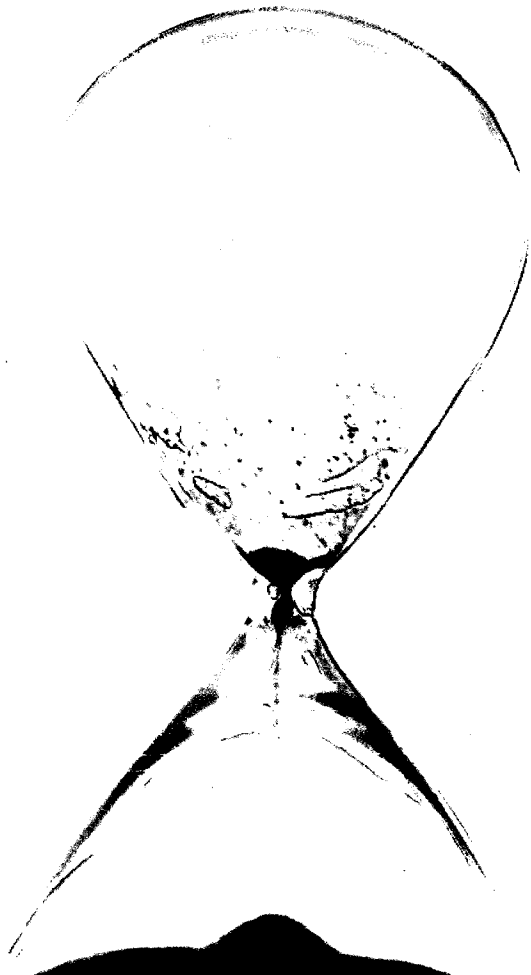


News From Jesus

Part Two



THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERING OVERFLOW

September 28, 1974—South American Division

Adventist pioneers began work in Brazil in 1891. That work has grown until today we have 184,287 members united in the blessed hope.

Part of this remarkable growth we owe to Brazil College, which for almost 60 years has been preparing workers for evangelistic endeavors. However, this institution urgently needs quarters for the theology department. Fifty percent of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering overflow for this quarter will be applied toward this project.

The Amazonas Agricultural School, located in the heart of the Amazon jungle, will benefit from the other half of this offering. This dense green jungle, until recently largely untouched by man, is now being rapidly penetrated and settled.

We believe that the Amazonas Agricultural School can play an important role in illuminating the Amazon with the light of the Adventist hope.

We request you, the members of the Sabbath School, to contribute generously on Sabbath, September 28, for these two institutions that so much need your financial support.

Enoch de Oliveira, Secretary
South American Division

THE COVER

The hourglass, oft-used symbol of the passage of time, here represents the message of the second half of Revelation, which points to the last time—the end. These prophecies reveal that most of the time of man's rule in this world is past. The time of Christ's rulership approaches.

The user of an hourglass knows the precise time required for the sand to flow through the aperture. But in relation to the time of the coming of Jesus there is no such precision after 1844. Time is short. But we have tipped the hourglass by our unpreparedness for His return, so that the passage of the last grains of sand has been delayed. Shall we get the sand flowing again?

NEWS FROM JESUS-2

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Revelation was written not for the casual reader but for the one who loves his Bible and earnestly seeks to know the truth as it is in Jesus.

The angel said to John: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." Rev. 1:3. Many years ago Ellen G. White issued this challenge to the Adventist Church: "Great truths that have lain unheeded and unseen since the day of Pentecost, are to shine from God's word in their native purity. To those who truly love God the Holy Spirit will reveal truths that have faded from the mind, and will also reveal truths that are entirely new."—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 473.

In 1888 Ellen White wrote: "Increased light will shine upon all the grand truths of prophecy, and they will be seen in freshness and brilliancy, because the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will illuminate the whole."—*Evangelism*, page 198.

It is evident that even Seventh-day Adventists did not have all the light on prophecy at the time these words were written. Increased light is never the result of indolence. Jesus said: "Seek, and ye shall find." The book of Revelation is different from every other book in the New Testament. If we think of the Sermon on the Mount as the primer of the church, and the Acts of the Apostles as the geography of the church, and the epistles as the ethics of the church, then the Revelation could well be the philosophy of history of the church.

While it is a revelation of Jesus Christ, it is also a book of music. Seven anthems are recorded in these chapters. Through these we can catch the echo of the celestial choirs. Forty-six times John records hearing voices, and often they are voices of victory. On occasions devils also are referred to, but they are all silent. No song is awakened in Revelation by evil passions. Jesus sang knowing He was facing crucifixion. Paul and Silas sang in the dark dungeon with their feet in the stocks. The church has always sung her way through trials to triumph. Thank God for the Christian message that sets the people singing. Hymns, psalms, anthems, and oratorios have marked the history of God's people through the centuries.

During this second series of lessons on the Revelation we will study some of the most graphic portions of the book. Prophecies of great import will challenge our thinking—prophecies which we as Adventists need to understand in order to share faith and give a reason for the hope that is within us with meekness and fear. It was largely the study of the Revelation that brought the advent movement into being. Let us pray that the restudy of these great themes will prepare the church for the latter rain. In this connection Ellen G. White has said: "When we as a people understand what this book [Revelation] means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 113. And again: "When the books of Daniel and Revelation are better understood, believers will have an entirely different religious experience."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 114. These statements should challenge us to study this great book with a new diligence, seeking ever to know the truth as it is in Jesus.

The Blessing of Daily Study

"Every day some portion of time should be appropriated to the study of the lessons, not merely in learning to mechanically repeat the words, while the mind does not comprehend the meaning; but to go to the very foundation, and become familiar with what is brought out in the lesson."—"Counsels on Sabbath School Work," page 53.

My Pledge

As one who greatly desires to improve his knowledge of the Scriptures, I pledge myself to the careful and prayerful study of some portion of my Sabbath School lesson each day of the week.

(signed)

The regular adult Sabbath School lessons are available free each month in Braille and 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ rpm records to blind and physically handicapped persons who cannot read normal inkprint. This includes individuals who because of arthritis, multiple sclerosis, paralysis, accidents, old age, and so forth, cannot hold or focus on normal inkprint publications. Contact the Christian Record Braille Foundation, Box 6097, Lincoln, Nebraska 68506.

Lesson Titles for the Quarter

1. War Against the Woman
2. The Beast and the Lamb
3. Challenge to Freedom
4. The Three Angels' Messages
5. The King Is Coming
6. The Plagues
7. Satan's Confederacy
8. Exodus From Babylon
9. The Marriage Supper
10. The Devil's End
11. The Holy City
12. In God's Presence
13. The Invitation

Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly (regular edition), No. 317, July-September, 1974. Single copy, 35 cents; four issues (1 year), \$1.40; no additional charge to countries requiring extra postage. Published in the U.S.A., by Pacific Press Publishing Association (a corporation of S.D.A.), 1350 Villa Street, Mountain View, California 94042. Second-class mail privileges authorized at Mountain View, California. Form 3579 requested. When a change of address is desired, please be sure to send both old and new addresses.

Copyright 1974 by Pacific Press Publishing Association

Cover photo by Concerned Communications

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Rev. 12:10, 11.

war against the

"Satan had warred for the mastery in heaven, and had lost the battle. God could no longer trust him with honor and supremacy, and these, with the part he had taken in the government of heaven, were taken from him.

"Since that time Satan and his army of confederates have been the avowed enemies of God in our world, continually warring against the cause of truth and righteousness. Satan has continued to present to men, as he presented to the angels, his false representations of Christ and of God, and he has won the world to his side. Even the professedly Christian churches have taken sides with the first great apostate. . . .

"The influence of mind on mind, so strong a power for good when sanctified, is equally strong for evil in the hands of those opposed to God. This power Satan used in his work of instilling evil into the minds of the angels, and he made it appear that he was seeking the good of the universe. . . .

"The casting down of Satan as an accuser of the brethren in heaven was accomplished by the great work of Christ in giving up His life. Notwithstanding Satan's persistent opposition, the plan of redemption was being carried out. Man was esteemed of sufficient value for Christ to sacrifice His life for him. Satan, knowing that the empire he had usurped would in the end be wrested from him, determined to spare no pains to destroy as many as possible of the creatures whom God had created in His image. . . .

"The victory gained at His death on Calvary broke forever the accusing power of Satan over the universe, and silenced his charges that self-denial was impossible with God and therefore not essential in the human family."

—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, pp. 973, 974.

LESSON OUTLINE

- 1. The Woman, Rev. 12:1, 2**
- 2. The Dragon, Rev. 12:3**
- 3. The War, Rev. 12:7, 8**
- 4. The Victory, Rev. 12:10-12**
- 5. The Wilderness, Rev. 12:13**
- 6. The Remnant, Rev. 12:17**

LESSON 1

June 30 to July 6

woman



Part 1
THE WOMAN

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." Rev. 12:1, 2.

It will help our understanding of Revelation 12 if we think of it as a prophetic drama in four parts:

1. The origin of sin when Lucifer challenged God and His throne.
2. The attack on Christ.
3. The persecution of the church in an attempt to destroy it.
4. The final war on God's remnant people.

What symbolic meaning did writers of both Old and New Testaments give to a woman in prophecy? Jer. 6:2; Isa. 54:5, 6; Hosea 2:19, 20; 2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7, 8.

How have the Bible writers represented the corrupt or apostate church? Isa. 50:1; Jer. 3:1, 8; Ezek. 16:26-29; Rev. 17:1-5.

A woman in prophecy represents a church. With the sun for her garment and the moon as her footstool the woman is a fitting representation of God's people, the church. The true people of God are pictured as being clothed with the "Sun of righteousness." Mal. 4:2. The church of both the Old and the New Testaments was established on the sure foundation of the Word of God. Thus the sun represents Christ's righteousness, and the moon represents the Word of God.

The twelve stars in the crown of the woman or the true church could well represent the twelve tribes of Israel, as she is shown in the prophecy previous to the birth of Jesus and thus before the founding of the Christian church.

In what state was the woman or the church when John saw her? Verse 2.

Throughout all the centuries since God made the promise to Eve, His true people were awaiting the coming of the Redeemer. But it was in "the fulness of the time" that God sent forth His Son. Gal. 4:4. When He came He was a helpless Babe laid in the slender arms of a maiden. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." 1 Tim. 3:16.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I better understand the condescension of the Son of God to come into this world for my salvation?

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Hidden Treasure," page 114.

Part 2
THE DRAGON

"And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." Rev. 12:3.

What power was waiting to destroy the child?

Who was this dragon power? Verse 9.

The devil has always sought to work through earthly powers. Both ancient Egypt and pagan Rome took the dragon as their symbol of power. This prophecy unmasks the devil, showing him to be the author of all opposition to God by earthly powers such as Babylon, Tyre, Rome, and even some modern nations.

Under what circumstances do we find God's first promise of the coming Deliverer? Gen. 3:15.

This general promise was narrowed down from time to time. It came to Abraham; then to Isaac; then to Jacob; then to the tribe of Judah; next to David and his family; et cetera. On each of these delegations we find the devil concentrating his powers to thwart the plan of God. Yet in spite of all the enemy's plots and schemes, God's promise was at last fulfilled.

In what significant way does the New Testament begin? Matt. 1:1.

The child, Jesus, was born at last a member of the human race in spite of all the united powers of opposition. Then from His earliest years through to manhood our Lord was the object of demonic hate. Satan at last succeeded in having Him crucified. And His grave was sealed by the Roman seal. But that sealed rock-hewn sepulcher could not hold the Prince of life. He strode forth the Conqueror, having raided the realm of demonism and shattered the forces of darkness.

Where next do we find the "child" our Saviour? Rev. 12:5. See also Eph. 1:20, 21.

He arose for our justification, and as King of righteousness He now ministers at the throne of grace. Heb. 4:14; 8:1; 10:12. Who can bring any accusation against the elect of God? As we are justified in Christ and vindicated by His power, nothing now can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Rom. 8:38, 39.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I overcome the dragon?

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 438, 501, 502.

Part 3
THE WAR **"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." Rev. 12:7, 8.**

This is a wonderfully revealing scripture. While other prophets touch the great question of the origin of evil, these brief verses make the issue very clear. War did not begin on earth; it began in heaven. Lucifer instigated rebellion among the angels as he challenged the rulership of God.

How does Isaiah unfold the mystery of sin? Isa. 14:12-15.

What added touch does Ezekiel give? Ezek. 28:12, 15.

Note that Lucifer is presented to us in these two scriptures under the symbolic role of the king of Babylon in Isaiah and then as the king of Tyrus in Ezekiel. An unseen power "worketh in the children of disobedience." Eph. 2:2.

How many angels or "the stars of heaven" joined with Lucifer in the rebellion? Rev. 12:4.

How did God deal with these rebel hosts? 2 Peter 2:4.

Where are these fallen angels now? Jude 6.

They are under judgment awaiting the execution of their sentence of judgment when they, along with all unrepentant sinners, will be destroyed forever. Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10, 14.

It was a tragic day when the serpent won the allegiance of Adam and Eve. This newly created earth then became the battleground of contending forces led by two great generals, Michael and the dragon.

Sin is a mystery. To excuse it is to defend it. There is no place for sin in a perfect universe. Like a diseased portion of a human body it must be removed in order for the body to exist and be healthy. Evil will eventually be destroyed. Concerning Satan the Lord has said: "Never shalt thou be any more." Ezek. 28:19.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do I understand the subtlety of Satan in his multitudinous deceptions? Am I wholly on God's side in the contest with evil? What is the Lord's promise to those victorious over sin?

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. 3:21.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 499, 500.

Part 4
THE VICTORY

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." Rev. 12:10.

"The great contest that had been so long in progress in this world was now decided, and Christ was conqueror. His death had answered the question whether the Father and the Son had sufficient love for man to exercise self-denial and a spirit of sacrifice. Satan had revealed his true character as a liar and a murderer. It was seen that the very same spirit with which he had ruled the children of men who were under his power, he would have manifested if permitted to control the intelligences of heaven. With one voice the loyal universe united in extolling the divine administration."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 70.

Why does the devil attack the church with such great wrath? Rev. 12:12 (last part).

Christ's victory at Calvary settled the destiny not only of our world but also of Satan and all his evil hosts. In *The Desire of Ages*, page 758, we read: "All heaven triumphed in the Saviour's victory. Satan was defeated, and knew that his kingdom was lost. . . .

"Not until the death of Christ was the character of Satan clearly revealed to the angels or the unfallen worlds. The archapostate has so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles."

What warning is issued to the inhabitants of the earth? Verse 12.

The blood of the Lamb is the secret of the Christian's victory. But with the Christian's belief in the blood must also be "the word of their testimony." To believe in the vicarious atonement of our Lord is primary. But it must be accompanied by our testimony to its reality in our lives.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what ways must my life change in order to take full advantage of the means of victory God has provided?

"All who will can be overcomers. Let us strive earnestly to reach the standard set before us. Christ knows our weakness, and to Him we can go daily for help. It is not necessary for us to gain strength a month ahead. We are to conquer from day to day."—Ellen G. White *Comments, SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 974.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Shall Not God Avenge His Own?" pages 167-170.

Part 5 **Against whom did the devil fight when he no longer had**
THE WILDERNESS **access to Jesus?**

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child." Rev. 12:13.

What was given to the woman and why? Verse 14.

"The eagles' wings given her appropriately signify the haste with which the true church was obliged to seek her own safety when the man of sin was installed in power. The assistance of God was provided her to this end. The like figure is used to describe God's dealings with ancient Israel. By Moses He said to them, 'Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto Myself.' Exodus 19:4."—Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, page 558.

How long was the church to be "nourished" and protected? Verses 6, 14.

This period of 1,260 days, or "time, and times, and half a time," we have already noted in chapter 11:3. In verse 2 (chapter 11) another calculation is used—"forty and two months."

What does water represent in prophecy? Rev. 17:15; Isa. 8:7.

What "helped the woman" or the church? Rev. 12:16.

During the 1,260 years when true Christians faced death for their faith, God's faithful people fled to places of refuge such as the Piedmont valleys in Italy and the Alpine fastnesses. The new land of America also opened its arms in welcome for those who made their way across the ocean to escape persecution.

The 1,260-year period which began in A.D. 538 reached to 1798. But in our Lord's great prophecy in Matt. 24:22 Jesus said, "those days should be shortened." See also Mark 13:20. And they were shortened. It is claimed that the last decree of tolerance was passed in Austria in 1775, a few years prior to 1798, the end of the 1,260 years.

THINK IT THROUGH **What lessons are there for me in the story of God's church during the 1,260 years?**

FURTHER STUDY *The Great Controversy*, pages 54-56.

Part 6
THE REMNANT

With whom did the dragon make war?

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Rev. 12:17.

Since Jesus was born of the woman, then the remnant of her seed are the “brothers” and “sisters” of Jesus. By attacking Jesus’ “family,” the devil attacks Jesus. Those who remain faithful to their relation to Jesus are designated as the *remnant*. It is in the light of the use of “remnant” in other scriptures that we must understand the expression in Revelation 12:17.

What promise did King Hezekiah make on God’s behalf if the people would turn back to God? 2 Chron. 30:6.

Those who had escaped from Assyrian captivity he called a “remnant.” The word in Hebrew means “those who escape,” “what remains,” or “what is left.”

What are the characteristics of the remnant? Rev. 12:17.

“The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God.”—*The Great Controversy*, page 582.

“Since it is the distinctive work of the prophets to bear messages from Jesus to the people . . . , the interpretation that the testimony of Jesus refers to the ‘testimony,’ or ‘witness,’ that Jesus bears to the church is strongly supported. Seventh-day Adventists thus interpret the passage and believe that the ‘remnant’ will be distinguished by the manifestation of the gift of prophecy in their midst. The ‘testimony of Jesus Christ,’ they believe, is the witness of Jesus in their midst through the medium of the prophetic gift.”—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Rev. 12:17.

This gift of prophecy Seventh-day Adventists affirm has been clearly manifested in the ministry and writings of Ellen G. White. She was active as God’s messenger among us from 1844 to 1915, when she passed to her rest. Throughout her long and intensely active life she gave continual evidence of her divine call.

THINK IT THROUGH

How shall I become more aware of the divine blessings given to God’s remnant in the writings of the spirit of prophecy? Am I bringing my life into harmony with the counsels of His Spirit?

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, page 510; *Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 213.



NG GALLOWAY; H. LARKIN

the Beast and the Lamb

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Rev. 13:8.

In chapters 12 to 22 we have, in a special way, God’s final message of warning and entreaty to the world. Instead of religion being the bread of life, today it has become the cake of life, a dainty dessert at the end of a full meal of pleasure, business, or discussion. Even among those who digress enough to speak a little about religion, the Bible is, too often, not regarded as the authentic Word of God.

To meet the need of this tragic time God inspired John to write the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is God’s message to our time. In these chapters Christ crucified, risen, ministering, and coming again is set forth in verity. The impressive prophetic symbols in this book make more plain the everlasting gospel. As we continue to study this illuminating book let us remember that it is a message straight from the Lord Jesus Himself.

LESSON OUTLINE

- 1. Daniel’s Beast Reappears, Rev. 13:1, 2**
- 2. The Beast’s Power, Rev. 13:2 (last part)**
- 3. The Wounded Head, Rev. 13:3, 4**
- 4. Blasphemy, Rev. 13:5-7**
- 5. The Book of Life, Rev. 13:8**
- 6. The Saints, Rev. 13:9, 10**

Part 1
DANIEL'S BEAST
REAPPEARS

"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." Rev. 13:1, 2.

Six centuries before John's day the prophet Daniel recorded a vision in which he saw a great ten-horned beast "dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly." Dan. 7:7.

While Daniel was an important officer of state in Babylon, he was given this vision. These beasts represented successive empires: the lion, Babylon; the bear, Persia; the leopard, Greece; and the ten-horned beast, Rome. The beast John saw combined all the creatures of Daniel's vision—the lion, the bear, the leopard and the ten-horned beast.

Which of the four beasts of Daniel did this seven-headed beast most resemble? Rev. 13:2.

Although this beast symbolized pagan Rome, yet Greek culture and philosophy predominated in the Roman Empire to such an extent that we often speak of the Greco-Roman Empire. Hence the expression, "like a leopard" for the leopard symbolized Greece. But the cultures of Babylon and Persia also formed a part of the Empire.

What part of the seven-headed beast particularly resembled ancient Babylon?

History records that when Rome spoke it was with the same intolerant voice as that of Nebuchadnezzar when he ordered the three Hebrews into the fiery furnace.

THINK IT THROUGH

How would these great symbolic messages have affected me had I been a member of one of the churches which received the Revelation in John's day?

"In the revelation given to him [John] there was unfolded scene after scene of thrilling interest in the experience of the people of God, and the history of the church foretold to the very close of time. In figures and symbols, subjects of vast importance were presented to John, which he was to record, that the people of God living in his age and in future ages might have an intelligent understanding of the perils and conflicts before them.

"This revelation was given for the guidance and comfort of the church throughout the Christian dispensation."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, page 583.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, page 439.

Part 2
THE BEAST'S POWER

"And the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." Rev. 13:2.

Who is the dragon that gives power and authority to the seven-headed beast? Rev. 12:9.

We are not left to guess concerning the identity of the dragon. He is called "the Devil and Satan." In verse 4 the great red dragon is pictured as waiting to devour the Child as soon as He was born. This anti-God power always works through earthly kingdoms in his attempts to thwart the purposes of God. It was pagan Rome that sought the destruction of the infant Jesus.

Besides "power" and "authority" what else did the dragon give the beast? Rev. 13:2.

The word "seat" in the Greek is *thronos*, from which we get our word *throne*.

In addition to being a political kingdom what else does prophecy say this blasphemous power demands? Verse 4.

Notice the wording of this text. When men pay this power homage they actually worship the dragon, or the devil.

What are the similarities between the ten-horned beast of Daniel and the seven-headed beast of Revelation? Dan. 7:7-14, 23-27; Rev. 13:1-10.

The purpose of this prophecy is to alert the people of God to the dangers facing them, especially at the end of time. Persecuting powers have come and gone in past centuries, but what God's remnant people face just before Christ comes is more subtle, more deceptive than has ever been faced before.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do I have a faith strong enough to meet the greatest deceptions and the most overwhelming demonstrations of power?

"A day of great intellectual darkness has been shown to be favorable to the success of the papacy. It will yet be demonstrated that a day of great intellectual light is equally favorable for its success. In past ages, when men were without God's word and without the knowledge of the truth, their eyes were blindfolded. . . . In this generation there are many whose eyes become dazzled by the glare of human speculations, 'science falsely so called.'"—*The Great Controversy*, pages 572, 573.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 56-60.

Part 3
THE WOUNDED HEAD

"And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Rev. 13:3.

The identity of this wounded head as the papacy is clear. The papacy grew over a period of two hundred years, from Constantine to Justinian. A decree by Justinian in A.D. 538 made the bishop of Rome "the head of the churches and the corrector of heretics." It was not sudden but a gradual transference of power. The church historian Eusebius, in his *Life of Constantine* states: "In order to render Christianity more attractive to the Gentiles, the priests adopted the exterior vestments and ornaments used in the pagan cult." Truth was tragically sacrificed on the altars of form and liturgy. The rule of the popes increased until it became almost absolute. Papal control continued for many centuries. But it was destined for defeat.

What did John see happening to bring an end to this dominating power? Verse 3 (first part).

The beast of Revelation 13 received a "wound of death" (literal translation of the Greek). But he recovered from the wound. Even more remarkable than the wounding was the healing. Every previous world power, after its wounding, remained dead, or at least played no further role as a world leader. But this power was different.

What effect will the papacy have on the world when its recovery is complete? Verse 3 (last part), 4.

A similar statement of astonishment by the people of the world is found in Revelation 17:8. The full recovery of this wounded power is made possible because of the changed attitude on the part of the peoples of the world. Liberty is the watchword today. Under the slogan of liberty subtle influences are shaping the future.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do I recognize the widespread plans of certain groups to enforce their ideas upon me? Will I personally be prepared to face the crisis when it comes?

"There are only two parties upon this earth—those who stand under the bloodstained banner of Jesus Christ and those who stand under the black banner of rebellion."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 974.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, page 579.

Part 4
BLASPHEMY

"And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." Rev. 13:5-7.

The power here mentioned is easily identified. It is the same power already mentioned in chapters 11 and 12—the power that was to continue forty-two months or 1,260 prophetic days.

When the beast opened his mouth, what does the prophecy say he did? Verse 6.

Blasphemy in the Scriptural definition is not bad language; it is claiming to be God. When Jesus was being tried before the Jewish court, He was charged with blasphemy.

In addition to blaspheming God's name, what does the prophecy say he will do? Verse 6.

To blaspheme God's tabernacle means that this power would claim to do just what Christ, our High Priest, is doing in the heavenly sanctuary. And that the apostate church does. She claims to forgive sins. When Jesus forgave sins, the Pharisees called it blasphemy. See Luke 5:21.

What else does the prophecy say this power would do? Verse 7.

Making war against God's people and overcoming them has marked the history of this power. The terrible persecutions of the centuries are responsible for the lives of millions of men and women. The angel told Daniel this power would "wear out the saints of the most High." Dan. 7:25.

THINK IT THROUGH

How would I react if it were demanded of me that I either give up my faith or give up my life? Those terrible days of the past could well happen again.

"The same spirit that in ages past led men to persecute the true church, will in the future lead to the pursuance of a similar course toward those who maintain their loyalty to God. Even now preparations are being made for this last great conflict." —*Prophets and Kings*, page 605.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 49-52.

Part 5
THE BOOK OF LIFE

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev. 13:8.

The expression, "the book of life" is found seven times in the Revelation, and each reference occurs in a very solemn setting (see Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27; 22:19). Jesus told the Seventy, whom He had sent out to preach and to heal, that to know their names were "written in heaven" called for greater rejoicing than that the devils were subject unto them. Luke 10:19, 20.

How is the true church described in the Epistle to the Hebrews? Heb. 12:23.

The Revised Standard Version reads: "The assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven." In an old gospel song we ask the question, "Is my name written there, on the page white and fair?" Nothing is more important for us than to know that our names are retained in the Lamb's book of life.

What is the ultimate end of those whose names are not found in that book? Rev. 20:15.

How widespread will be the worship of the beast before our Lord returns? Rev. 13:8.

At the end of earth's history the whole human race will be divided into just two groups—those who give their homage to the beast, after his wound has been fully healed, and those whose names are found in the book of life.

What is Christ's promise to those who overcome in the battle against the powers of evil? Rev. 3:5.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do I know my name is "written in heaven"? If not, why not?

"Over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil, and whose name is registered in the Lamb's book of life, the controversy is repeated. Never is one received into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the enemy. But He who was the hope of Israel then, their defense, their justification and redemption, is the hope of the church today."
—*Prophets and Kings*, page 585.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 7, p. 182.

**Part 6
THE SAINTS**

"If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." Rev. 13:9, 10.

Instead of "the patience and faith of the saints," the New English Bible reads, "the fortitude and faithfulness of God's people," implying both courage and constancy in the midst of bitter persecution. During the forty-two prophetic months (verse 5) or the 1,260 prophetic days (chapter 12:6) the true church suffered severely. Many times they cried inwardly: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?" Chapter 6:10. But in chapter 13 we see the captor captured, the persecutor avenged.

How do both John and Daniel speak of the power of this apostate church? Rev. 13:7; Dan. 7:25.

The wording of the New English Bible is again most impressive: "It was also allowed to wage war on God's people and to defeat them" (Rev. 13:7), and "the saints shall be delivered into his power." Dan. 7:25. Through those centuries of persecution millions of true and steadfast Christians revealed before an astonished world what the grace of God can do in spite of pain and torture.

What did the prophecy say would happen at the end of the 1,260 days or years? Rev. 13:10.

True to Bible prophecy, events occurred in Europe which resulted in the pope's being taken prisoner by General Berthier of France. This was in the year 1798, exactly 1,260 years after 538 when the Arian Ostrogoths had been "plucked up by the roots" (Dan. 7:8), making way for the papacy to dominate the nations of Europe. How accurate is the Word of God! But great trials still await the children of God.

THINK IT THROUGH

Would my faith be strong enough to sustain me under torture even unto death?

"God desires His people to prepare for the soon-coming crisis. Prepared or unprepared, they must all meet it; and those only who have brought their lives into conformity to the divine standard, will stand firm at that time of test and trial. When secular rulers unite with ministers of religion to dictate in matters of conscience, then it will be seen who really fear and serve God."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pages 431, 432.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 607-610.

CLOSED

By order No. 7117

**Pending compliance
with worship code**



challenge to freedom

"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." Rev. 13:10.

"The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. . . . [Rev. 13:11-17 quoted] . . .

"When the Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power to sustain a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution; when the state shall use its power to enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church—then will Protestant America have formed an image to the papacy, and there will be a national apostasy which will end only in national ruin."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 976.

LESSON OUTLINE

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. The Two-horned Beast I, Rev. 13:11 | 4. The Image to the Beast, Rev. 13:14 (last part), 15 |
| 2. The Two-horned Beast II, Rev. 13:11 (last part), 12 | 5. The Mark of the Beast, Rev. 13:16 |
| 3. The World Deceived, Rev. 13:13, 14 (first part) | 6. The Man, Name, and Number, Rev. 13:17, 18 |

Part 1
THE TWO-HORNED
BEAST I

From whence did this second beast-power come?

“And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.” Rev. 13:11.

“The first beast was from the ‘sea;’ the second came up from the ‘earth.’ The sea represents ‘peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues’ (Revelation 17:15), a true picture of Europe, where the papal beast arose. The *earth* must represent, not a crowded country of diverse nations, but a sparsely populated and isolated area. And where was there such a place? Certainly not in Europe or Asia. True to the prophecy, something tremendous was happening across the Atlantic. A century and a half before this time, colonies had begun to spring up in America. By 1776 these colonies had bound themselves together and were waging the Revolutionary War, severing themselves from Europe. Thus the foundation was laid for a completely new nation.”—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, pages 138, 139.

How does the prophet describe this second beast’s entrance into the international scene? Verse 11.

The Greek word *anabainō* means to come up quietly, unobtrusively, but quickly, as a springing vegetable. And that is how the United States of America arose. One historian says, “Like a silent seed we grew into an empire.”

When was this nation, symbolized by the beast with two horns, to arise? Answer: At the time the ten-horned beast received its “deadly wound.” See Rev. 13:3, 11, 12.

The United States Constitution was ratified in 1789, the very year the French Revolution broke out, which eventually brought to an end the 1,260-year period.

John Wesley’s interpretation of this prophecy about 1760 is arresting. He said: “He is not yet come, though he cannot be far off. For he is to appear at the end of the forty-two months of the first beast.”—*Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*. Quoted in *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 139.

“The United States is a land that has been under the special shield of the Omnipotent One. God has done great things for this country, but in the transgression of His law, men have been doing a work originated by the man of sin. Satan is working out his designs to involve the human family in disloyalty.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 975.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 439-441.

Part 2
THE TWO-HORNED
BEAST II

"He had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." Rev. 13:11, 12.

What is significant about the horns of this second beast? Verse 11.

With what is the power of the two-horned beast compared? Verse 12.

"Prophecy represents Protestantism as having lamblike horns, but speaking as a dragon. Already we are beginning to hear the voice of the dragon. There is a satanic force propelling the Sunday movement, but it is concealed. . . .

"Let not the commandment-keeping people of God be silent at this time, as though we gracefully accepted the situation. There is the prospect before us of waging a continuous war, at the risk of imprisonment, of losing property and even life itself, to defend the law of God, which is being made void by the laws of men."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 975.

When the two-horned beast compels the people to worship, whom will they be worshipping? Verse 12.

The prediction that it will speak "as a dragon" (verse 11) and exercise "all the power of the first beast" plainly foretells a development of the spirit of intolerance and persecution that was manifested by the powers represented by the dragon and the leopardlike beast. The statement that the beast with two horns "causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast" indicates that the authority of this nation is to be exercised in enforcing some observance which shall be an act of homage to the papacy.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I prepared for the time when liberty will be curtailed and I will be under pressure of law for failure to pay homage to a power alien to the gospel of Christ? What will be my stand at that time?

"Only in flagrant violation of these safeguards to the nation's liberty, can any religious observance be enforced by civil authority. But the inconsistency of such action is no greater than is represented in the symbol. It is the beast with lamblike horns—in profession pure, gentle, and harmless—that speaks as a dragon."—*The Great Controversy*, page 442.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 441, 442.

Part 3
THE WORLD
DECEIVED

"And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." Rev. 13:13, 14.

What does the Spirit of God declare will happen "in the latter times"? 1 Tim. 4:1.

Just prior to our Lord's return there will exist widespread ungodliness and religious declension. Apostasy from God's truth is what makes this possible.

How does the apostle Paul describe the conditions in the last days? 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

When people do not receive the truth, what will they receive in its place? 2 Thess. 2:9-11.

"The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, and who has always oppressed the people of God, will cause laws to be made enforcing the observance of the first day of the week. But God's people are to stand firm for Him. And the Lord will work in their behalf, showing plainly that He is the God of gods."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 975.

What makes the devil's deception so strong? Rev. 13:13, 14.

When the prophet Elijah challenged the prophets and priests of Baal, he asked God to reveal His power by sending fire from heaven. In the last days the enemy of righteousness will use every kind of device to deceive. Those who say that seeing is believing may be deluded. Only God's Word will sustain God's people in the coming days of trial and test. The promise is clear: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Rev. 3:10.

THINK IT THROUGH

How am I making God's Word a part of my life so that I will be able to remain true in the face of nearly overwhelming deceptions?

The apostle Paul says: "For our fight is not against any physical enemy: it is against organizations and powers that are spiritual. We are up against the unseen power that controls this dark world, and spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil." Eph. 6:12, Phillips.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 1, pp. 301, 302; *The Great Controversy*, pages 612, 624.

Part 4
THE IMAGE TO
THE BEAST

What does prophecy indicate will be made in honor of the beast?

"Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." Rev. 13:14.

"The 'image to the beast' represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas. The 'mark of the beast' still remains to be defined.

"After the warning against the worship of the beast and his image the prophecy declares: 'Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Since those who keep God's commandments are thus placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God's law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 445, 446.

What will "the image of the beast" encourage the people to do? Verse 15.

"To understand what would constitute an image of the papal beast, we must first gain some definite idea of what constitutes the papacy itself. The full development of the beast, or the establishment of papal supremacy, dates from the famous letter of Justinian, which was made effective in A.D. 538, constituting the pope the head of the church and the corrector of heretics. The papacy was a church clothed with civil power—an ecclesiastical body having authority to punish all dissenters with confiscation of goods, imprisonment, torture, and death. What would be an image of the papacy?—Another ecclesiastical establishment clothed with civil power, in other words, a union of church and state."—Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, pages 590, 591.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what ways should I be seeking God earnestly today so that I may be prepared for the coming crisis?

"When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result."—*The Great Controversy*, page 445.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, page 443.

Part 5
THE MARK OF
THE BEAST

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads." Rev. 13:16.

Who in chapter 13 imposes the mark of the beast? Verses 11, 16.

"The same spirit that in ages past led men to persecute the true church, will in the future lead to the pursuance of a similar course toward those who maintain their loyalty to God. . . .

"The decree that will finally go forth against the remnant people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews. . . .

"Satan will arouse indignation against the minority who refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith."—*Prophets and Kings*, pages 605, 606.

What is the mark of the beast? See verse 16.

"Mark. Gr. *charagma*, 'an impress,' 'a stamp,' 'a mark.' This is evidently some badge of loyalty to the beast, some special feature that denotes that the one displaying such a mark worships the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed (v. 8). Adventist interpreters understand this mark to be not a literal brand but some sign of allegiance that identifies the bearer as loyal to the power represented by the beast. The controversy at that time will center on the law of God, and particularly on the fourth command. . . . Hence the observance of Sunday will constitute such a sign, but only at the time when the beast's power will be revived and Sunday observance becomes a matter of compliance with civil law."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Rev. 13:16.

What is the fate of those who receive this mark? Rev. 14:9-11.

THINK IT THROUGH

Do I think it impossible for my nation to compel people on matters of religion? What will have first to be changed before this can come about? Are there indications today of such changes in the making?

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, page 615; *Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 251; *Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 117.

Part 6
THE MAN, NAME,
AND NUMBER

“And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.” Rev. 13:17, 18.

All through the Revelation two supernatural powers are contrasted—the man of sin and the Man of Salvation. In this lesson we reach one of the great crises of the book, where a prominent enemy of truth is unmasked and identified.

What will be the result of not receiving the mark? Verse 17.

Satan says, “I will be ruler of the earth, prince of the world. I will so control the minds under my power that God’s Sabbath shall be an object of contempt. A *sign*? I will make the observance of the seventh day a sign of disloyalty to the authorities of earth. Human laws shall be made so stringent that men and women will not dare to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. For fear of wanting food and clothing, they will join with the world in transgressing God’s law; and the earth will be wholly under my dominion.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 4, p. 1172.

What is the significant number associated with the beast? Verse 18.

A footnote in the Douay Version, the official Roman Catholic Bible, reads: “The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number” (meaning 666). However, the implication is given that this “antichrist” has not yet appeared.

The title *Vicarius Filii Dei*, meaning “vicar of the Son of God,” is a title held by the pope. This title has the value in Roman numerals of 666. This coincidence alone proves nothing, but in the context of the prophecy it adds one more point of identification of the beast power.

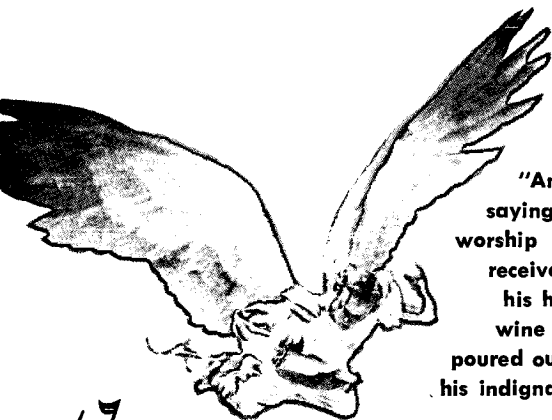
THINK IT THROUGH

What should be my attitude toward Catholic people, and how should I use interpretations of prophecy that are uncomplimentary to Catholic ears?

“We should be careful not to thrust and crowd and condemn those who have not the light that we have. We should not go out of our way to make hard thrusts at the Catholics. Among the Catholics there are many who are most conscientious Christians and who walk in all the light that shines upon them, and God will work in their behalf. . . . Do not censure others; do not condemn them.”—*Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 243.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 81.



"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation." Rev. 14:9, 10.

the three Angels' messages

"The fourteenth chapter of Revelation is a chapter of the deepest interest. This scripture will soon be understood in all its bearings, and the messages given to John the revelator will be repeated with distinct utterance."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 978.

"The Lord has a people on the earth, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. He has His thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Such will stand with Him on Mount Zion. But they must stand on this earth, girded with the whole armor, ready to engage in the work of saving those who are ready to perish. Heavenly angels conduct this search, and spiritual activity is demanded of all who believe present truth, that they may join the angels in their work."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 978.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. The Victorious Company, Rev. 14:1-3
2. The Firstfruits, Rev. 14:4, 5

3. The First Angel's Message, Rev. 14:6, 7
4. The Second Angel's Message, Rev. 14:8
5. The Third Angel's Message, Rev. 14:9, 10
6. True Worship Identified, Rev. 14:11 (last part)-13

LESSON 4
July 21-27



Part 1
THE VICTORIOUS
COMPANY

"And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." Rev. 14:1-3.

What a wonderfully inspiring scene this is in comparison with the tragic picture of the last verses of chapter 13! This fourteenth chapter is closely related however to chapters 12 and 13. John in vision is watching the preparations for the final battle between two great opposing powers. The dragon under all kinds of disguises is marshalling his forces to oppose God's loyal remnant.

What is the main identification seen in this victorious group with the Lamb? Verse 1.

The "Father's name" contrasts strongly with the "mark of the beast." The 144,000 sealed ones we already noticed in chapter 7. There they are presented as having been gathered from all nations. Here they appear with Christ on Mount Zion.

What does John hear this triumphant group doing? Verse 3.

John speaks of their song as *new* because it tells of a new experience—full salvation from sin. And no one could learn it except those who had passed through the "time of trouble" referred to in Daniel 12:1. These have been sealed with "the seal of the living God." Rev. 7:2. And that seal is associated with the name of God the Father. The only commandment of the ten which contains His *name* and His *office* revealing His *authority* is the fourth, the Sabbath command. But that is the very one the beast and the false prophet have attempted to change. These that stand with Christ as conquerors at the last will be a loyal and faithful people to the end.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I be certain to take part in that great song of victory?

"Upon the crystal sea before the throne, that sea of glass as it were mingled with fire,—so resplendent is it with the glory of God,—are gathered the company that have 'gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.'"—*The Great Controversy*, page 648.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 1, pp. 58-61.

Part 2
THE FIRSTFRUITS

"These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." Rev. 14:4, 5.

"Those constituting this special company are undefiled in life and doctrine. A woman in prophecy denotes a church. In Revelation 17:5 we have the picture of an impure woman with her daughters, all of whom have partaken of the same unholy nature. . . . But the 144,000 are not defiled with these women, or these apostate churches. They have a pure faith not defiled by false teachings; it is 'the faith of Jesus.'"—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 148.

What special honor is given to the sealed ones? Verse 4.

The privilege of following the Lamb throughout His vast creation, to explore those undreamed of constellations beyond the range of our telescopes and learn from the lips of our Redeemer the history of areas beyond our imagination, should inspire us to greater faithfulness and dedication.

What is this specially sealed company called? Verse 4.

The expression "firstfruits" has reference not to a point of time but rather to quality. Christ is called "the firstfruits of them that slept." 1 Cor. 15:20. Yet we know that He was not the first in time to be raised from the dead. But He certainly was the first in quality and the greatest in victory.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I following my Lord so closely now that I can be assured of following Him in the hereafter?

"The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they will behold Christ crucified. Never will it be forgotten that He whose power created and upheld the unnumbered worlds through the vast realms of space, the Beloved of God, the Majesty of heaven, He whom cherub and shining seraph delighted to adore—humbled Himself to uplift fallen man; that He bore the guilt and shame of sin, and the hiding of His Father's face, till the woes of a lost world broke His heart and crushed out His life on Calvary's cross."—*The Great Controversy*, page 651.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 648, 649.

Part 3
THE FIRST ANGEL'S
MESSAGE

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. 14:6, 7.

What is the secret of victory for God's remnant in the last great crisis when everything on earth is against them? The answer is found in the three special messages God is sending to the world.

What is the first angel's message called? Verse 6.

"God has always had but one gospel, sometimes called 'the gospel of God,' 'the gospel of grace,' 'the gospel of Jesus Christ,' 'the gospel of the kingdom,' etc. These different expressions merely emphasize different phases of the same glorious gospel or good news! It was proclaimed to Adam before he was driven from Eden. Noah, too, was 'a preacher of righteousness.' 2 Peter 2:5. . . . Faithful Abraham taught the same glorious gospel (Galations 3:8)."—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 150.

In what setting is the gospel being proclaimed in the first angel's message? Verse 7.

Paul preached concerning a "judgment to come" (Acts 24:25), but the message today is that the hour of God's judgment *is* come. The announcement is in the present tense. The judgment here mentioned is the investigative judgment, that which precedes the second advent. When Christ returns, He brings His rewards with Him. See Rev. 22:12.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I in my daily life give God the glory due to Him? Am I more concerned with my own personal interests than with God's glory?

"Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolator, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, 'Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.' It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment."—*The Great Controversy*, page 438.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pages 232-237.

Part 4
THE SECOND
ANGEL'S MESSAGE

"And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Rev. 14:8.

This is the first time the word "Babylon" is found in the Revelation. At the time John wrote, the ancient city was in ruins. The city was originally founded by Nimrod (Gen. 10:10; 11:1-9), and greatly expanded by the Nebuchadnezzar of Daniel's time. It stood as the emblem of apostasy and rebellion. In both the Old and New Testaments Babylon is contrasted with Jerusalem, the one a symbol of human glory and self-worship, the other the symbol of God's glory and divine worship. Salem means "peace" but one connotation of Babel is "confusion."

What startling announcement does this second angel make?

The Protestant reformers of the sixteenth century consistently applied the term "Babylon" to the papacy—the church with its headquarters in Rome. In John's day Rome was called "Babylon" by the Christians. In the light of chapter 17:5 more than one church is included, for the prophecy calls her "the mother of harlots," the daughters partaking of the same character as the mother. "Tertullian, who lived at the close of the second century, specifically declares that the term Babylon in the Apocalypse refers to the capital city of imperial Rome. . . .

"Babylon, both literal and mystical, has thus long been recognized as the traditional enemy of God's truth and people. As used in the Revelation the name is symbolic of all apostate religious organizations and their leadership, from antiquity down to the close of time."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Rev. 14:8.

With what is spiritual Babylon charged?

The expression "*made* all nations drink" of the unholy wine of her false teachings suggests coercion. The pressure of the state will doubtless be used to enforce her decrees.

THINK IT THROUGH

If pressure were applied to force me to compromise my faith, what would be my attitude?

"As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. . . . They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. . . .

"In this time of persecution the faith of the Lord's servants will be tried."—*The Great Controversy*, page 608.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pages 237-240.

Part 5
THE THIRD ANGEL'S
MESSAGE

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." Rev. 14:9, 10.

No other message in all the Bible is more solemn than this. In view of the world-wide apostasy and boycott predicted in chapter 13:16, 17, it comes with forcible meaning.

Intoxicated with the wine of Babylon's false teaching, what will these marked ones finally drink? Verse 10.

About a hundred years after the apostles the church began to lose her sense of loyalty to God and gradually accepted the practices of the pagan world. The great truth of life only in Christ was set aside for the corrupt doctrine of natural immortality, claiming that all souls are immortal. Infant baptism replaced the Biblical practice of immersion, and the keeping of Sunday holy replaced observance of Christ's Sabbath.

In what manner is God's message concerning this apostasy to be given? Verse 9.

"There are now true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion, who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. God accepts their sincerity of purpose and their integrity before Him. But when Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God. . . . It is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive 'the mark of the beast.'"—*The Great Controversy*, page 449.

THINK IT THROUGH

When will Sundaykeeping become the mark of the beast?

"Sundaykeeping is not yet the mark of the beast, and will not be until the decree goes forth causing men to worship this idol sabbath. The time will come when this day will be the test, but that time has not come yet."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 977.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pages 254-258.

Part 6
TRUE WORSHIP
IDENTIFIED

"They have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:11-13.

Only the faith of Jesus will enable God's loyal witnesses to remain true and faithful in the coming crisis.

What are the characteristics of the saints? Verse 12.

The word "patience" can also be translated "steadfastness" or "fortitude." In chapter 13:10, when referring to the steadfastness of the martyrs who faced persecution and death we find these words linked—"patience and faith." But in chapter 14:12 where it refers to the final test we note a third characteristic—obedience to God's commands. So it could read *patience, obedience, and faith.*

What special blessing is reserved for those who die in the Lord during the time of the third message? Verse 13.

During the "time of trouble" spoken of by Daniel, there will be a special resurrection in which two different groups of the dead will be raised. We read "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12:2.

"All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law. 'They also which pierced Him' (Revelation 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and obedient."—*The Great Controversy*, page 637.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I among those who carefully keep God's commandments? Are the three angels' messages real to me?

"When Jesus has finished His intercessory ministry, He then comes before 'the Ancient of Days' to receive the kingdom and dominion for which He died. Daniel 7:13. This is actually the marriage of the Bridegroom—the Lamb—and occurs before He returns to earth for His saints. His waiting saints, those caught up to meet Him, are then taken to 'the marriage supper of the Lamb' in the Father's house. Revelation 19:7-9."—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 187.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 436-438.



the King is coming

"And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Rev. 15:3.

"What a song that will be when the ransomed of the Lord meet at the gate of the Holy City, which is thrown back on its glittering hinges, and the nations that have kept His word—His commandments—enter into the city, the crown of the overcomer is placed upon their heads, and the golden harps are placed in their hands! All heaven is filled with rich music, and with songs of praise to the Lamb. Saved, everlastingly saved, in the kingdom of glory! To have a life that measures with the life of God—that is the reward."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 982.

"With Paul they can say, 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also which love his appearing.' There are many whose grey hairs God honors because they have fought a good fight and kept the faith."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 982.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. The Son of Man Descends, Rev. 14:14
2. The Harvest, Rev. 14:15-19
3. The Sea of Glass, Rev. 15:1, 2
4. The Majesty of Christ, Rev. 15:3
5. The Holiness of God, Rev. 15:4
6. Christ's Closing Ministry, Rev. 15:5-8



Part 1
THE SON OF MAN
DESCENDS

"And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle." Rev. 14:14.

On what is the Saviour seated when He comes again? Verses 14, 16.

The fact that this radiant picture of Christ's return immediately follows the giving of the three angels' messages shows that these messages are indeed God's final warning and appeal.

What does He wear in token of His kingship? Verse 14.

In chapter 19:12 we see Him crowned with "many crowns." We note also that He has a "sharp sickle" indicative of the harvest He has come to reap. This picture is drawn from the Old Testament. In Joel 3:13 we read: "Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe." Jesus said, "The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels." Matt. 13:39.

How does the apostle Paul describe Christ's coming? 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

"With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms—'ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.' No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendor. 'His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light.' Habakkuk 3:3, 4. As the living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head; but a diadem of glory rests on His holy brow. His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noon-day sun. 'And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, *King of kings, and Lord of lords.*' Revelation 19:16."—*The Great Controversy*, page 641.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I ready for Jesus' coming? How can I be ready?

"Then every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him. In the place of a crown of thorns, He will wear a crown of glory,—a crown within a crown. In place of that old purple kingly robe, He will be clothed in raiment of whitest white, 'so as no fuller on earth can white them.' Mark 9:3. And on His vesture and on His thigh a name will be written, 'King of kings, and Lord of lords.' Rev. 19:16."—*The Desire of Ages*, page 739.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pages 15, 16.

Part 2
THE HARVEST

"And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God." Rev. 14:15-19.

From whence did John see the angel come who cried out, "Thrust in thy sickle"? Verse 15.

As we noticed in chapter 4, John in vision was invited into the throne room of the Eternal. And so the scenes that were caused to pass before him were transpiring in the temple in heaven. For example, the four "beasts" or "living creatures" to which we gave special attention are noted in other scenes. See chapters 7; 11; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4. The prophet himself refers to scenes happening before him in heaven.

How many harvests are referred to in verses 15 to 18?

In ancient Israel there were two harvests—the harvest of grain and the harvest of fruit, especially grapes. These two harvests are used to represent the saints and the wicked. And it is worthy of special notice that when this prophecy applies both harvests are "fully ripe."

The first angel from the temple cried to the Son of Man to reap His harvest. "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." Ps. 50:5. Another angel came from the altar and cried, "Gather the clusters of the vine of the earth." The one with the sharp sickle harvested "the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God." Verses 18 and 19.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the significance of the harvest being "ripe"?

"The truth and the glory of God are inseparable; it is impossible for us, with the Bible within our reach, to honor God by erroneous opinions. Many claim that it matters not what one believes, if his life is only right. But the life is molded by the faith. If light and truth is within our reach, and we neglect to improve the privilege of hearing and seeing it, we virtually reject it; we are choosing darkness rather than light."—*The Great Controversy*, page 597.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Tares," pages 72-75.

Part 3
THE SEA OF GLASS

"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God." Rev. 15: 1, 2.

In what glowing terms does John speak of the scene that passes before him? Verse 1.

The New English Bible reads: "Another great and astonishing portent." What a change is the victorious company on the "sea of glass" compared with the forgoing scene of carnage and destruction! Such contrasts are characteristic of apocalyptic literature, especially the book of Revelation. So before picturing the triumphant company on the "sea of glass," reference is made to the "seven last plagues," which forms the basis of chapter 16.

Who especially are the ones joining in the anthem of praise on the sea of glass? Verse 2.

"The sea of glass mingled with fire" is very descriptive.

"Those who have witnessed the brilliant spectacle of a tropic sunset at sea have caught a faint idea of the glory the prophet here attempts to describe. As the great sun sinks like a ball of blazing fire, the ocean itself seems to break forth into flames of glory; the waves, touched with crimson, transform the whole scene into a mingling of flood and flame. So was the scene that opened to the Patmos prophet."—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 162.

And the most wonderful thing about it is that everyone, no matter who he is or where he was born can, if he maintains faith in Jesus, be part of that number.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the meaning of the quadruple victory (Rev. 15:2) attributed to the saints on the sea of glass?

"Although church and state will unite their power to compel 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond' (Revelation 13:16), to receive 'the mark of the beast,' yet the people of God will not receive it. The prophet of Patmos beholds 'them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God' and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Revelation 15:2, 3."—*The Great Controversy*, page 450.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 1, pp. 60, 61.

Part 4
THE MAJESTY
OF CHRIST

"And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Rev. 15:3.

Again scenes of victory and glory are set over against scenes of defeat and destruction (see chapter 14:18-20). The members of this triumphant host voice their praise to Him through whom they have conquered sin and the grave.

What is the anthem sung by the redeemed on the sea of glass? Verse 3.

"It is the song of Moses because it voices the praise of those who, like ancient Israel at the Red Sea, have been miraculously delivered from impending destruction. But it is also the song of the Lamb because it speaks of the triumph of God's people over death and the grave. It will be a song of experience, and only those who have passed through the experience will be able to join in that paean of praise. . . . Poor lost sinners redeemed by grace will tell the story in an anthem never heard before."—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 163.

In Jeremiah 10:6, 7 we find similar language. Here the prophet contrasted the gods of the heathen with the living God, whom he calls "King of the nations."

"The song celebrates the noble acts of the Lord; it declares them to be great; but it is not their greatness, it is their righteousness and faithfulness which calls forth the grateful praise."—*Ellicott's Commentary*, on Rev. 15:3. With the long period of oppression and persecution, all the universe will then see God's acts as altogether righteous, even the seeming delay in bringing about the destruction of evil.

On what principles does the psalmist state God's throne is founded? Ps. 58:11; 97:2.

THINK IT THROUGH

Compare Revelation 15:3, 4 with the song of Moses in Exodus 15:1-18.

The Revelation is full of Christ. Twenty-seven times in this book He is called "the Lamb." He is our Priest at the throne of grace, our Creator and Redeemer, and our coming King. He is the key to earth's history and the victory of the saints. Through Him alone we can overcome the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. Praise Him for His unspeakable gift.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 8, pp. 44, 45.

Part 5
THE HOLINESS
OF GOD

Because our Lord is holy, what shall be our attitude to His name?

"Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." Rev. 15:4.

The word translated "holy" in this passage is applied to one who reverences sacred obligations. God imposes upon Himself the responsibility as "Judge of all the earth" (Gen. 18:25) to do right and vindicate the expectations of those who put their trust in Him.

What name did our Lord give to Moses as the name of God he was to convey to the children of Israel? Ex. 3:14, 15.

His name baffles exposition, while His many titles are beyond natural man's understanding. In the desert He expressed Himself at the burning bush to Moses, supplying a graphic illustration of His timeless, changeless, tireless, divine nature.

"God had previously expressed His title *Elohim* to the patriarchs, which by its meaning suggests the God who wills all that He does. He now tells Moses that He is about to make Himself known to Israel as Jehovah, by demonstrating Himself as the God who does all that He wills."—Charles J. Rolls, *The World's Greatest Name*.

When the saints shall sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, what has been made manifest? Rev. 15:4.

God's judgments are at last being revealed. It has not always been possible for men to understand the ways to God. But in the end all will be made plain. "For now we see through a glass, darkly." Another translation reads, "Now we see only puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we shall see face to face. My knowledge now is partial; then it will be whole, like God's knowledge of me." 1 Cor. 13:12, NEB.

THINK IT THROUGH

Distinguish between fearing and glorifying God's name.

"The King of heaven is from everlasting to everlasting. Stars and seas, mountains and meadows, times and seasons do not contribute one whit to the sovereignty or superiority of heaven. He is eternal though all else be temporal, He is impregnable though all else be vulnerable, He is immortal though all else be corruptible. Of Him it is written 'Thou remainest.'"—Charles J. Rolls, *The World's Greatest Name*.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 7, p. 28; *The Great Controversy*, pages 670, 671.

Part 6
CHRIST'S CLOSING
MINISTRY

Read Rev. 15:5-8.

This Scripture reveals the awesome preparation for the outpouring of God's wrath upon the corrupters of the earth and the destroyers of His people. The seven last plagues fall after the close of probation, at the end of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.

What does the prophet call the temple in heaven? Verse 5.

The RSV reads: "The temple of the tent of witness in heaven," as do other translations. Stephen spoke of "the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness," which was made after the pattern showed in the mount. Acts 7:44. The tabernacle contained "the ark of the testimony," so called because it contained the law which was God's testimony to Israel. See Ex. 32:15, 16; 25:21.

Who handed to the angels the vials with the plagues? Verse 7.

How appropriate that one of those beings, closely connected with Jesus, should deliver to the ministers of vengeance the vials of wrath for those who have blasphemed the Saviour and persecuted His followers! Before the plagues fall upon the guilty, however, the ministration of mercy will have ceased.

What did John see filling the temple while the angels of vengeance were engaged in their work? Verse 8.

The Scripture clearly indicates that no man, or actually no being, can enter the temple during the outpouring of the seven last plagues of God's judgments. There will be no Intercessor, no Mediator. And to feel the wrath of God unmixed with mercy is an experience beyond our imagination.

THINK IT THROUGH

"My accompanying angel said, 'Time is almost finished. Do you reflect the lovely image of Jesus as you should?'"
—"Early Writings," page 64.

Ellen G. White wrote: "In the temple in heaven, the dwelling place of God, His throne is established in righteousness and judgment. In the most holy place is His law, the great rule of right by which all mankind are tested. The ark that enshrines the tables of the law is covered with the mercy seat, before which Christ pleads His blood in the sinner's behalf. Thus is represented the union of justice and mercy in the plan of human redemption."—*The Great Controversy*, page 415.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 2, pp. 191-193.

THE



PLAGUES

“And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.” Rev. 16:7.

“The present is a solemn, fearful time for the church. The angels are already girded, awaiting the mandate of God to pour their vials of wrath upon the world. Destroying angels are taking up the work of vengeance; for the Spirit of God is gradually withdrawing from the world. Satan is also mustering his forces of evil, going forth ‘unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world,’ to gather them under his banner, to be trained for ‘the battle of that great day of God Almighty.’ Satan is to make most powerful efforts for the mastery in the last great conflict. Fundamental principles will be brought out, and decisions made in regard to them. Skepticism is prevailing everywhere. Ungodliness abounds. The faith of individual members of the church will be tested as though there were not another person in the world.”—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 983.

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. The First and Second Plagues | Rev. 16:1-3 |
| 2. The Third Plague | Rev. 16:4-7 |
| 3. The Fourth Plague | Rev. 16:8,9 |
| 4. The Fifth Plague | Rev. 16:10,11 |
| 5. The Sixth Plague | Rev. 16:12-16 |
| 6. The Seventh Plague | Rev. 16:17-21 |

LESSON OUTLINE

Part 1
THE FIRST AND
SECOND PLAGUES

“And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.” Rev. 16:1-3.

Twice in this chapter John says, “I heard a great voice out of the temple.” The first voice was a command to the angels: “Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God.” When the voice was heard again it was an announcement: “It is done!”

Upon whom did the first plague fall? Verse 2.

“Before the angel pours out his vial, the whole human race will have divided itself into two classes: those who are sealed with the seal of the living God, and those who have the mark of the beast. To the one class who are under the protecting wings of the Almighty, the promise is: ‘Thou shalt not be afraid for the . . . pestilence that walketh in darkness. . . . A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. . . . Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.’ Psalm 91:5-10.”—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 165.

When the prophet Jeremiah was predicting the overthrow of ancient Babylon, what did he call God’s weapons? Jer. 50:25.

Into what kind of cup is the wine of God’s wrath poured? Rev. 14:10.

Jeremiah’s description of “all the kingdoms of the world” being forced to drink the cup of the Lord’s wrath is most impressive. See Jeremiah 25:15-17, 26-28, 32, 33.

What terrible condition results from the second plague? Rev. 16:3.

THINK IT THROUGH

What am I doing now to prepare for divine protection during the plagues?

“When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (Revelation 14:9, 10), will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God’s people.”—*The Great Controversy*, pages 627, 628.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pages 280, 282.

Part 2

THE THIRD PLAGUE

"And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." Rev. 16:4-7.

What did Isaiah call God's judgments on Jerusalem that is applicable also to the plagues? Isa. 28:21.

What is God's attitude to the death of the wicked? Ezek. 33:11.

"There will be a law against the Sabbath of God's creation, and then it is that God will do His 'strange work' in the earth. He has borne long with the perversity of the race; He has tried to win them to Himself. But the time will come when they shall have filled their measure of iniquity; and then it is that God will work. This time is almost reached. God keeps a record with the nations: the figures are swelling against them in the books of heaven; and when it shall have become a law that the transgression of the first day of the week shall be met with punishment, then their cup will be full."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 910.

"God's judgments will be visited upon those who are seeking to oppress and destroy His people. His long forbearance with the wicked emboldens men in transgression, but their punishment is nonetheless certain and terrible because it is long delayed. . . . By terrible things in righteousness He will vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. The severity of the retribution awaiting the transgressor may be judged by the Lord's reluctance to execute justice."—*The Great Controversy*, page 627.

What did the "angel of the waters" say about God's judgments upon the wicked? Rev. 16: 5, 6.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can you reconcile the plagues with God's love?

Here is a wonderful promise of God's protection that is especially appropriate to the time of the plagues:

"He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isa. 33:16. See also Isa. 41:17, 18; 32:2.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 627, 628.

Part 3
THE FOURTH PLAGUE

"And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory." Rev. 16: 8, 9.

"These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy.

"In that day, multitudes will desire the shelter of God's mercy which they have so long despised."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 628, 629.

Upon what is the fourth plague poured? Verse 8.

What is the attitude of the people to this occurrence? Verse 9.

Repentance is the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart. But before the plagues fall the Spirit of God will have been withdrawn from the earth. There is nothing to convict men of sin and bring them to salvation. So they blaspheme the Almighty and His holy name. It is a sad picture, but this is the end result of persistent sin.

Enumerate the promises in Psalm 91 that are particularly applicable to the time of the plagues.

"In the ninety-first psalm is a most wonderful description of the coming of the Lord to bring the wickedness of the wicked to an end, and to give to those who have chosen Him as their Redeemer the assurance of His love and protecting care.

"[Ps. 91:15 quoted.]"—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 3, p. 1150.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can God's promises be more meaningful to me now, before I face the time of trouble?

"Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ's patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress and have heard their prayers. They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril. But they must wait yet a little longer. The people of God must drink of the cup and be baptized with the baptism."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 630, 631.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 629, 630.

Part 4
THE FIFTH PLAGUE

"The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." Rev. 16:10, 11.

What is the fifth plague and upon what does it fall? Verse 10.

The "seat" or "throne" of the beast-power is the main objective of the fifth plague, wherever the headquarters might happen to be located. The papacy through its long history has had its headquarters in Rome. But the "kingdom" might well include the whole world at the time of the plagues. In verse 1 the command was, "Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." "It would therefore appear that for the duration of this plague the entire world is enveloped in a pall of darkness. Thus, while men grope unrepentantly for light in a spiritually dark world, . . . God sends upon them literal darkness, symbolic of the deeper spiritual night that is yet to enshroud the earth."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Rev. 16:10.

How do the wicked react under this plague? Verse 11.

As we have already noted, only the Holy Spirit can cause men to repent. But the Spirit of God will have been withdrawn from the earth *before* these judgments of God descend. The wicked therefore have no sorrow for their sins, only blasphemy against God. This was their attitude during the fourth plague, and it still persists.

What message in the Psalms can give comforting assurance to the righteous during the fourth and fifth plagues? Ps. 121: 5-7.

THINK IT THROUGH

Psalm 91:8 states that the righteous will see "the reward of the wicked." What will be the effect of that scene on us?

"The people of God will not be free from suffering; but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation and suffer for want of food, they will not be left to perish. That God who cared for Elijah will not pass by one of His self-sacrificing children. He who numbers the hairs of their head will care for them, and in time of famine they shall be satisfied. While the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence, angels will shield the righteous and supply their wants. To him that 'walketh righteously' is the promise: 'Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.'"—*The Great Controversy*, page 629.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies to Ministers, pages 182, 183.

Part 5
THE SIXTH PLAGUE

"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Rev. 16:12-16.

Among the different aspects of the sixth plague three are especially vital—(1) the miracle-working power of demons; (2) their world-wide influence; (3) the gathering of the nations for the battle of the great day of God.

From whence do these demonic spirits proceed? Verse 13.

The identity of the beast as the papacy we have already noted in earlier lessons. And the false prophet, apostate Protestantism, has also been established. The question is, who is the dragon? In Revelation 12:9 he is called "the Devil, and Satan." But this archenemy of God and man always works through people or organizations. In the days of the apostles he worked through pagan Rome. In these closing days the dragon who makes war upon God's remnant (Rev. 12:17) could well represent the great anti-God movement, which, backed up by spirit powers, is determined to obliterate God's name from the earth. In fulfillment of this prophecy we see spiritualism working through all these great movements. In fact spiritualism may come to be the foundation of popular religion.

How much of the world is being prepared for the battle of the great day of God? Verse 14.

"Thus, before the spirits can have such absolute authority over the race as to gather them to battle against the King of kings and Lord of lords, they must first win their way among the nations of the earth, and cause their teaching to be received as of divine authority and their word as law. This work they are now doing, and when they shall have once gained full influence over the nations in question, what fitter instrument could be employed to gather them to so rash and hopeless an enterprise?"—Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, page 699.

THINK IT THROUGH
FURTHER STUDY

What will be the nature of the battle of Armageddon?

The Great Controversy, pages 561, 562.

Part 6
THE SEVENTH
PLAGUE

Read Rev. 16:17-21.

The seventh plague is the last tragic judgment of the series. While some of the plagues will be local, the last one is poured out into the air. The atmosphere all over the habitable globe will be affected. But not for long, for the great voice of God declares, "It is done."

From whence does that voice speak? Verse 17.

The gathering of the nations took place under the sixth plague. Now the real battle begins, and God uses His armory.

What other events occur at this time? Verse 18.

What did the Lord reveal to Job about snow and hail? Job 38:22, 23.

God has reserved snow and hail for "the day of battle and war." And He will cause an "overflowing scourge" to pass through the lands of earth. But His people will be delivered, "every one that shall be found written in the book." Dan 12:1.

What message in the Psalms expresses the attitude of God's faithful ones amid the reeling earth? Ps. 46:1.

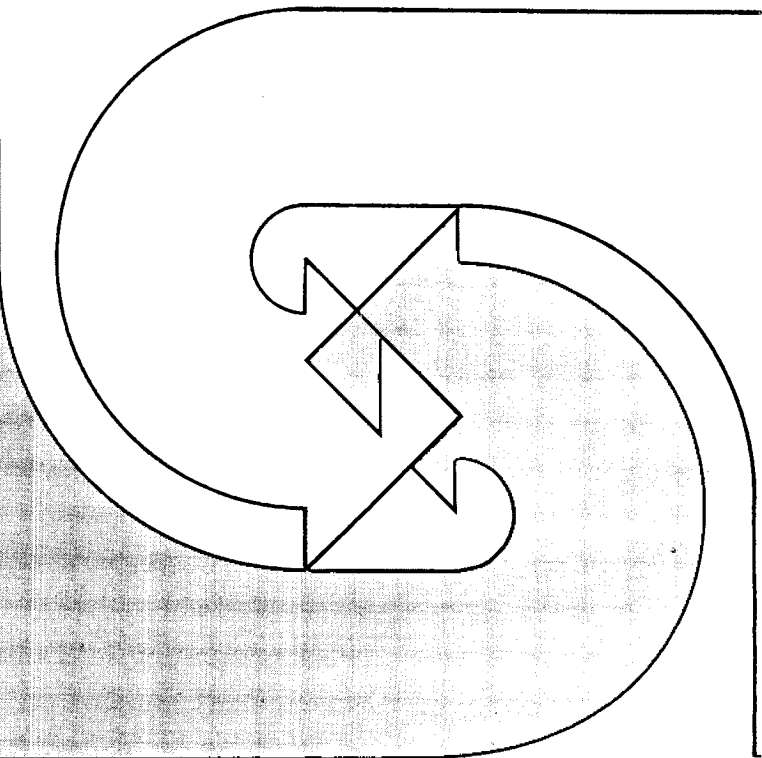
This whole psalm, like Psalm 91, contains a message especially appropriate for "the time of trouble," and in the midst of worldwide distress God's faithful ones will be heard singing those words in triumph. See *The Great Controversy*, page 639.

What happens to the cities of the nations at this time? Rev. 16:19.

"We need to study the pouring out of the seventh vial. The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen, the religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber, and the armies of the living God will take the field."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 983.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 636-638.



"Satanic agencies have been moved from beneath, and they have inspired men to unite in a confederacy of evil, that they may perplex, harass, and cause the people of God great distress. The whole world is to be stirred with enmity against Seventh-day Adventists, because they will not yield homage to the papacy, by honoring Sunday, the institution of this anti-christian power. It is the purpose of Satan to cause them to be blotted from the earth, in order that his supremacy of the world may not be disputed."—"Testimonies to Ministers," page 37.

satan's confederacy

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Rev. 17:14.

The seventeenth chapter of Revelation has been interpreted in a variety of ways, and Seventh-day Adventists are not all agreed on one interpretation. Some who study this lesson will see the prophecy in a different way from that presented here. However, while the interpretation of details may vary, the main thrust of the prophecy is given by Ellen G. White in the following quotation:

"In the seventeenth of Revelation is foretold the destruction of all the churches who corrupt themselves by idolatrous devotion to the service of the papacy, those who have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. [Rev. 17:1-4 quoted.]

"Thus is represented the papal power, which with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, by outside attraction and gorgeous display, deceives all nations; promising them, as did Satan our first parents, all good to those who receive its mark, and all harm to those who oppose its fallacies. The power which has the deepest inward corruption will make the greatest display, and will clothe itself with the most elaborate signs of power. The Bible plainly declares that this covers a corrupt and deceiving wickedness. 'Upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.'

"What is it that gives its kingdom to this power? Protestantism, a power which, while professing to have the temper and spirit of a lamb and to be allied to Heaven, speaks with the voice of a dragon. It is moved by a power from beneath."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 983.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **The Unholy Woman, Rev. 17:1-3**
2. **The Blood of the Martyrs, Rev. 17:4-6**
3. **The World Astonished, Rev. 17:7, 8**
4. **The Clue to Understanding, Rev. 17:9-11**
5. **The Faithful Remnant, Rev. 17:12-14**
6. **When the World Fulfills God's Will, Rev. 17:15-18**

Part 1
THE UNHOLY
WOMAN

"And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." Rev. 17:1-3.

Who unfolded this symbolic prophecy to John? Verse 1.

A woman in prophecy represents a church. This evil woman is therefore the symbol of an apostate church. Throughout our history Adventists, as did the great Protestant Reformers before us, have applied this prophecy to the papacy. But it includes more than one religious organization. Verse 18 states that she represents the great city, and 16:18, 19 identifies the great city as Babylon. Thus the scarlet woman represents all apostate religion.

Where was John carried in spirit? Verse 3.

The New English Bible reads, "he carried me away into the wilds." From the viewpoint of the judgment (see verse 1) he saw the scarlet woman. When the angel described her in verse 1 he said she was seated "upon many waters," but when John saw her judgment she was seated on a scarlet beast which corresponds in general with the dragon of Revelation 12 and the beast of Revelation 13. To human appearance she was supported by earth's population, but behind this facade she was seen supported by the devil.

What did John note particularly about this beast? Verse 3.

The dragon of chapter 12 had seven crowned heads and ten horns; and the leopard-beast of chapter 13 had seven heads and ten crowned horns; the beast of chapter 17 had also seven heads and ten horns but there is no mention of crowns. At the time to which this prophecy points the world empires are past, for there are no crowns, or power symbols, on the heads. The nations of Europe are not the source of power, for the ten horns are uncrowned. The woman is the manifestation of dragon power in the world at the time of fulfillment of this prophecy. She has replaced the crowned heads and horns of the past. This fact points to a new kind of power structure not appropriately represented by crowns. From another vantage point this beast of chapter 17 is seen as the image to the beast in Revelation 13.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the significance of each feature of this prophecy for these last days?

Part 2
THE BLOOD OF
THE MARTYRS

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration." Rev. 17:4-6.

It was "the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" that intoxicated this seductive infamous woman representing religious apostasy in the world. Yet John also realized that what sustained the martyrs in the hour of death was the blood of the Lamb. They therefore were honored to shed their blood for Him.

How was the woman dressed? Verse 4.

Purple and scarlet are considered royal colors. But they could also be the colors of sin and spiritual prostitution. The golden cup pictured in the woman's hand is "full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication." This is strong language. But God wants us to realize how He regards the corruption of the gospel message as well as the illicit relationship of the church with the world.

What was the name on her forehead? Verse 5. What is the significance of this name?

What does the woman hold in her hand? Verse 4.

This is a cup full of abomination and counterfeit doctrines of a false priesthood. How tragic that the simple way of salvation should be so corrupted as to require the services of a man-made priest to absolve the sinner.

THINK IT THROUGH

In what ways can I help those in the darkness of ignorance and superstition while there is yet a time of grace?

"The men of Babel had determined to establish a government that should be independent of God. . . . Had they gone on unchecked, they would have demoralized the world in its infancy. Their confederacy was founded in rebellion; a kingdom established for self-exaltation, but in which God was to have no rule or honor."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 123.

Part 3
THE WORLD
ASTONISHED

"And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." Rev. 17:7, 8.

When the people of the world discern this beast arising with new and added power, they are amazed. The only ones unmoved are those whose names are written in the book of life. Through the study of God's prophetic Word they have known what to expect in these last days. Prophecy is indeed "a light that shineth in a dark place." 2 Peter 1:19.

From whence does the beast of Revelation 17 arise? Verse 8.

The beast of chapter 13 arose out of the sea, which represented peoples and warring nations. But after exercising its power for 1,260 years from A.D. 538 to 1798 it suffered a death-stroke. The prophecy indicates that he will come back into power, at which time all the world will wonder after him. Rev. 13:3. The scarlet beast of Revelation 17 symbolizes the same power but the prophet is viewing it at a different time—after it has recovered from the "deadly wound." When it reappears it comes, not from the sea but from the "bottomless pit." The Greek word *abussos*, translated "bottomless pit," means an abyss. In Romans 10:7 it means the place of the dead.

Will that influence and control continue? Verse 10.

Prophecy declares it will be a "short space," but long enough to deceive the whole world except those whose names are written in the book of life.

THINK IT THROUGH

"Is my name written there?"

No more pertinent question can be asked. For only those whose names are written there will escape the delusions of the devil and stand without fear in the presence of our Lord when He returns.

"While these messages have been studied with profit and inspiration throughout the centuries, they have their special application to earth's last generation. Through the study of His word, the Lord by His Spirit is preparing a people to stand through the final days of deception and be ready for the appearing of our Lord. The prophet was, therefore, witnessing events of our own day."—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, pages 175, 176.

Part 4
THE CLUE TO
UNDERSTANDING

"But here is the clue for those who can interpret it. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits. They represent also seven kings, of whom five have already fallen, one is now reigning, and the other has yet to come; and when he does come he is only to last for a little while." Rev. 17:9, 10, NEB. See also verse 11.

"What John had been shown was a 'mystery' . . . in the sense that reality had been concealed in symbolic language, and it would require 'wisdom' to understand the figurative in terms of the literal."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Rev. 17:9.

Where was the woman sitting at the time John was given this vision? Verse 9.

What are the three stages of this beast-power brought out in this prophecy? Verses 8 and 11.

There must be real significance in twice mentioning the beast that "was," "is not," and "yet is." History records the power that "was"; it reigned for 1,260 years, during which time the saints were persecuted and attempted changes were made in God's law. Dan. 7:25; Rev. 13:5-7. But the power which had been killing with the sword of the state, received by the sword of the state a deathstroke in 1798 and for a time appeared dead. Some declare that this is the "is not" period. The papacy had no civil power after 1798. But looking beyond that time John sees a "yet is" period when civil power will be regained and all the world will wonder after the beast. Rev. 13:3.

A portion of the prophecy studied today is yet unfulfilled. "It is never wise to be dogmatic when studying unfulfilled prophecies. A Biblical principle is clear; Jesus said, 'I have told you before it come to pass that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.' John 14:29. The unfolding of events will doubtless clarify many of these difficult passages.

"During the last century the Church of Rome has been regaining her political influence until today she is strong once more."—R. A. Anderson *Unfolding the Revelation*, pages 174, 175.

What are we counseled to do in regard to these events? Rev. 16:15; Luke 12:37.

THINK IT THROUGH

Are we watching world events in the light of prophecy as diligently as did our early pioneers? If things were to close up suddenly, would I be caught unaware?

"The attitude of watching is to designate the church as God's people indeed. By this sign the waiting ones are distinguished from the world and show that they are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 2, p. 205.

Part 5
THE FAITHFUL
REMNANT

"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Rev. 17:12-14.

The ten kings *receive* their authority by *giving* their authority to the beast and *receiving it back again*. Ellen G. White identified this power as Protestantism. See introduction. They had religious authority. When they receive it back under the beast, they have political authority. The authority which at first was only religious is given back as governmental authority.

When the horns finally unite, what is said of their mind? Verse 13.

These have not the mind of Christ but the mind of Satan as they band together. Ellen G. White comments: "There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces. . . .

"In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God's people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 983.

If we wonder how it is possible for the nations to be deceived, note these inspired words: "The power of Satan now to tempt and deceive is ten-fold greater than it was in the days of the apostles."—*Spiritual Gifts*, Vol. 2, p. 277.

When the forces of evil finally unite, upon whom do they wage war? Who will win? Verse 14.

THINK IT THROUGH

"The so-called Christian world is to be the theatre of great and decisive actions. Men in authority will enact laws controlling the conscience, after the example of the papacy. Babylon will make all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Every nation will be involved."—Ellen G. White Comments, "SDA Bible Commentary," Vol. 7, p. 949.

Part 6
WHEN THE WORLD
FULFILLS GOD'S WILL

"And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Rev. 17:15-18.

What does prophecy declare will happen to the woman? Verse 16.

These last verses of chapter 17 picture a strange reversal of all that the previous verses seemed to be leading up to: verse 14 forecasts a bitter attack upon the Lamb and His followers by Satan's confederacy of evil. But verse 16 shows that the very powers that gave their strength and support to the woman will eventually turn on her and savagely destroy her, burning her with fire.

What result of men's anger, pointed out by the psalmist, will occur again? Ps. 76:10.

In 1798 it was the beast that suffered the "deadly wound." The political power was stripped from the papacy; but the woman, the church, continued on as a religious power. Slowly the church began to rebuild her political power, until in this prophecy she is seen riding the beast.

What does this prophecy say is her relationship to the kings or the dictators of earth? Verse 18.

This portrays a global combination. It will include all the powers of earth, and under the influence of the woman they will form a confederacy against the apparently helpless people of God. But these very powers will turn upon the woman and destroy her.

What is the nature of the daughters that spring from this adulterous "mother"? Verse 5.

The daughters of the apostate church actually form the image to the beast of chapter 13:14.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I able to discern the antichrist influences that threaten the church in both education and religion?

The false science of the present day, which undermines faith in the Bible, will prove as successful in preparing the way for the acceptance of the papacy, with its pleasing forms, as did the withholding of knowledge in opening the way for its aggrandizement in the Dark Ages."—*The Great Controversy*, page 573.

LESSON 8

August 18-24

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Rev. 18:4.

collapse of Babylon

"The proclamation of the gospel is the only means in which God can employ human beings as His instrumentalities for the salvation of souls. As men, women, and children proclaim the gospel, the Lord will open the eyes of the blind to see His statutes and will write upon the hearts of the truly penitent His law. The animating Spirit of God, working through human agencies, leads the believers to be of one mind, one soul, unitedly loving God and keeping His commandments—preparing here below for translation. . . .

"As the members of the body of Christ approach the period of their last conflict, 'the time of Jacob's trouble,' they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His Spirit."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 984.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **The Lighted Earth, Rev. 18:1-3**
2. **Another Voice Saying, "Come," Rev. 18:4, 5**
3. **When Apostasy Claims to Be a Queen, Rev. 18:7-11**
4. **The Collapse of Babylon, Rev. 18:12-19**
5. **Babylon Sinks, Rev. 18:21-23**
6. **All Nations Deceived, Rev. 18:23 (last part), 24**



Part 1
THE LIGHTED EARTH

"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." Rev. 18:1-3.

Chapter 18 portrays graphically the climax of human history. In true apocalyptic style we have a brief introduction followed by an impressive description of how things will end.

What was the result of this other angel which comes down from heaven? Verse 1.

The threefold message, given by the three angels in chapter 14, continues to gain in strength right up to the appearing of our Lord in the clouds. Rev. 14:14. But a new impetus is given by this angel who comes from heaven with great power lighting the world with splendor.

"It is an awful hour when a world's destiny is to be decided—a most solemn crisis when an entire contemporaneous generation of the human family is to pass the bounds of probation, as the last note of mercy is sounded."—Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, page 724.

What mighty announcement does he bring and how is the message delivered? Verse 2.

This is the same message as that of the second angel (Rev. 14:8), but it is even more specific: Not only is spiritual Babylon fallen after intoxicating the nations with the wine of her false doctrines, but she has become "a dwelling place of demons" and "a haunt of every foul and hateful bird." Rev. 18:2, RSV. Paganism has always been a false religion, but the papacy is an apostate one. Included in this Babylon is also the false prophet or apostate Protestantism.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I prepare to participate in lighting the earth with God's glory?

"During the loud cry, the church, aided by the providential interpositions of her exalted Lord, will diffuse the knowledge of salvation so abundantly that light will be communicated to every city and town. The earth will be filled with the knowledge of salvation. So abundantly will the renewing Spirit of God have crowned with success the intensely active agencies, that the light of present truth will be seen flashing everywhere."—*Evangelism*, page 694.

Part 2
ANOTHER VOICE
SAYING, "COME"

"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." Rev. 18:4, 5.

Where did this other voice come from which John heard? Verse 4.

This voice from heaven is called "another" voice, showing that a new agency is here introduced. We now have five celestial messengers expressly mentioned as engaged in this last religious reformation. These are the first, second, and third angels of Revelation 14; fourth, the angel of verse 1 of this chapter; and fifth the agency indicated by the "voice" of verse 4, now before us.

To whom is the message of this chapter especially directed? Verse 4.

"Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power—all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. In amazement they hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of her errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 606, 607.

How far have the sins of Babylon reached? Verse 5.

The ancient Babel builders were attempting to erect a tower whose top was to "reach unto heaven." Gen. 11:4. Modern Babylon will not construct an architectural monstrosity but she will challenge God by the rejection of His law.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I better cooperate with heavenly agencies in doing God's work?

"The prophecies in the eighteenth of Revelation will soon be fulfilled. During the proclamation of the third angel's message, 'another angel' is to 'come down from heaven, having great power,' and the earth is to be 'lightened with his glory.' The Spirit of the Lord will so graciously bless consecrated human instrumentalities that men, women, and children will open their lips in praise and thanksgiving, filling the earth with the knowledge of God, and with His unsurpassed glory, as the waters cover the sea."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 984.

**Part 3
WHEN APOSTASY
CLAIMS TO BE A
QUEEN**

"Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning." Rev. 18:8, 9.

Read Revelation 18:7-11.

This chapter describes events after the beast-power has come to life again. We are not informed how much time will elapse between the healing of the wound and the proclamation of the woman, or the church, that she is no longer a widow. The Scripture speaks of it as a "short space."

How long will the plagues last? Verse 8.

This may be a prophetic day (or a literal year) for it speaks of "death, and mourning, and famine." A day of twenty-four hours could not produce a famine. In Isaiah 34:8 the prophet speaks of "the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion." Or it could refer to a short time, without a specific length intended.

What will be the reaction of the kings with whom the church has been in illicit relation when they see the destruction of their great organization? Verse 9.

Spiritual Babylon is not an actual city, but her destruction is pictured as a burning city. Four times we find the expression "one hour" associated with Babylon's reign and destruction. For just "one hour" the powers of the world reign with her (Rev. 17:12); in "one hour" her judgment comes (Rev. 18:10); in "one hour" her riches come to naught (v. 17); in "one hour" she is made desolate (v. 19). Thus is indicated a very rapidly moving chain of events. As the defiant Babel builders of old were thwarted in their enterprise and scattered, so also will this modern Babylonian project collapse and its builders will cry for the mountains to hide them when our Saviour appears in glory, coming for His people.

THINK IT THROUGH

Entrance into God's kingdom of glory is promised, not to the successful but to the faithful. Our Lord will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." As I examine my faithfulness, where should I improve?

"The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 984.

Part 4
THE COLLAPSE
OF BABYLON

"And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing." Rev. 18:14, 15.

Read Revelation 18:12-19.

In these verses is pictured the sudden destruction of apostate religion. This will be a terrible shock to these modern Babel builders. The mourners recall their grandiose plans and their quick-growing profits. Now all is gone.

How many different classes of merchants are mentioned? Verses 12-14, 17.

What is their reaction? Verses 15, 19.

International trade, which promised so much, has suddenly come to an end because of the judgments of God. It is not that God takes pleasure in the destruction of sinners, for He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9. But Babylon's great sin is her defiance of God and her determination to enforce her religion and her mark on all, regardless of their conscientious beliefs. A death decree will be passed upon God's remnant. When the situation reaches that point, God becomes the Deliverer of His people. The plagues, mentioned in verse 8, begin to fall, and commerce collapses.

What is God's earnest appeal just before the plagues are poured out? Verse 4.

God's people are found everywhere, in every nation, denomination, and religion. They are living up to all the light they have. To them God makes this last appeal. It is to prepare men and women to make the right stand in the final crisis that the advent message has been raised up.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I sense more fully the importance of these times and the bigness of the issues before us?

"As God called the children of Israel out of Egypt, that they might keep His Sabbath, so He calls His people out of Babylon, that they may not worship the beast or his image. The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, has exalted himself above God, by presenting a spurious sabbath to the world; the Christian world has accepted the child of the papacy, and cradled and nourished it, thus defying God by removing His memorial, and setting up a rival sabbath."—Ellen G. White Comments, *S.D.A. Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, pp. 984, 985.

Part 5
BABYLON SINKS

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

Read also verses 22, 23.

What striking figure is used to show the complete destruction of modern Babylon? Verse 21.

In what other circumstances was this illustration used? Jer. 51:60-64.

As we have already noticed, the downfall of ancient Babylon, and even the words of the prophet Jeremiah, are used by the prophet John to describe the final collapse of man's greatest and final achievement—the organization of a world government. Many statesmen believe world government to be the solution to world war. Such a project would link together all commerce, industry, finance, and religion. This, they say, would control all human endeavor and ensure human success. To make the idea appealing it might well be done in the name of Christianity.

What did the angel say as he cast the great stone into the sea? Verse 21.

This dramatic act by the angel in John's vision must have deeply impressed the prophet. No other passage in Scripture is more descriptive than this eighteenth chapter.

Like a huge millstone dropped into the sea, Babylon will sink never to rise again. And all who have put their trust in her will also perish. "Come out of her my people" is God's urgent appeal.

THINK IT THROUGH

What ties still keep me from coming fully out of Babylon?

"As the members of the body of Christ approach the period of their last conflict, 'the time of Jacob's trouble,' they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His Spirit. As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble. Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 984.

**Part 6
ALL NATIONS
DECEIVED**

“Thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.” Rev. 18:23, 24.

Among the sins charged to Babylon, sorcery, or witchcraft, seems to be her leading crime. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, it was to deliver them not only from slavery but also from the occultism and sorcery of that land.

By what power will the nations be brought into unity and led on to Armageddon? Rev. 16:13-16.

What did the apostle Paul declare the nations would be saying just before Christ's return? 1 Thess. 5:2, 3.

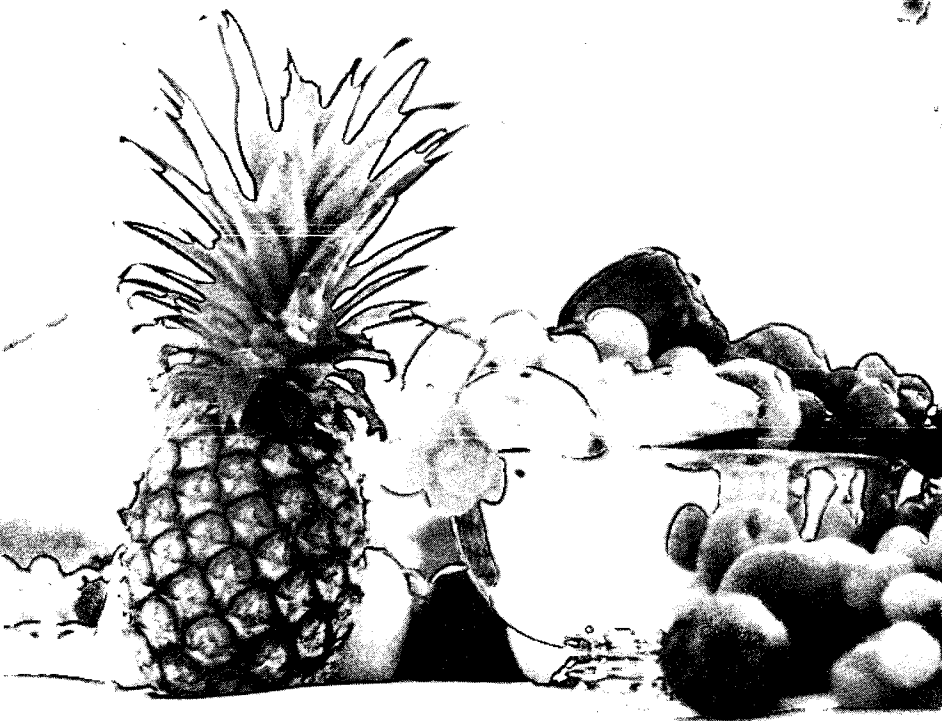
While the nations will be talking peace, they will actually be preparing for war. They will be making more diabolical weapons of war. See Joel 3:9, 10. Spirits of devils working miracles are instigating a program that will lead the nations to their doom. Spiritualists declare they are “lifting civilization into the Christ-age” and will “usher in the millennium.” In Revelation chapters 13 to 18 we are given a preview of the pageant when the whole world will unite against God. But it will end in utter defeat. Five times in chapter 18 we read “no more at all.” Verses 21-23. With civilization facing immense problems—the threat of annihilation by nuclear power, world-wide violence, famine, and perhaps others as yet unrecognized—it will be natural for those not knowing God's Word to laud any plan that promises to enhance the morality of society, to provide for human needs, and to bring about worldwide peace.

THINK IT THROUGH

If an outstanding leader were to appear claiming to bring universal peace and at the same time healing the sick and working unbelievable miracles, how would I determine whether or not I should support him?

“Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world's Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures.”—*The Great Controversy*, page 624.

The Marriage Supper



LESSON 9

August 25-31

"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. Rev. 19:9.

"In this life we can only begin to understand the wonderful theme of redemption. With our finite comprehension we may consider most earnestly the shame and the glory, the life and the death, the justice and the mercy, that meet in the cross; yet with the utmost stretch of our mental powers we fail to grasp its full significance. The length and the breadth, the depth and the height, of redeeming love are but dimly comprehended. The plan of redemption will not be fully understood, even when the ransomed see as they are seen and know as they are known; but through the eternal ages new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind. Though the griefs and pains and temptations of earth are ended and the cause removed, the people of God will ever have a distinct, intelligent knowledge of what their salvation has cost."—*The Great Controversy*, page 651.

LESSON OUTLINE

1. **The Triumphant Chorus, Rev. 19:1-6**
2. **The Bridegroom and the Bride, Rev. 19:7, 8**
3. **Called to the Marriage Supper, Rev. 19:9, 10**
4. **The Conqueror Comes, Rev. 19:11-16**
5. **The Second Supper, Rev. 19:17, 18**
6. **The Righteous Preserved, Rev. 19:19-21**

Part 1
THE TRIUMPHANT
CHORUS

"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." Rev. 19:1, 2.

With the great system of evil and deception overthrown and boastful Babylon now a desolation, the saints are about to receive their reward. So they lift their voices in this mighty "Hallelujah Chorus."

What was the theme of the song John heard sung by the multitude in heaven? Verses 1, 2.

When the prophet Daniel in vision was looking just beyond our own day, his words of victory were: "The time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Dan. 7:22. But the great usurper must first be dispossessed. Anticipating that, the saints shout, "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God." Rev. 19:1. Three more times the "Alleluia" appears in verses 2-6.

Who confirmed the song of the multitude? Verse 4.

"When the earthly warfare is accomplished, and the saints are all gathered home, our first theme will be the song of Moses, the servant of God. The second theme will be the song of the Lamb, the song of grace and redemption. This song will be louder, loftier, and in sublimer strains, echoing and reechoing through the heavenly courts. Thus the song of God's providence is sung, connecting the varying dispensations; for all is now seen without a veil between the legal, the prophetic, and the gospel. The church history upon the earth and the church redeemed in heaven all center around the cross of Calvary. This is the theme, this is the song,—Christ all and in all,—in anthems of praise resounding through heaven from thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand and an innumerable company of the redeemed host. All unite in this song of Moses and of the Lamb. It is a new song, for it was never before sung in heaven."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, page 433.

THINK IT THROUGH

The song we will sing then is the story of our experience here. In what ways is my life hindering preparation for singing that song of deliverance and redemption?

"Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to 'the Lamb of God.' Lift Him up, the risen Saviour, and say to all who hear, Come to Him who 'hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us.' Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song."—*Evangelism*, page 185.

Part 2
THE BRIDEGROOM
AND THE BRIDE

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Rev. 19:7, 8.

For what does God call His servants to rejoice? Verse 7.

"Many are the allusions to this marriage supper in the New Testament. It is referred to in the parable of the marriage of the king's son (Matthew 22:1-14), and again in Luke 14:16-24. It is the time when we shall eat bread in the kingdom of God when we are recompensed at the resurrection of the just. (Luke 14:12-15.) It is the time when we shall drink of the fruit of the vine with our Redeemer in His heavenly kingdom. (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18.) It is the time when we shall sit at His table in the kingdom (Luke 22:30), and He will gird Himself, and come forth and serve us (Luke 12:37). Blessed indeed are they who have the privilege of partaking of this glorious feast."—Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, page 734.

What did John hear the multitude saying about the Lamb's wife? Verse 7.

In what color raiment did John see the wife clothed, and why? Verse 8.

What is represented by the bride? Rev. 21:9, 10.

In 2 Corinthians 11:2, Paul symbolized the church as a bride. But a city without inhabitants is nothing more than a group of buildings and streets. It is the people in the city that make it what it is. Thus the bride is the New Jerusalem.

When God called Israel as a nation, what figure did He use? Hosea 2:19.

THINK IT THROUGH

What do the symbols of Jesus as groom, city as bride, and marriage supper at His advent teach about the relationship of Jesus and the redeemed?

"Only the covering which Christ Himself has provided can make us meet to appear in God's presence. This covering, the robe of His own righteousness, Christ will put upon every repenting, believing soul. . . .

"This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 311.

**Part 3
CALLED TO
THE MARRIAGE
SUPPER**

"And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev. 19:9, 10.

What did the angel say of those called to the marriage supper? Verse 9.

Why did the multitude rejoice? Verse 7.

Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you." That place is the Holy City. Abraham "looked for a city . . . , whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11:10. The Holy City will be the metropolis of the new earth to which the redeemed of all the ages will come to worship God "from one sabbath to another." Isa. 66:23.

When the angel finished speaking, what did John do? Verse 10 (first part).

The prophet was enraptured and overwhelmed. We are told: "The countenance of the angel grew radiant with joy and was exceeding glorious, as he showed John the final triumph of the church of God. . . . He [the apostle] was carried away with the glory of the scene and with deep reverence and in awe fell at the feet of the angel to worship him."—*Early Writings*, pages 230, 231.

How did the angel react to John's attempt to worship him? Verse 10 (last part).

We are strictly counseled against the worshiping of angels. See Col. 2:18. The gentle reproof given to John clearly reveals the reason human beings are not to worship angels. He said, "I am thy fellowservant." He had also served John's brethren, the prophets. He was not divine, but a servant of God.

What did the angel say is the testimony of Jesus? Verse 10 (last part).

The spirit of prophecy means that Jesus is witnessing to His church through the gift of prophecy.

THINK IT THROUGH

To what extent is the testimony of Jesus, or the spirit of prophecy, molding my life? Am I reading His counsel as much as I should?

Part 4
THE CONQUEROR
COMES

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God." Rev. 19: 11-13.

What happened to the heavens when John beheld this scene? What color was the horse? Verse 11.

White horses, white linen, white robes all speak of Christ's righteousness. See verse 8. It is in righteousness that He leads forth the armies of heaven to war against all the united forces of evil. We could say that this is the real battle of the great day of God. "Spirits of devils, working miracles" have combined the whole world in a determined effort to blot out the name of God and the people of God. Can we imagine the effect on the deluded masses when they see the Saviour in His majesty leading the hosts of light as a conquering army?

How is the head of this conquering King adorned? Verse 12.

When John saw Him coming in power, how was He clothed? Verse 13.

What Old Testament scripture gives the same picture? Isa. 63:1-3.

When the One who was sacrificed on Calvary comes in glory to rout the enemy of God and man, He will bear on His person a bloodstained robe, the receipt of the price He paid for our redemption. In Gethsemane and on Calvary He trod the wine-press alone. When He comes a glorious King, His foes will still be out of harmony with Him in character.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can Jesus be my King? Am I on His side in the combat with evil?

"The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white. . . .

"All the world will be on one side or the other of the question. The battle of Armageddon will be fought, and that day must find none of us sleeping. . . .

"The power of the Holy Ghost must be upon us, and the Captain of the Lord's host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 982.

Part 5
THE SECOND
SUPPER

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great." Rev. 19:17, 18.

Notice here the contrast to the marriage supper of joy and gladness where the righteous of all the ages assemble in the Father's presence to celebrate the victory of the Lamb, and where He comes forth to serve us. Verse 9. This is a different, a tragic supper when the birds of prey gather to feast on the flesh of kings and captains and all who have refused the invitations to the marriage supper of the Lamb and continued in their worldly way of life.

What does the apostle Paul state to be the punishment of those who are unprepared for our Lord's return? 2 Thess. 1: 7-9.

The days in which we live must be days of preparation to meet our Lord in peace. The nations of earth seem to be preparing for war and bloodshed. But every human being who is alive, whatever his social state, if he has not accepted salvation, will be destroyed by the brightness of that glory in the sky.

What does the great apostle say particularly about the man of sin and how he will meet his end? 2 Thess. 2:3, 4, 8.

"We are to see in history the fulfillment of prophecy . . . and to understand the progress of events in the marshalling of the nations for the final conflict of the great controversy."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 307.

THINK IT THROUGH

What more can I do to call the attention of the world to the great events just before us? What did I do last week to open someone's eyes to the truth for this time?

"When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. . . . The people of God will draw together and present to the enemy a united front. . . .

"Then will the message of the third angel swell to a loud cry, and the whole earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 6, p. 401.

Part 6
THE RIGHTEOUS
PRESERVED

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." Rev. 19:19-21.

Who comprise the armies of the beast in the final battle? Verse 19.

Where were the beast, the false prophet and all the unholy retinue cast? Verse 20.

The lake of fire here mentioned is not the final lake of fire at the end of the millenium. In this nineteenth chapter the prophet is discussing events connected with the second advent of Christ, one of which is the fiery destruction of the living wicked. Paul, describing our Lord being "revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," says it will be "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them . . . that obey not the gospel." 2 Thess. 1:7, 8. The presence of the Lord and the glory of His power will destroy all who have linked themselves with the devil and his angels.

Revelation 19:21 in the New English Bible reads: "The rest were killed by the sword which went out of the Rider's mouth"; that is, the voice of Christ, who calls the righteous dead to arise.

THINK IT THROUGH

What will it mean to be alive to see the Saviour coming in all His glory? It will take special preparation to stand unafraid in that tremendous hour.

"When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble."—*The Great Controversy*, page 614.



THE DEVIL'S END

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Rev. 20:6.

It is unfortunate that the word "millennium" is too often thought of by well-meaning Christians as a period of prosperity on earth with Christ reigning as King in old Jerusalem. There is no Scriptural warrant for such an interpretation. The word itself simply means a thousand years and nothing more. Any period of 1,000 years is a millennium. Christians generally agree with the Scriptural prophecy which clearly states that the devil will be bound a thousand years. But where will be his prison? The Scripture says it will be on this earth.

Seventh-day Adventists, from our very early days, have taught that when Jesus returns in glory He will destroy the wicked by the brightness of His coming, while the righteous will be either raised from the dead or translated and will accompany Christ and His angels back to the "Father's house," leaving the earth absolutely devoid of life—a real prison-house for Satan and his rebel angels.

LESSON OUTLINE

- 1. The Devil Bound, Rev. 20:1-3**
- 2. Martyrs Honored, Rev. 20:4-6**
- 3. Loosing of the Devil, Rev. 20:7, 8**
- 4. The Devil Attacks, Rev. 20:9**
- 5. The Final Judgment, Rev. 20:12, 13**
- 6. The Controversy Ended, Rev. 20:14, 15**

Part 1
THE DEVIL BOUND

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled." Rev. 20:1-3.

The history of this little planet, Earth, is the story of a conflict between two opposing forces—the kingdom of light and truth led by the Son of God and His angels, and the kingdom of darkness and error led by Satan and his angels.

What was the third temptation that Satan presented to Jesus in the wilderness? Matt. 4:8-10.

It was to bring this little world back into harmony with the universe, and to save mankind from the dominion of the devil, that the Son of God left the glories of heaven, came to this world, lived a sinless life, and died a vicarious death. He did all this to give every human being an opportunity of breaking from the power of Satan, and by grace, becoming a member of the family of God. But the time is coming when the devil will be arrested and, together with his angels and all who follow him, will finally be destroyed.

What was in the hand of the angel mentioned in Rev. 20:1?

What did the angel do with the devil? Verse 2.

Satan is a spirit-being, and of course no spirit can be bound by a literal chain. It must therefore be a chain of circumstances. We ourselves use that figure of speech at times, saying, for example, "I cannot come, for I am bound," meaning circumstances make it impossible to comply with some request. Just so the devil will be bound by a chain of circumstances, every link forged by an event over which neither he nor his angels has any power.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I, with Satan, bound to this world, or am I unbound from it and free in Jesus awaiting translation?

"For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men. Now all have made their decisions; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God. The time has come for God to vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. Now the controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men. 'The Lord hath a controversy with the nations;' 'He will give them that are wicked to the sword.'—*The Great Controversy*, page 656.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 657-659.

Part 2
MARTYRS HONORED

Whom did John see sitting on thrones of judgment and reigning with Christ during the thousand years?

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Rev. 20:4-6.

Where did the martyrs come from, and how did they get to be living with Christ? Verse 5.

What great event marks the second advent of Christ? 1 Thess. 4:16.

What did Jesus say about the two resurrections? John 5:28, 29.

"During the thousand years between the first and the second resurrection the judgment of the wicked takes place. The apostle Paul points to this judgment as an event that follows the second advent. [1 Cor. 4:5 quoted.] . . . In union with Christ they [the saints] judge the wicked, comparing their acts with the statute book, the Bible, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body. Then the portion which the wicked must suffer is meted out, according to their works; and it is recorded against their names in the book of death."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 660, 661.

THINK IT THROUGH

Why should saints judge angels?

"Jesus comes in a mighty, threefold glory that is beyond our comprehension. No wonder the wicked are unable to look upon Him and live. They will be smitten down as if by an atomic flash. The heat and power of that 'explosion' will be terrific.

"This is not some tremendous cosmic catastrophe triggered by man; it is the work of God. And notice, it affects only those who are unable to endure the light of His glory."—H. M. S. Richards, *What Jesus Said*, pages 544, 545.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 660, 661.

Part 3
LOOSING OF
THE DEVIL

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." Rev. 20:7, 8.

What will happen to Satan at the end of the thousand years? Verse 7.

What is John's description of the length of Satan's release? Verse 3 (last part).

The wording of verse 3 is very revealing. He will deceive the nations no more *till* the thousand years are expired. Why has he not been able to carry on his work of deception? Simply because the righteous have all been taken from this world to the Father's house, and the wicked have not been raised from the dead.

What does Scripture say of those who are raised in the first resurrection? Verse 6.

When the earth is depopulated, Satan and his angels will be confined to this planet. There will be no one to tempt and deceive. Satan will not be slain by the brightness of Christ's glory as will be the case with the wicked humans. He will be able to view the tragic results of his rebellion. But how is he loosed? If the destruction of all the living wicked constituted Satan's binding, then the reversal of that will constitute his loosing.

What event takes place at the close of the 1,000 years? Verses 12, 13.

The resurrected wicked are the ones the devil goes out to deceive and organize into a fighting force. Each one of these could have been a citizen of God's kingdom.

THINK IT THROUGH

The tragedy of billions of lost people made in the image of God! What can I do to help prevent the loss of some?

Those who rise from the grave after the thousand years come forth for judgment.

"Satan also and evil angels are judged by Christ and His people. Says Paul: 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' Verse 3 [of 1 Cor. 6]. And Jude declares that 'the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.' Jude 6."—*The Great Controversy*, page 661.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, page 662.

Part 4
THE DEVIL ATTACKS

"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Rev. 20:9.

Against what does the devil lead his deceived multitudes at the end of the thousand years? Verse 9.

The question naturally arises, Where was "the beloved city" during the millennium? John wrote in Revelation 21:2 that he saw it "coming down from God out of heaven."

"As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendor, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the Holy City."—*The Great Controversy*, page 663. The attention of the multitude is again arrested as, high above the city, God unfolds in a panorama the whole history of sin and salvation.

"Now Christ again appears to the view of His enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray."—*The Great Controversy*, page 665.

"Coming near to the city, the wicked will be able to gaze through its transparent walls of jasper. To their astonishment they will recognize some in that city whom they have despised. But these are inside the city and saved, while they themselves are outside the city and lost."—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 197.

How did our Lord describe the effect of this scene upon those who merely profess to serve Him? Luke 13:28.

This will be the first and last time the whole human race, of all the ages, will meet. What a scene that will be! The effects of sin will be self-evident to the whole universe.

THINK IT THROUGH

What will be accomplished by the second life of the wicked? Why resurrect them?

"Satan seems paralyzed as he beholds the glory and majesty of Christ. He who was once a covering cherub remembers whence he has fallen. A shining seraph, 'son of the morning;' how changed, how degraded! From the council where once he was honored, he is forever excluded. He sees another now standing near to the Father, veiling His glory."—*The Great Controversy*, page 669.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 663-665.

Part 5
THE FINAL
JUDGMENT

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." Rev. 20:12, 13.

What is the source of information for the judgment of the wicked? Verse 12.

These closing verses of the twentieth chapter of Revelation present the last acts of rebellion and how God finally disposes of sin and sinners.

Twice in Scripture we read "the books were opened." Dan. 7:10 and Rev. 20:12. "The following classification appears in GC 480, 481: (1) the book of life, wherein are recorded the names of all those who have accepted the service of God; (2) the book of remembrance, a record of the good deeds of the saints; and (3) a record of the sins of men. In the record of a vision of the executive phase of the judgment at the end of the 1000 years the following classification appears: (1) the book of life, containing a record of the good deeds of the saints; (2) the book of death, containing the record of the evil deeds of the unrepentant, (3) the statute book, the Bible, according to whose standard men are judged (EW 52)."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Dan. 7:10.

"In the books of heaven our lives are as accurately traced as in the picture on the plate of the photographer. Not only are we held accountable for what we have done, but for what we have left undone. We are held to account for our undeveloped characters, our unimproved opportunities."—Ellen G. White *Comments, SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 987.

When Jesus returns, what will He bring with Him? Rev. 22:12.

Some will receive the reward of everlasting life; others will receive everlasting death. Each reward will be the result of the individual's deliberate choice. Those who in the end are finally destroyed in the fires of God are there because of their own choosing. Before that final day of judgment and retribution all will have had opportunity to make the right choice. And each day we are choosing life or death by our thoughts and actions.

THINK IT THROUGH

What kind of choices am I making day by day? See Deut. 30:19.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 666-670.

Part 6
THE CONTROVERSY
ENDED

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Rev. 20:14, 15.

What is this final destruction called? Verse 14.

When sin and rebellion finally come to their end, it will also be the end of death itself. We die the first death because of Adam's sin. The Scripture says: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:22. Only those who are "in Christ" escape the second death. Of those "accounted worthy to obtain that world, [the new earth] and the resurrection," Jesus says, "neither can they die any more." Luke 20:35, 36. And Paul says, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." 1 Cor. 15:26.

What will Christ, the Judge, have to say to the wicked? Matt. 25:41.

"The final scene in the drama of the ages is described in these simple words: 'And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them [the wicked].' Revelation 20:9. This is the 'day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.' 2 Peter 3:7. This is the end of the wicked. This is God's great antiseptic that prepares the world for its re-creation. This is the cleansing, purifying fire that fits the earth to be the home of the redeemed. 'And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.' Rev. 20:15. *Those are not human words; they are God's words.*"—H. M. S. Richards, *What Jesus Said*, page 549.

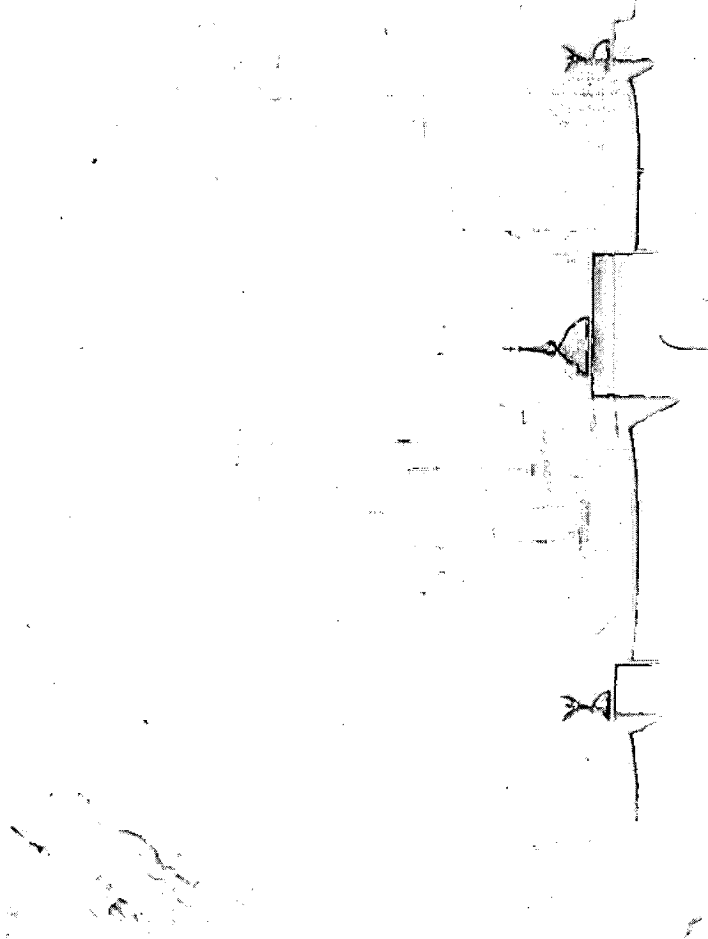
THINK IT THROUGH

How can we make clear to our Christian friends, and others, how God will annihilate evil? It will be brief but eternal in its effects.

"A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been held in control is to be let loose. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne and leave the world to the control of Satan. The principalities and powers of earth are in bitter revolt against the God of heaven. They are filled with hatred against those who serve Him, and soon, very soon, will be fought the last great battle between good and evil. The earth is to be the battlefield—the scene of the final contest and the final victory."—*My Life Today*, page 308.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 671-673.



the HOLY CITY

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” Rev. 21:3.

“In the school of Christ students never graduate. Among the pupils are both the old and the young. Those who give heed to the instructions of the Divine Teacher constantly advance in wisdom, refinement, and nobility of soul, and thus they are prepared to enter that higher school, where advancement will continue throughout eternity. . . .

“To dwell forever in this home of the blest, to bear in soul, body, and spirit, not the dark traces of sin and the curse, but the perfect likeness of our Creator, and through ceaseless ages to advance in wisdom, in knowledge and holiness, ever exploring new fields of thought, ever finding new wonders and new glories, ever increasing in capacity to know and to enjoy and to love, and knowing that there is still beyond us joy and love and wisdom infinite—such is the object to which the Christian hope is pointing.

“In the world to come Christ will lead the redeemed beside the river of life and will teach them wonderful lessons of truth. He will unfold to them the mysteries of nature. They will see that a master hand holds the world in position.”
—*My Life Today*, page 361.

LESSON OUTLINE

- 1. A New Heaven and a New Earth, Rev. 21:1-3**
- 2. Tears and Death Banished, Rev. 21:4-7**
- 3. The City—I, Rev. 21:8-11**
- 4. The City—II, Rev. 21:12-14, 18**
- 5. The City—III, Rev. 21:15-21**
- 6. God's Glory, Rev. 21:22-27**

Part 1
A NEW HEAVEN
AND A NEW EARTH

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Rev. 21:1-3.

What outstanding difference did John note between the new earth and the present earth? Verse 1.

"The sea divides friends. It is a barrier between us and those whom we love. Our associations are broken up by the broad, fathomless ocean. In the new earth there will be no more sea, and there shall pass there 'no galley with oars.' In the past many who have loved and served God have been bound by chains to their seats in galleys, compelled to serve the purpose of cruel, hardhearted men. The Lord has looked upon their suffering in sympathy and compassion. Thank God, in the earth made new there will be no fierce torrents, no engulfing ocean, no restless, murmuring waves."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 988.

What promise did God make through Isaiah? Isa. 65:17.

"All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving—the robe of Christ's righteousness.

"All nature in its surpassing loveliness will offer to God a constant tribute of praise and adoration. The world will be bathed in the light of heaven. The years will move on in gladness. The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold greater than it is now. Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while Christ and God will unite in proclaiming, 'There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death.'"—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 988.

What is the greatest promise of all about the new earth? Verse 3 (last part).

We will have not only a new world, but the Creator of the universe will be our King. "God Himself" will be with us, dwelling on this renewed earth.

THINK IT THROUGH

How can I arrange for more time to ponder these tremendous truths? Is my life being shaped by this revelation of divine love?

FURTHER STUDY

The Ministry of Healing, pages 506-508.

Part 2
TEARS AND DEATH
BANISHED

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.” Rev. 21:4-7.

God wipes away tears by removing all causes of sorrow. Pain will be banished forever, and death will be unknown in that land of delights.

What are the promises given in verse 4?

The “former things” or the “old order” (NEB) is no more. All is different.

“We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, ‘Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!’ and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven’s arches ring.”—*Early Writings*, page 17.

What are the words of the One who sits on the throne? Verse 5.

“This earth is not to be destroyed, but to be renewed. It will be an eternal witness of God’s great love.”—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 201.

What is the one condition to be an inheritor of all these glories? Verse 7.

The overcomer will not be just a visitor, much less an alien in that world of wonders. He will belong to the family. God will be his Father, and God says, “He shall be my son.”

To whom is the water of life to be given? Verse 6.

THINK IT THROUGH

What kind of literature or amusements do I enjoy? Am I thirsting for “the water of life,” or am I satisfied to drink from the polluted fountains of this world?

“The earth itself, the very field that Satan claims as his, is to be not only ransomed but exalted. Our little world, under the curse of sin the one dark blot in His glorious creation, will be honored above all other worlds in the universe of God.”—*The Desire of Ages*, page 26.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 9, pp. 286, 287.

Part 3
THE CITY—I

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." Rev. 21:8-11.

Who invited John to witness this city descending from God? Verse 9.

What a contrast this was to the tragic picture of destruction the prophet had witnessed when the earth was devastated and the great cities of earth collapsed! How the exiled prophet must have responded to this scene of glory!

But who were deprived from entering that city of light and purity? Verse 8.

Note that the list begins with those called the "fearful," or the cowardly, those who give up in time of trial. Then come the "unbelieving," or the untrustworthy. Then the "abominable," meaning those from whom one turns in disgust. The "murderous" are those who follow in the footsteps of Cain. The term "whoremongers," or fornicators, includes those who sin sexually. "Sorcerers" are those who practice magic and spiritualism. The designation "idolators" takes in more than the heathen. Christians can also be idolators. And "all liars" is a significant expression. While Christians would not tell lies, yet it is possible to "make lies" by a nod or a gesture. Even to say nothing may amount to lying.

Where will the sinner be found at last? Verse 8 (last part).

THINK IT THROUGH

What does self-examination reveal about my relationship to this list of sins which will at last keep many out of the Holy City? Paul says, "Let a man examine himself." 1 Cor. 11:28.

"God does not force the will or judgment of any. He takes no pleasure in a slavish obedience. He desires that the creatures of His hands shall love Him because He is worthy of love. He would have them obey Him because they have an intelligent appreciation of His wisdom, justice, and benevolence."—*The Great Controversy*, page 541.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 1, pp. 67-70.

Part 4
THE CITY—II

"And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

"And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass." Rev. 21:12-14, 18.

What did John see surrounding the Holy City? Verse 12.

Whose names were engraved on the twelve gates? Verse 12.

Whose names did John see on the magnificent foundations? Verse 14.

The fact that the twelve tribes of Israel are mentioned along with the twelve apostles of the Lamb shows that this city belongs to God's people of all ages and dispensations. It is not a Jewish city but the dwelling place of God Himself.

Who are stationed as the gatekeepers of this city? Verse 12.

It is not that these entrances need to be guarded, but angels who, through all the centuries have been "sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14), stand at the gates of this mighty city to welcome those who come and go through the gates. And what a welcome it will be for those who by the grace of their Lord have overcome all the power of the enemy and have a right to the tree of life!

How do I react to the thought of living in the city Jesus has prepared for me?

"The veil that interposes between the visible and the invisible world will be drawn aside, and wonderful things will be revealed. . . .

"There all who have wrought with unselfish spirit will behold the fruit of their labors. The outworking of every right principle and noble deed will be seen. . . . How little of the result of the world's noblest work is in this life manifest to the doer! . . . Parents and teachers lie down in their last sleep, their lifework seeming to have been wrought in vain; they know not that their faithfulness has unsealed springs of blessing that can never cease to flow; only by faith they see the children they have trained become a benediction and an inspiration to their fellow men, and the influence repeat itself a thousand-fold. . . . In the hereafter the action and reaction of all these will be seen."—*Education*, pages 304-306.

THINK IT THROUGH

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pages 13-19.

Part 5
THE CITY—III

"And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."

"And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald. . . . And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."
Rev. 21:15, 16, 19-21.

What is the shape of this capital city of the new earth? Verse 16.

Some have asked if the city will be able to accommodate the millions of the saved. The measurements given by the angel are amazing. Who could imagine a city nearly 1,500 miles in circumference or 375 on each side. The jasper walls of that city enclose 2,250,000 square miles! Someone has estimated that all the people who have ever lived on this earth from Adam's time to our own could crowd into that giant city, and there would still be room for visitors from other worlds. But only those who have accepted of God's grace and been obedient to all the truth the Lord has revealed will enter there.

What feature of the city is a strange contrast with earthly cities? Verse 18.

In *The Great Controversy*, pages 674, 675 we read: "A fear of making the future inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which lead us to look upon it as our home."

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I permitting the trials and disappointments of this present life to rob me of the anticipation of the glories of the life to come?

"Preachers and people have looked upon the book of Revelation as mysterious, and of less importance than other portions of the Sacred Scriptures. But I saw that this book is indeed a revelation given for the especial benefit of those who should live in the last days, to guide them in ascertaining their true position and their duty."—*Early Writings*, page 231.

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pages 301-305.

Part 6
GOD'S GLORY

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Rev. 21:22-27.

What is absent in the New Jerusalem which was the center of old Jerusalem? Why? Verse 22.

What kind of illumination will this city have? Verse 23.

"Light-giving bodies will not be imperative for the illumination of the city. The glorious effulgence of the presence of God will give more than sufficient light (cf. Isa. 60:19, 20). Material things are not indispensable in God's plan; in His presence they are put to shame (cf. Isa. 24:23). Created light cannot outshine the uncreated glory of the divine presence."—*SDA Bible Commentary*, on Rev. 21:23.

What nations will bring honor to the Holy City? Verse 24.

"The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away. No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin.

"One reminder alone remains: Our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought. . . . And the tokens of His humiliation are His highest honor; through the eternal ages the wounds of Calvary will show forth His praise and declare His power."—*The Great Controversy*, page 674.

THINK IT THROUGH

How am I preparing to live in the city lighted by the glory of God?

"This earth is the place of preparation for heaven. The time spent here is the Christian's winter. Here the chilly winds of affliction blow upon us, and the waves of trouble roll against us. But in the near future, when Christ comes, sorrow and sighing will be forever ended. Then will be the Christian's summer. All trials will be over, and there will be no more sickness or death. 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying . . . : for the former things are passed away.'"—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 988.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 676-678.

In GOD'S Presence

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12.

"In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look. The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings. . . .

"He 'hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places: . . . that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.'"—*My Life Today*, page 368.

LESSON OUTLINE

- 1. River and Tree of Life, Rev. 22:1, 2**
- 2. The Throne of God and the Lamb, Rev. 22:3, 4**
- 3. They Shall See His Face, Rev. 22:4, 5**
- 4. Behold, I Come Quickly, Rev. 22:6, 7**
- 5. Blessed Are They, Rev. 22:7-10**
- 6. The Time Is at Hand, Rev. 22:10-12**



Part 1
RIVER AND
TREE OF LIFE

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Rev. 22:1, 2.

What did John see proceeding from God's throne? Verse 1.

What was growing on either side of the river? Verse 2.

"The picture thus presented before the mind is this: The glorious throne of God at the head of this broad way, or avenue; out of that throne the river of life, flowing lengthwise through the center of the street; and the tree of life growing on either side, forming a high and magnificent arch over that majestic stream, and spreading its life-bearing branches far away on either side. . . .

"But how can the tree of life be but one tree, and still be on either side of the river? It is evident that there is but one tree of life. From Genesis to the Revelation it is spoken of as but one—the tree of life. To be at once on both sides of the river, it must have more than one trunk, in which case it would be united above in order to form but one tree."—Uriah Smith, *Daniel and the Revelation*, pages 771, 772.

What did John say about the leaves of the tree? Verse 2 (last part).

Some translations read "the service of the nations" which is better, for in that land of delights there will be no sickness, pain, or death.

"The fruit of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden possessed supernatural virtue. To eat of it was to live forever. Its fruit was the antidote of death. Its leaves were for the sustaining of life and immortality."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, p. 288.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I anticipating with joy that time when our great Teacher will lead us to the tree of life and explain the plan of redemption?

"The tree of life is a representation of the preserving care of Christ for His children. As Adam and Eve ate of this tree, they acknowledged their dependence upon God. The tree of life possessed the power to perpetuate life, and as long as they ate of it, they could not die. The lives of the antediluvians were protracted because of the life-giving power of this tree, which was transmitted to them from Adam and Eve."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 988.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, page 675.

Part 2
THE THRONE OF
GOD AND THE LAMB

"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." Rev. 22: 3, 4.

What do we have to endure in the world today that will be missing in the new earth? Verse 3, (first part).

The simple emphatic expression "the throne of God and of the Lamb" is very revealing. When Lucifer challenged God for His throne and then ultimately won the allegiance of Adam, this newly created world became the battleground of the forces of good and evil. Adam was no longer a king with the oversight of earth. He became a servant of sin under the dominion of Satan.

Having yielded to the devil, Adam thereby passed on sin to all his posterity. Rom. 5:12. We were lost, hopelessly lost; but in the fullness of time God Himself, in the person of Jesus Christ, came to take the place of Adam—to pay the penalty of sin, to suffer and die a vicarious death on our behalf. Pointing Him out in the crowd, John the Baptist cried out with confidence: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. Three and a half years later He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. But He rose from the dead and ascended to His Father. While reigning as coregent of the universe He also is our great High Priest, officiating as both Priest and Victim, as Offerer and Offering—the Lamb of God. So the throne of the universe is called "the throne of God and of the Lamb." It was as the Lamb of God that He offered Himself for a lost world and a lost race.

In the ages of eternity to come the eternal throne of Deity will always be "the throne of the Lamb." We will never exhaust the theme of our redemption.

The world we know today is under a three-fold curse—thorns and thistles (Gen. 3:17); diminished production (Gen. 4:12); and the Flood (Gen. 8:21).

THINK IT THROUGH

How have these curses affected my life?

"All faces will reflect the image of their Redeemer. There will then be no anxious, troubled countenances, but all will be bright, and smiling in spotless purity. The angels will be there, also the resurrected saints with the martyrs, and the best of all, and what will cause us the most joy, our lovely Saviour, who suffered and died that we might enjoy that happiness and freedom, will be there.—His glorious face will shine brighter than the sun, and light up the beautiful city and reflect glory all around."—*My Life Today*, page 357.

FURTHER STUDY

Education, pages 306-309.

Part 3
THEY SHALL SEE
HIS FACE

"And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 22:4, 5.

What wonderful promise is given to the saints of God? Verse 4.

What about the Holy City will be different from any earthly city? Verse 5.

"In the City of God 'there shall be no night.' None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to His name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning and shall ever be far from its close. 'And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light.' Revelation 22:5. The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the Holy City with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day."—*The Great Controversy*, page 676.

The righteous will walk in that radiant city and know they have a right there. Not that any of their works earned them a place in God's kingdom, but because they have accepted His invitation to become members of His family through grace, and grace alone. Any works of righteousness we do are not to earn salvation, but because we have already received salvation.

"The people of God are privileged to hold open communion with the Father and the Son. 'Now we see through a glass, darkly.' 1 Corinthians 13:12. We behold the image of God reflected, as in a mirror, in the works of nature and in His dealings with men; but then we shall see Him face to face, without a dimming veil between. We shall stand in His presence and behold the glory of His countenance."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 676, 677.

THINK IT THROUGH

Have I fully received that salvation? Am I relying on God's grace alone for my salvation?

"Oh, the wonders of redeeming love! the rapture of that hour when the infinite Father, looking upon the ransomed, shall behold His image, sin's discord banished, its blight removed, the human once more in harmony with the divine!"—*The Great Controversy*, page 646.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 674-676.

Part 4
BEHOLD I COME
QUICKLY

"And he said unto me, these sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." Rev. 22:6, 7.

When the voice from heaven unfolded the future to John, what was its special emphasis? Verse 7.

The keynote of the Revelation is the second coming of Christ. "The attention of the people should be called to the momentous event which is so near at hand. The signs of the times should be kept fresh before their minds. The prophetic visions of Daniel and John foretell a period of moral darkness and declension; but at the time of the end, the time in which we are now living, the vision was to speak and not lie. When the signs predicted begin to come to pass, the waiting, watching ones are bidden to look up and lift up their heads and rejoice because their redemption draweth nigh."—*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, pp. 9, 10.

It is those who will live in harmony with the message of the book of Revelation that are here called "blessed" or "happy."

"Christ is coming with power and great glory. He is coming with His own glory and with the glory of the Father. He is coming with all the holy angels with Him. While all the world is plunged in darkness, there will be light in every dwelling of the saints. They will catch the first light of His second appearing. The unsullied light will shine from His splendor, and Christ the Redeemer will be admired by all who have served Him. While the wicked flee from His presence, Christ's followers will rejoice."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 420, 421.

In what way will the wicked react to the blazing glory of Christ? Rev. 6:15-17.

Because of the tremendous issues involved, the Lord is sending an urgent appeal, His last appeal, to all the world. The three angels' messages of Revelation 14 are the heart of that appeal.

THINK IT THROUGH

What is the urgency of God's message for this generation?

"God has presented to me the dangers that are threatening those who have been given the sacred work of proclaiming the third angel's message. They are to remember that this message is of the utmost consequence to the whole world. They need to search the Scriptures diligently, that they may learn how to guard against the mystery of iniquity, which plays so large a part in the closing scenes of this earth's history."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 980.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 5, pp. 266, 267.

Part 5
BLESSED ARE THEY

"Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." Rev. 22:7-9.

A special blessing is pronounced on those who *keep* the sayings of the prophecies of this book. As we have noticed in previous lessons, the great majority of those who study Revelation push its prophecies away off into the future. Not only do they lose the blessing the Lord has promised, but they are left unprepared for the tremendous events which will most definitely affect all believers.

What did the angel say to John at the conclusion of the great revelation he had received? Verse 10.

When Daniel received his visions, he was told to seal some of them. On the other hand John's visions were relevant to his day. But even more relevant to our day, "for the time is at hand."

"Christ the Revelator, foreseeing the warfare that would be waged against the study of the Revelation, pronounced a blessing upon all who should read, hear, and observe the words of the prophecy."—*The Great Controversy*, page 342.

When John received this revelation, what was his attitude toward the angel? Verse 8.

This was the second time John sought to worship the angel. And he met the same rebuke. The heavenly messenger wanted him to know that he too was a creature and could not accept worship due to God alone.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I studying these prophecies of Revelation and related prophecies concerning our day as diligently as is urged by the spirit of prophecy? Am I keeping abreast of the times?

"As we near the close of time, there will be greater and still greater external parade of heathen power; heathen deities will manifest their signal power, and will exhibit themselves before the cities of the world. . . . All need wisdom carefully to search out the mystery of iniquity that figures so largely in the winding up of this earth's history."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, pages 117, 118.

FURTHER STUDY

Early Writings, pages 230, 231.

Part 6
THE TIME IS AT
HAND

"And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:10-12.

"The time is at hand" said the voice from heaven to John. But what time? The time indicated by the prophecies. And those "things" (verse 6) meet their climax in the second coming of Christ.

What solemn pronouncement is made just prior to our Saviour's return? Verse 11.

"When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. . . .

"The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above. Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him in and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. 'So,' says the Saviour, 'shall also the coming of the Son of man be.' Matthew 24:39. Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men."—*The Great Controversy*, pages 490, 491.

Who makes the pronouncement? Verse 12.

The same One who comes in glory bringing His rewards with Him is the One who, as Judge, pronounces the sentence. See John 5:22, 27.

Those who are "unjust," because "unjustified," remain unjust. Those who are "holy" remain holy for all eternity. There will be no further opportunity to accept salvation.

THINK IT THROUGH

How shall I be just before God and the judgment?

"God designed that the Prince of sufferers in humanity should be judge of the whole world. . . . He alone is to pronounce the sentence of reward or of punishment. . . . Both saints and sinners will recognize in him who was crucified the Judge of all living."—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, Nov. 22, 1898.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 6, p. 130.

The Invitation

“Everyone who heareth is to say: Come. Not only the ministers, but the people. All are to join in the invitation. Not only by their profession, but by their character and dress, all are to have a winning influence. They are made trustees for the world, executors of the will of One who has bequeathed sacred truth to men.” — “Testimonies,” Vol. 5, p. 207.

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Rev. 22:17.

“We are living in the closing scenes of this earth’s history. . . . We have no time—not a moment—to lose. Let us not be found sleeping on guard. . . . Let us persuade men and women everywhere to repent and flee from the wrath to come. Let us arouse them to immediate preparation, for we little know what is before us. . . .

“He [the Lord] is soon coming, and we must be ready and waiting for His appearing. Oh, how glorious it will be to see Him and be welcomed as His redeemed ones! . . . If we can but see the King in His beauty we shall be forever blessed. I feel as if I must cry aloud: ‘Homeward bound!’ We are nearing the time when Christ will come in power and great glory to take His ransomed ones to their eternal home. . . .

“In the great closing work we shall meet with perplexities that we know not how to deal with; but let us not forget that the three great powers of heaven are working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His promises to pass. He will gather from the world a people who will serve Him in righteousness.”—*Testimonies*, Vol. 8, pp. 252-254.

LESSON OUTLINE

- 1. The Blessed, Rev. 22:13, 14**
- 2. Those Outside the City, Rev. 22:15**
- 3. The Bright and Morning Star, Rev. 22:16**
- 4. The Final Invitation, Rev. 22:17**
- 5. Christ’s Last Warning, Rev. 22:18, 19**
- 6. Even So, Come, Lord Jesus, Rev. 22: 20, 21**

Part 1
THE BLESSED

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:13, 14.

How does our Lord introduce Himself as He prepares to make His last appeal? Verse 13.

This is the fourth time the expression Alpha and Omega is used in the Revelation. These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. It is a significant title when we realize that much that we communicate in knowledge is symbolized by letters, and it is thus an appropriate title for the One who is the Word. But more, the Lord Jesus is the "author and finisher of our faith." Heb. 12:2.

What is the closing benediction in this book? Verse 14 (first part).

"This passage is sometimes translated, 'Blessed are those who wash their robes.' . . . Whichever reading is preferred the result is the same, for only those who have 'washed their robes . . . in the blood of the Lamb' (Revelation 7:14) are able to 'do His commandments.' Obedience is never a ground of grace; but God's grace is the only ground for our obedience. It was disobedience that shut our first parents out of Eden and debarred them from the tree of life. And only through the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ and a life of submission to God's will can man be reinstated in the Paradise of God and again have access to the tree of life."—R. A. Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, pages 209, 210.

To what do the cleansed and obedient ones have a right? Verse 14 (last part).

Admission into the Holy City and authority or the right to partake of the tree of life is reserved for those only who, like their Redeemer, are *faithful and true*.

THINK IT THROUGH

When the righteous Judge shall weigh my motives, as well as my words, how will I stand?

"When probation ends, it will come suddenly, unexpectedly—at a time when we are least expecting it. But we can have a clean record in heaven today, and know that God accepts us; and finally, if faithful, we shall be gathered into the kingdom of heaven."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 989.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 628.

Part 2
THOSE OUTSIDE
THE CITY

How does our Lord classify those outside the Holy City?

"Outside are dogs, sorcerers and fornicators, murderers and idolators, and all who love and practice deceit." Rev. 22:15, NEB.

The allusion to dogs had real meaning for those to whom the Revelation was first sent, for hungry, semi-wild dogs used often to wander about the streets of many ancient cities, devouring dead bodies and other refuse. See 1 Kings 14:11. And it is in this setting that the figure is used. Another group mentioned are those who practiced sorcery or spiritualism. The whoremongers and fornicators are mentioned next. Sexual license, even depravity, is a mark of our times, as are also murderers. Idolators includes more than the heathen who worship idols of wood and stone. Many kinds of idol worship beset the people of God today. Last on the list are the liars, or those who practice some form of deceit; it may be in business or in the home or cheating on income tax or examinations. It is sobering to ponder that all such will be outside the city.

By contrast what is the fruit of the Spirit? Gal. 5:22, 23.

It is in this life that we must prepare for the life to come. How easily the purity of our affections and the integrity of our thoughts can be changed! Suddenly we get flurried, annoyed, agitated, and the quiet waters of the soul are lashed into fury. Isaiah said, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, . . . whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Isa. 57:20. To enter the city of God we must be overcomers.

THINK IT THROUGH

Am I cooperating with the Spirit of God to gain the victory over my own sinful self? Am I crucifying the flesh with its affections?

"When we become children of God, our names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and they remain there until the time of the investigative judgment. Then the name of every individual will be called, and his record examined, by Him who declares, 'I know thy works.' If in that day it shall appear that all our wicked deeds have not been fully repented of, our names will be blotted from the book of life, and our sins will stand against us."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 987.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "The Pearl," page 118.

Part 3
THE BRIGHT
AND MORNING STAR

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Rev. 22:16.

"The bright and morning star" is one of the many titles of our Lord. This is one of the oldest, most significant of all His Scriptural titles. The first reference is in Numbers 24:17, where we read, "There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel."

How did Zacharias, father of John the Baptist, refer to the coming Redeemer? Luke 1:77, 78.

The New English Bible reads: "The morning sun from heaven will rise (or has risen) upon us."

In what terms is our Lord spoken of in the closing book of the Old Testament? Mal. 4:2.

Just as the rising sun dispels the darkness, bringing warmth, growth, and blessing to the earth, so does our Lord's presence in our lives bring spiritual growth and blessing, dispelling the darkness of our sinful nature.

What other identification of Himself does He give? Rev. 22:16.

It is paradoxical to call Jesus "the root" and at the same time "the offspring." When Jesus asked the Pharisees "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" they answered, "The Son of David." Matt. 22:42. Then Jesus quoted Psalm 110:1, where it says, "The Lord said unto my Lord," et cetera. Then the Master asked them, "If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" Matt. 22:45. That was too much for those religious leaders. They could not answer. Jesus existed, was Creator, and thus the root of David. But in the fullness of time He was born of a woman through the line of David, and so was David's offspring.

THINK IT THROUGH

Is Christ the Daystar in my life? Can I sing these words sincerely: "All the darkness of the night has passed away; it is morning in my heart"?

"Those who wait for the Bridegroom's coming are to say to the people, 'Behold your God.' The last rays of merciful light, the last message of mercy to be given to the world, is a revelation of His character of love. The children of God are to manifest His glory. In their own life and character they are to reveal what the grace of God has done for them.

"The light of the Sun of Righteousness is to shine forth in good works—in words of truth and deeds of holiness."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 415, 416.

FURTHER STUDY

Testimonies, Vol. 6, pp. 20, 21.

Part 4
THE FINAL
INVITATION

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

Which person of the Godhead, and with Him who else, gives the final invitation? Verse 17. Identify the symbol.

The last command to Noah just before the great Flood was: "Come thou and all thy house into the ark." Gen. 7:1. A similar appeal is now going to all mankind. Just as in Noah's day the only ones who escaped the Flood were those who responded to God's call, so today the only ones who will be protected during the plagues and from the second death at last are those who hear and heed God's final invitation.

"All who are partakers of this great salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ are under obligation to work as laborers together with God. In the heavenly courts the roll is called, on which every name is registered, and the heavenly agencies respond to the call. The service given by every human being upon earth is there recorded. If any are negligent, it is recorded; if diligent, the same is reported; if idlers, the fact stands against their names. In all the great mass of humanity, not one is lost sight of. Then let every one be ready to answer the call, saying, 'Here, Lord, ready for action.'

"The world has claims upon you. If you fail to shine as lights in the world, some will rise in the judgment, and charge upon you the blood of their souls."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 987.

How far-reaching is the invitation to accept the water of life? Verse 17.

When the woman of Samaria heard Jesus speaking about "the water of life," she desired to know more. Then she hurried to the townspeople and invited them to hear the words of life from the Master. Having heard, she then said, "Come!"

THINK IT THROUGH

How much am I doing to invite my friends and neighbors to drink of the water of life?

"Like the waters of the Flood the fires of the great day declare God's verdict that the wicked are incurable. They have no disposition to submit to divine authority. Their will has been exercised in revolt; and when life is ended, it is too late to turn the current of their thoughts in the opposite direction, too late to turn from transgression to obedience, from hatred to love."—*The Great Controversy*, page 543.

FURTHER STUDY

Christ's Object Lessons, "Go Into the Highways and Hedges," pages 235, 236.

Part 5
CHRIST'S LAST
WARNING

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. 22:18, 19.

Who is speaking in these verses? Verse 16.

What special message does our Lord give? Verses 18, 19.

"Men cannot with impunity trample upon the word of God. The meaning of this fearful denunciation is set forth in the closing chapter of the Revelation: [Rev. 22:18, 19 quoted.] . . .

"Such are the warnings which God has given to guard men against changing in any manner that which He has revealed or commanded. These solemn denunciations apply to all who by their influence lead men to regard lightly the law of God. They should cause those to fear and tremble who flippantly declare it a matter of little consequence whether we obey God's law or not. All who exalt their own opinions above divine revelation, all who would change the plain meaning of Scripture to suit their own convenience, or for the sake of conforming to the world, are taking upon themselves a fearful responsibility. The written word, the law of God, will measure the character of every man and condemn all whom this unerring test shall declare wanting."—*The Great Controversy*, page 268.

If men take away the truth from these prophecies, what does Christ, the Judge, say He will take from them? Verse 19.

Even by neglecting to study and apply these messages to ourselves we might be guilty of taking away from these prophecies.

THINK IT THROUGH

Are the prophecies of Revelation finding a positive response in my heart? Am I bringing my life into harmony with the challenging message of this book?

"The One who has stood as our intercessor; who hears all penitential prayers and confessions; who is represented with a rainbow, the symbol of grace and love, encircling His head, is soon to cease His work in the heavenly sanctuary. Grace and mercy will then descend from the throne, and justice will take their place. He for whom His people have looked will assume His right—the office of Supreme Judge."—Ellen G. White Comments, *SDA Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 989.

Fundamentals of Christian Education, pages 386, 387; *The Great Controversy*, page 268.

FURTHER STUDY

Part 6
EVEN SO, COME,
LORD JESUS

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." Rev. 22:20, 21.

What was John's last prayer of response? Verse 20.

Those words, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," are John's closing prayer. Inspired of God to bring us the Revelation, he now prepares to lay aside his pen. Just as he does, the Lord announces anew the certainty of His coming, and the old Patmos prophet, knowing his work as heaven's recorder is at an end, ponders the meaning of what he has written. Then from the depths of his soul his response is, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." That has been the prayer of God's faithful ones through all the ages since that day.

When Abraham was called of God, for what was he looking? Heb. 11:10.

Although he had been blessed with wealth, how did he regard the Land of Promise where he sojourned? Heb. 11:9.

Abraham's attitude to material possessions is a great example for us all. He lived in the important city of Ur. He was a man of wealth with his father, Terah, before he left his homeland bound for a land he did not know. When he arrived in the land to which God directed him, he again became wealthy. But he was dwelling as a stranger in the Promised Land, for his eyes envisioned the eternal city God was preparing for His people. This earth with all its miasma and pollution is to be renewed. The fires of God will not destroy the planet, but only purify it. Out of the ashes the Creator will bring forth a new and beautiful world with no trace of sin or contamination. Rebellion will be at an end. And on that new earth the city for which the saints of all the ages looked will be the capital. This was the great metropolis the angel described to John. No wonder the exiled prophet exclaimed, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" Come quickly! Should not that be our prayer?

THINK IT THROUGH

What is my response to the announcement, "Surely I come quickly"?

"The meek shall inherit the earth." It was through the desire for self-exaltation that sin entered into the world, and our first parents lost the dominion over this fair earth, their kingdom. It is through self-abnegation that Christ redeems what was lost. And He says we are to overcome as He did. Rev. 3:21. Through humility and self-surrender we may become heirs with Him when "the meek shall inherit the earth." Ps. 37:11.

FURTHER STUDY

The Great Controversy, pages 301, 302.

LESSONS FOR THE FOURTH QUARTER OF 1974

Sabbath School members who have not received a copy of the *Adult Lessons* for the fourth quarter of 1974 will be helped by the following outline in studying the first two lessons. The title of the series is "A Gift From Jesus"—a study on the spirit of prophecy in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

First lesson: "Heaven's Media of Communication." Memory verse, Ps. 19:1, 2. Outline as follows: (1) A Dialogue, Gen. 1:27, 28. (2) A Barrier, Isa. 59:2. (3) Various Media, Ps. 19:1-4. (4) The Urim and Thummim, Ex. 28:29, 30. (5) The Prophetic Channel, 1 Cor. 14:4. (6) Modern Guidance, Joel 2:28, 31.

Second lesson: "The Prophet's Call." Memory verse, Amos 7:15. Outline as follows: (1) The Call, Isa. 6:8, 9. (2) Jeremiah's Commission, Jer. 1:4, 5, 9. (3) The Gift in the Old Testament, Jude 14, 15. (4) The Gift in the New Testament, Heb. 1:1, 2. (5) The Prophets' Humanity, James 5:17. (6) The Prophets Cruelly Treated, Matt. 23:29-31.

The Commentary Reference Series is one of the most essential helps for YOUR lesson study



An invaluable self-contained library set for every Sabbath School leader, teacher, and student. *The SDA Bible Commentary* in seven volumes is a verse-by-verse exegesis of the whole Bible, supported by recognized scholarship in ancient languages, chronology, sacred history, and modern archeology. The special articles in these fields are illuminating. The *Bible Dictionary* defines every significant Bible word. The *Source Book* provides reliable historical aid in understanding prophecy. The *Encyclopedia* contains the history of the Advent Church, its organizations, major doctrines, and beliefs. \$15.75 a volume. Complete 10-volume set, \$149.75.

RECENTLY RELEASED—in one volume. *Ellen G. White's Commentaries* compiled from the 7-volume *Bible Commentary* set. Numbered 7-1 and bound to match the set. \$7.9

Please add 35c per book for mailing. Include State sales tax where necessary.

Please order from
your conference
Bible House or ABC
Mailing Service
2621 Farnam Street
Omaha, Nebraska
68131



A non-Adventist visitor describes the new Profiles of Faith class.

"I have been visiting a Seventh-day Adventist church now for about five months. The Bible used to be quite difficult for me to understand, but since I have been attending the PROFILES OF FAITH class, my Bible knowledge and Christian experience have both grown.

"I really appreciate the clarity and practical approach of these colorful study guides. Not only do they make it easier to understand the subjects, but the photography and illustrations are also very symbolic and meaningful."

PROFILES OF FAITH classes across the country are bringing

responses such as this from non-Adventist class members. Originally planned as a pastor's Bible class, many churches now extend a special invitation to all visitors to attend.

Is your church missing out on PROFILES OF FAITH? Find out more about this new series of 28 colorful, Christ-centered study guides. Eleven selected booklets are also available for supplementary reading. Your pastor or Adventist Book Center can supply full information on these new materials designed to lead souls into full harmony with Jesus Christ and His church.

Profiles of Faith

The modern approach in Sabbath school witnessing.

CHARISMA OF THE SPIRIT

by Rene Noorbergen

Currently, speaking in tongues is the rage of over 50 Christian denominations throughout America. And the movement is growing. Catholics, Methodists, Episcopalians, Baptists, and others thrill with what they believe to be the true language of the Holy Spirit.

What does it mean to open the door to semiunconsciousness so that an unknown tongue can emerge? What is it that rushes in to cause the tumbling, melodic sounds?

Speaking in tongues. One man stands aside. Listens intently to the sounds of ecstasy, watches the events taking place, speaks to key people. Refers to history for comparison. He writes a book.

Rene Noorbergen's CHARISMA OF THE SPIRIT investigates the tongues movement. Hear it from various ministers of the churches involved, from participating church members, from language experts, and, for contrast, from representatives of the psychic world.

Because the tongues movement is becoming more powerful as time goes on, we ask, "What does it mean?" You will find that CHARISMA OF THE SPIRIT, is an aid to understanding the supernatural experience of tongues.

Get your copy of CHARISMA OF THE SPIRIT from your Adventist Book Center. Or from ABC Mailing Service, 2621 Farnam Street, Omaha, NB 68131. In Canada: 201 16th Avenue NE, Calgary, Alberta T2E 1J9. Include 30 cents shipping and handling for first copy, 10 cents each additional. Tax if applicable.

Brought to you by
Pacific Press.

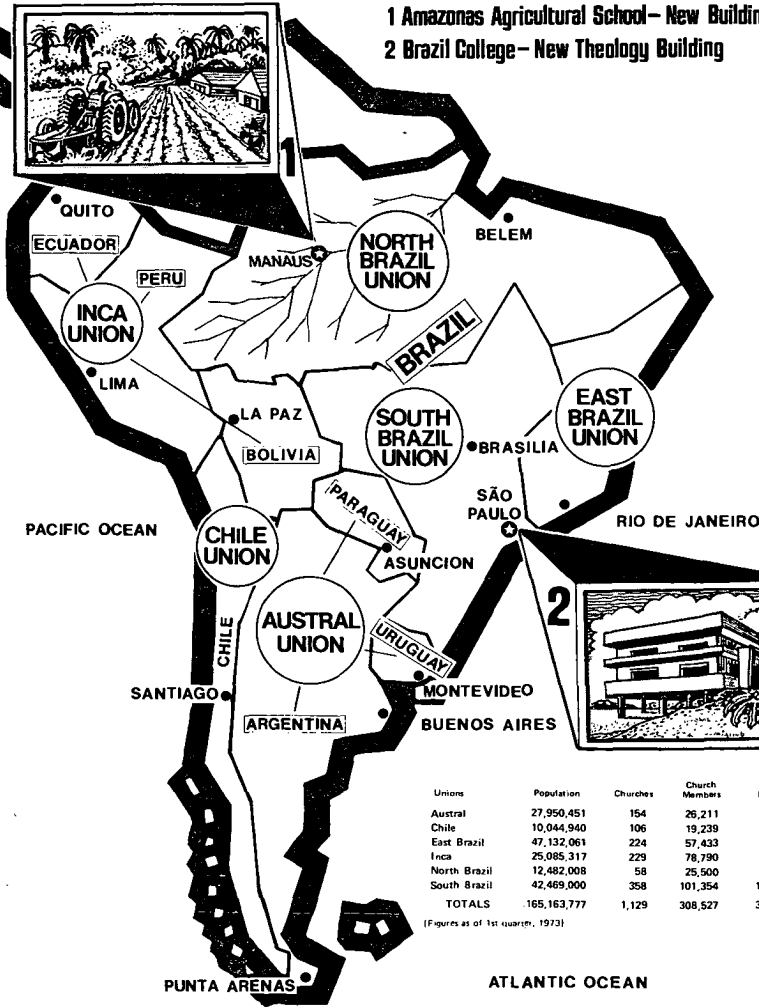
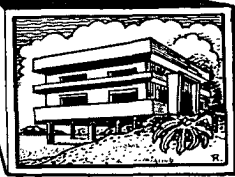
\$1.25

1974 BOOK OF THE YEAR



SOUTH AMERICAN DIVISION

1 Amazonas Agricultural School - New Buildings
2 Brazil College - New Theology Building



Unions	Population	Churches	Church Members	Sabbath School Members
Austral	27,950,451	154	26,211	23,156
Chile	10,044,940	106	19,239	16,342
East Brazil	47,132,061	224	57,433	59,435
Inca	25,085,317	229	78,790	82,933
North Brazil	12,482,008	58	25,500	22,299
South Brazil	42,469,000	358	101,354	107,311
TOTALS	165,163,777	1,129	308,527	311,476

(Figures as of 1st quarter, 1973)

