators can do anything differently. The outcome has been decided. So it is with the man and God's message to man: "TIME IS RUNNING OUT!" In Revelation 22 the message is "TIME'S UP!" It will be too late for anyone to change anything they have done. It will be too late to second guess how they lived or what they should have done. This is true of both the believer and the unbeliever.

#### A. The Permanence of Character: v.11

**NOTE:** The position of v.11 comes between to messages of urgency. In verse 10 are the words "the time is at hand" and in v.12 are the words "I come quickly." In other words whatever decisions need to be made or whatever changes are in order, they had better be cared for with haste. After the words "worship God" in v.9 the attention shifts to the Lord Himself and He becomes the Speaker. ***"And He saith unto me..." v.10ff***

## 1. Lost sinners condemned:

- a. The adverb "still" can be understood in the sense of "more" – i.e., "He that is unjust, let him be more unjust" – etc.
- b. The plain sense in the verse suggests that whatever condition you are in when you die or the Lord comes, that's it: "TIME'S UP!"

**ILLUS.:** The other concept here is that if a man dies in a certain condition, there is no chance for change. There is no purgatory to remedy his or her condition. If a man dies filthy, he is filthy for eternity. If a man dies righteous, he will be righteous for eternity. There is also the horrible implication that if a man dies filthy, he'll be more filthy after 1000 years in eternity than at the time of his death!

## 2. Saved saints confirmed:

- a. If the lost die and are fixed as "unjust" or "filthy" – the saved die "holy" and "righteous."
- b. If the lost become more filthy, the righteous become more righteous; these concepts should generate fright for the lost and delight for the saved.

**ILLUS.:** In the photographic process there are three stages to the development process which are analogous to life : 1) developer (life) 2) stop bath (death) and 3) fixer (eternity). The only chance you have to change is NOW!

**QUOTE:** Phillips, p.260, "The wicked go on being wicked for all eternity...The lost go on sinning and therefore go on suffering. The righteous, on the other hand, continue being righteous, and because they are eternally holy, they are eternally happy."

## B. The Promise of Christ: v.12

### 1. His coming: imminent

- a. Six times the Lord promises to "come quickly" – twice it is a warning and four times it is a promise.
- b. There is a sense of urgency throughout the book; His coming is seen as imminent and this holds hope for the saved and serves as a warning to the lost.

### 2. His rewards: immeasurable

- a. In the light of the previous verse this may suggest that the "rewards" are not only for the saved, but that the lost or "filthy" will get what they deserve too, based on their works. Cf. Rev. 20:12
- b. But for the believer it means that they will get exactly what they deserve for their works after they were saved (before that time all their works were as "filthy rags" and counted only against them).

**NOTE:** Salvation is free for us (though it cost Christ His life), but rewards are earned by our works.

**Romans 8:18** For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

**2 Corinthians 4:17** For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

**Colossians 3:23-25** And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.

**2 Corinthians 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one *may receive* the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, *whether it be good or bad*.

## C. The Person of Christ: v.13

### 1. The Alpha and Omega:

- a. This is the fourth time Christ refers to Himself as the Alpha and Omega; twice near the beginning of the book and twice near the end.
- b. He is the Creator and the Consummator; in Genesis He is the Creator and in Revelation He is the Consummator.
- c. The Living Word is revealed by the written Word, through human language, and He is not only the first and last letter in the alphabet, He is every letter in between; i.e., He is all His children need Him to be.



## 2. The Beginning and the End:

- a. Three times He refers to Himself in this way in Revelation.
- b. Since there can only be one beginning and one end, He is all in all.

## 3. The First and the Last:

- a. Four times in Revelation He refers to Himself like this.
- b. Since there can only be one first and one last, and since Jehovah God refers to Himself in this way, the conclusion is obvious and unarguable that they are One and the same.

**ILLUS.:** This is an excellent passage to use with Jehovah's (false) Witnesses. Take them back to Isaiah 44:6 & Isaiah 48:12 and show them that if Jehovah is the "first and the last" then He and Jesus must be one and the same, since there can only be ONE "first" and ONE "last!"

**Isaiah 44:6 Thus saith the LORD (Jehovah) the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.**

**Isaiah 48:12 Harken unto me (Jehovah), O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last.**

## D. The People and Their Conditions: v.14,15

### 1. Those who will be with Him: v.14

**ILLUS.:** The new version translators go berserk at this verse and change "keep His commandments" to "wash their robes" (!). In the very chapter which warns about subtracting or adding to the text, the translators of the NIV, ASV, NASV, TLB, RSV., NRSV, et. al., do both! But "the weight of internal evidence, as in so many other disputed renderings, turns out to be strongly in favor of the King James translation after all. It is only those who keep His commandments who have right to the tree of life, no because they have obeyed the commandments, but because their saving faith in Christ has both impelled, and enabled them to keep His commandments. Their faith cannot be seen outwardly, but their love of Christ's commandments has demonstrated to all the genuineness of their inward faith." - Morris

### 2. Those who will be without Him:

- a. The word "without" means exactly that – they will be exiled.
- b. The reason is that they are "unjust" and "filthy."

#### 1) The "dogs" are the sodomites!

**Deuteronomy 23:17-18 There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel. Thou shalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God for any vow: for even both these are abomination unto the LORD thy God.**

#### 2) The "whoremongers" are also banned.

**ILLUS.:** People today use all kinds of euphemisms for their ungodly behavior. One "sweet young thing" on TV from Hollywood spoke about "being in a relationship" with someone other than her husband and how they "live together" without the benefit of marriage and are carrying out an "affair." She is just "filthy," and "adulteress," and a "whoremonger." KJV, plain English, waste high, across the plate – no translation needed!

#### 3) The "murderers," "idolaters," and "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" are all banished as well.

**ILLUS.:** Lest anyone feel self righteous because they are free from such gross sins, the Lord simply adds "liars" to the list. Unless cleansed and forgiven by Christ's blood, those who practice lying will also be barred from the city and its tree of life. **TIME IS RUNNING OUT!**

## **XXVII. THE LAST TIME GOD SPEAKS: Rev. 22:16-21**

**ILLUS.:** For about 2000 years God progressively revealed His Word by speaking to men, through men. These men wrote or "inscriptured" His Word and words. Now for the last 2000 years God has remained silent. The Scriptures are complete and there will be no new revelation given to mankind on earth till the Living Word of God shows up at the outset of the Millennium. For those of us who go to heaven before the Millennium, there will be many wonderful new revelations. "Eye hath not seen..."

Last words are always interesting. Here are the "last words of the last Apostle in the last book of the Bible. In a sense they are also the last words of God to humans on this planet for earth's history. What wonderful words they are...

### A. A Final Call: "Come..." vv.16,17

1. The first mention of the Church or churches occurs in Rev. 1:4.
2. The last mention of the Church or churches in Revelation till now, was in chapter 4 before the Tribulation began, suggesting that the Church was raptured at that point.
3. The last mention of the Church or churches in the Bible occurs here in Rev. 22:16.
  - a. The Lord in heaven, with the Church triumphant, reminds us that His revelation was given as a testimony
  - b. It is interesting that He refers to Himself here as "the root and offspring of David," i.e., David's ancestor and descendent, which is only possible if He is the God-man!
  - c. This reference to David also reveals His tender remembrance of Israel.
4. The first invitation or "Come..." in the Bible was in Genesis, to Noah:

**Genesis 7:1 And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.**

5. The last invitation or "Come..." in the Bible is in Revelation, to "whosoever will": v.17
  - a. There is no need for anyone to go to hell, but salvation is given only to those who will "come" to Christ.
  - b. Only those who recognize their spiritual need ("athirst") will come.
  - c. Jesus promised that those who drink of this water "shall never thirst."
  - d. Notice that there is no charge for this "water of life": "freely"

**NOTE:** The first word change in the Bible was in "Eve's Revised Version" when she omitted the word "freely." The first time anyone sinned on earth they did so by omitting a word from God's revelation. And that omission had to do with God's grace. Adam and Eve could have eaten of the Tree of Life and could have had eternal life FREE!

**Genesis 2:16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:**

**Genesis 3:2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:**

- e. Before God slams His revelation shut for 2000+ years He includes another "freely" – His final call to "come."

#### B. A Final Warning: vv. 18,19

1. Don't tamper with 'the words' of the Book!
  - a. God commands us to live "by every word" that proceeds out of His mouth (Mt.4:4), so we must have His words!
  - b. God has promised a blessing to all who keep His "words" (Rev. 1:3), so we must have His words!

**QUOTE:** Morris, p.483,484 "We have the actual words of the Lord, and He has promised to bless all who keep them. Precise words are needed to convey precise thoughts; we will think the thoughts He desires us to think if we believe the words He says, and no other words are needed or appropriate."

2. Don't tamper with "this book" (Greek "biblos")
  - a. This warning is not given alone to those who tamper with the book of Revelation, but with the entire Bible.
  - b. Note the strategic location of this warning at the very end of the canon of Scripture; very "coincidental" – don't you think?!

**ILLUS.:** Here is another interesting "coincidence." Moses placed one of these warning at the end of the Pentateuch (the first five books of Moses). Solomon placed one right in the middle of your Bible. The Holy Spirit placed one here at the very end of your Bible!

**Deuteronomy 4:2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.**

**Proverbs 30:6 Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.**

- c. The plagues" promised to those who add to His Word, listed in Revelation are: being scorched with burning heat, stung by scorpions, smitten with diseases, starvation, hit by hailstones, drinking water turned into blood, etc.
- d. The penalty promised to those who subtract from His Word is to have his or her "part" removed from the book of life, etc.



**QUOTE:** Phillips, p.264 "Thus the Apocalypse opens with a blessing for those who read it, hear it, and keep it. It ends with a curse for those who tamper with it. The closing word that guards the Apocalypse is set as a sentinel to all of Scripture, for God places this book at the end of all the rest."

C. A Final Promise: v.20a

1. The prophetic pronouncement:

- a. "He which testifieth these things saith..." i.e., the Revelation and the Bible are not the mere words of man but the very words of God!
- b. The Bible closes with a promise of the imminent return of our Savior.

2. The Apostle's response: v.20b

- a. The last words from the lips of our Savior are these, and John interjects, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."
- b. John is excited about the prospect of seeing Him Who loved Him and upon Whose breast he leaned at the Last Supper, many years before.
- c. The old man is about to lay down his inspired pen as well as to lay down his life and with his last breaths he expresses his desire for Christ's soon return.

D. A Final Blessing: v.21 **"grace..."**(!)

1. The very last word in God's Word is a word about His grace!
2. The Bible opens with His grace and closes with His grace!

**CONCL.:** THE LAST TIME GOD SPEAKS in His Word to us He speaks of the grace of His Son. Truly, as the song writer says, "the only word for grace is amazing." In the words of John Newton: "'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved... Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come, 'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home."

It has been a long journey since we started this study of the precious book of Revelation. Hopefully God has not only taught us many things about the future, but also challenged us to live more fully for Him now, to claim His wonderful promises, and to put all our trust in His holy Word.

**Romans 11:33** O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!



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– Dr. Paul C. Fedena