

THE LAMB/THE LION

**A COMMENTARY ON THE REVELATION
IN QUESTION FORM**

Jim E. Waldron
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P. O. Box 123
Dunlap, TN 37327, USA
Phone 423-949-7395, 423-949-3286
Fax 423-949-7337

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THE REVELATION

In the fifteenth chapter of the Revelation John saw the victorious saints of God singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. They were singing the song of victory saying,

“Great and marvelous are your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of saints! Who shall not fear you, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. For the nations shall come and worship before you, for your judgments have been manifest” (15:3-4).

This song sums up the meaning of this great book: victory for God’s people and praise for Him who brought it about through His Son, the Lamb. No other book of the Bible demonstrates the continuous activities of God (the Father) and the Lamb in their day by day care of the earth and God’s offspring upon it. We know that love motivated the eternal God in His concern for His world; “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). He is still motivated by love for the world, which He created. As will be noted in this study the plagues on evil men named in this book were for the purpose of causing people to turn to God. In plain language the Revelation boldly sets forth God’s tough love upon those who practice evil in order that more and more of His creatures might turn from the love of Satan, sin, and self and seek Him.

The Revelation, more than any book in the Bible, shows us God’s actual on-going care of His earth and His creatures upon it. Throughout the Bible God’s continual participation in the affairs of this planet and its people is seen. We know, “He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and He sends the rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:45). Sometimes His presence has been in the forefront and at other times behind the scene, but none should ever imagine that God at any time simply set His plan in motion, like a wound up clock, went off and left it. The book of Revelation in vivid scenes brings the work of God and Christ in the on-going affairs of mankind into sharp focus.

God’s personal involvement with His creatures individually is clearly demonstrated in Genesis (e.g., Genesis 6:8; 12:1). The book of Exodus clearly demonstrates that God not only worked with individuals, but also with the nations of the earth to get them to do His will. In that book He told Pharaoh, “But in deed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth” (Exodus 9:16; cf., Romans 9:17). God then brought devastating and hard plagues on Pharaoh and the Egyptians to force them to do His bidding. Nor was God’s desire for them just so they would let Israel go. For about 800 years later we read that God was still showing His concern for the people of Egypt (Isaiah 19:1,4,19-21).

At the height of power in the Babylonian Empire, God told Nebuchadnezzar, the king, that he would be driven “from men...till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He chooses” (Daniel 4:25). That power still rests with the Throne of heaven for the Revelation tells us, “from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth” (1:5). Daniel wrote of this very thing, for he spoke of Jesus’ ascension to heaven in clouds, ten days before Pentecost (Daniel 7:13; cf., Acts 1:9), and foretold that the Christ would be “given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages should serve Him” (Daniel 7:14).

About 160 years before Cyrus the great came to power (reigned 559-529 BC – World Book vol. 4, p. 965) Isaiah made an amazing prophecy about him. He wrote, God “says of Cyrus, he is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, you shall be built, and to

the temple, your foundation shall be laid” (Isaiah 44:28). According to Ezra, “in the first year (539 BC) of Cyrus king of Persia ... the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation ...all the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God has given me. And he has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judea” (Ezra 1:1-2). This clearly demonstrates God’s “behind the scenes” care of His people and His world.

The command to rebuild the temple was given (cf., Ezra 5:13), but there was a holdup in getting the decree implemented as we learn from the sacred writer. Quoting the angel Gabriel, Daniel gave the reason for the delay, “but the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael (the archangel – Jude 9), one of the chief princes, came to help me...” (Daniel 10:11). In this place we are given a very brief view of the angels of God dealing with a conflict between nations in the spiritual realm. In the Revelation, through the eyes of John, we are continually taken behind the veil to see God, Christ and His angels at work to bring men to the point of seeking Him.

In another historical example Joseph’s life clearly shows God’s care for him even though he did not realize it until years later. In regard to all his adversity and his subsequent exaltation to the second highest office in Egypt he told his brothers, “do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life” (Genesis 45:5).

Perhaps the most amazing example of God’s care of His own “while not being seen” is found in the book of Esther. God’s name is no where mentioned in it. Yet, who can but remember the stirring words of Mordecai as he called on Esther to give her life if necessary to save God’s people. He said, “For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. Yet, who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14). Mordecai knew that God would care for His people. The book of Esther gives an extended demonstration of the way He did so without the mention of miracles, wonders, signs or even prophecy.

Paul’s sermon on Mar’s Hill in the midst of an assembly of well-educated unbelieving and skeptical Athenians clearly demonstrates God’s concern for all His creation. He said, God “has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though he is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:26-27). Paul’s statement to the Gentiles in Lystra make it clear how God has always done good things for His creatures to get them to seek Him. He said, “Nevertheless (God) did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts 14:17).

After realizing what the vision of “all kinds of four footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things and fowls of the air” meant Peter declared, “in truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him” (Acts 10:34-35). Not only does God send blessings on all human beings to persuade them to seek Him, but He brings trials on the whole world to make them realize that this physical earth is not an eternal place of dwelling. See the comments on Revelation 3:10, question 102.

Jesus’ statement to Pilate, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above” (John 19:11) shows that the rulers of the earth hold their powers because of God’s sufferance

By the grace of God it has been my privilege to teach this great book more than twenty times over the past twelve years (1990 –2002). The reason this blessing has come is due to my work with Bible training schools in India, Pakistan and Ukraine. Most of this teaching has taken place in India due to the fact that we have two locations where such is required annually. Faithful native Christians generally teach the courses in those schools; but for the most part, I have been responsible for teaching the Revelation along with some other special courses. It was in 1990, that I first began teaching this masterpiece from the pen of the beloved disciple on a regular basis. Because it is so difficult to master, I realized from the outset that a definite pattern was needed to understand it as the Lord intended. In the course of teaching and trying to comprehend what is written, I have done five things: (1) I prayed for wisdom (James 1:5). (2) I sought to understand the book as the saints at the end of the first century did. (3) I determined to depend as much as possible on the words and terms used by the prophets and on their interpretation or that of other sacred writers. (4) I outlined the book in question form even though at the time (1990) I did not know the answer to many of the questions and (5) I determined to learn as much as I could of the historical background for the book.

The point made in number two above appears to me to be a most important obligation for the individual who wants to know what the book is saying. The Lord wrote the book primarily for the saints who made up the seven churches and warned them four times (1:1, 3; 22:6, 10) to be alert, because the things to be revealed were to shortly take place. We should try to understand what the Lord was saying to the saints in the last decade of what we call the first century. This is the way an individual understands other books of the New Testament. For example, when we study Romans we realize that it was not written directly to us, but to “all who are at Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints” (c. 60 AD) (Romans 1:7). It was written directly to them, but indirectly to us. For example, we read that Paul addressed “all” the Christians at Rome as “saints,” therefore we conclude, and rightly so, that *all* who are sanctified (Hebrews 2:11; John 17:17) in Christ Jesus are “saints.” Although the Revelation was addressed to the seven churches it was not only for them; but, like the Colossian letter, which was to be read in Laodicea (Colossians 4:16); even so the former would have been circulated among other congregations. The fact that a book was addressed to one congregation or to an individual certainly did not mean its distribution was so limited.

Imagine yourself as a Christian in the assembly on the Lord’s day in Ephesus in 92 AD, and you are listening to the reading of this book which was delivered, perhaps just the day before, by a messenger from the apostle John. John is a brother who has given his life for the cause of Christ and His kingdom. He is an elder brother, whom you love dearly, who has been treacherously taken from you and the other Christians by a brutal government and exiled to the rocky island of Patmos some ninety miles (140 kilometers) off the coast. Such a setting for understanding the book is by no means unrealistic.

As you read these comments you will see that the one named as the first beast of the Revelation (13:1) is the Roman government with its seven brute like heads (17:3). We know from the writings of the apostles (Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-14; cf., Acts 25:11) that government is ordained of God and is very necessary to control the criminal element in society. The Holy Spirit tells us, “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God and the authorities that exist, are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God” (Romans 13:1-2). Even though the government of the Empire was made up of some very immoral men they were necessary to punish criminals, even as Paul wrote, “rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil” (Romans 13:3). Without reasonably stable governments a nation generally falls into civil war and/or anarchy. A government does not have to be a democracy for the gospel to flourish, but it does need to be one

that punishes evil and not good. Reasonable and tolerant governments serve as a canopy under which Christians can spread the borders of Jesus' kingdom. During the first thirty-five years of the church's existence the Roman government for the most part did an excellent job in that capacity (Acts 18:12-16; 19:39-41; 22:25-29), but from the summer of 64 AD until January 98 it became a tool of Satan (13:2). Thus the exhortations in the Revelation to the saints and the plagues on the beast and its supporters were for the purpose of *restructuring* the government into a better canopy of peace for the Mediterranean world.

You will find that I have given a great deal of historical information and at times it may seem tedious, but it appears to me that such is necessary in order to understand the book as the first century Christians did. Three major writers of the period were Gaius **Suetonius** Tranquillus (c. 70-130) *The Twelve Caesars* (From Julius Caesar to Domitian), Gaius Plinius Luci (61 AD – c. 117), *The Letters of the Younger Pliny*, and Cornelius **Tacitus**, who is called the greatest of the Roman historians (57 AD – c. 116 AD), *The Annals*, *The Histories* and *The Agricola*. The lives of all three of these writers overlapped that of Domitian (the sixth beast like head) and they are unanimous in describing him as a cruel sadistic brute. Even if we did not have the Revelation, these writers paint such a picture of the man that history says here was a beast. Yet, I say this knowing that a number of modern historians have tried to rationalize the activities of this man and others. For example one editor speaks of an “alleged reign of terror” under Domitian (Tacitus, *The Agricola*, Introduction, p. 1) in spite of such testimony as the following: “*the reign of terror (especially in Domitian's last years, AD 93-96) was particularly ruthless at Rome, rank, wealth and office, whether surrendered or retained, provided grounds for accusation, and the reward for virtue was inevitable death*” (Tacitus, *The Histories*, Book 1:2, p. 22). The other two authors named above strongly support this assessment.

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The first reference to the Roman Empire in the scriptures, although not specifically named, was when Daniel spoke of it while interpreting the image, which the king of Babylon had seen in his dream (Daniel 2:1, 31-33). In speaking of the fourth portion (iron and clay) of the image, he said, “the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron” (Daniel 2:40). It followed the empire of the Greeks, which had been set up by Alexander the great, which was symbolized by the bronze in the image (See Daniel 2:39; 8:4-8).

The city of Rome, Latin – *Roma*, is situated on the southwestern side of Italy on the Tiber River about fifteen miles from the sea. Earlier writers disagreed on the date the city was founded, but by the first century before the birth of our Lord April 22, 753 BC was being used consistently to date events and times. The earliest reports about the city's government say it was a monarchy with the help of an oligarchy, but from 508 until 27 BC it is classed as a republic, although there were various dictators through the centuries. The birthday of the Roman Empire as we speak of it, came to be on January 13, 27 BC. On that date the Roman Senate voted extra-ordinary powers to Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus for ten years over provinces where Roman rule was not yet fully established (Boak, pp. 270-271). Octavian was the nephew of the dictator Julius Caesar, who had been assassinated on March 15, 44 BC. Caesar in his will named the young man his adoptive son and heir (Durant, pp. 196-199).

The vote by the Senate effectively gave him complete control of all the army. On January 16, three days later the senators voted him the title of Augustus, which title came to be the name by which he is best known. He also bore the title “Imperator” from which we get the English term emperor. The Empire with many ups and downs stood until the year 476 AD. In that year the Germanic tribes who for many years had wielded much power in Italy finally overthrew the last

of the Roman Latin rulers, Romulus Augustulus, and proclaimed a German prince, Odoakar, as king (Nilsson, p. 314).

Augustus ruled from 27 BC until 14 AD although Tiberius was a co-ruler with him during his latter years. Tiberius' personal rule is counted from 14-37 AD. Our Lord was crucified (April 7, 30 AD) during his rule (Luke 3:1) and while Pontius Pilate was Roman governor in Judea (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book XV, 44; Matthew 27:1-2, 35). Gaius Caligula (37-41) followed Tiberius as emperor and after him Claudius ruled from 41 to 54. He was the one "who commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome" (Acts 18:1-2; Suetonius, *Claudius*, 25, p. 202) and he was followed by Nero (54-68 AD). This man was the first of the seven beast-like emperors who are portrayed as the heads of the brute-like government in the Revelation (17:3-10).

CHAPTER ONE

1. **List five clues from Revelation chapter one that aid in a proper understanding of the book.** (1) The first of these is the purpose of the book, which was to reveal to Jesus' servants certain things, which were to shortly come to pass (1:1), although many previously revealed and pending events (such as the resurrection and judgment) are discussed in conjunction with those things. (2) The events of the book were "signified," i.e., given in signs or symbols (1:1). (3) Jesus was already sitting as ruler of the kings of the earth (1:5). (4) The kingdom was already in existence for John was in it (1:9). (5) Although the things to be revealed were to shortly take place, John was told, "write the things you have seen and the things which are and the things which will take place after this" (1:19). That is, the book is a panorama of things past, present and future as viewed by John from his time in history (1:19).
2. **Whose Revelation was it?** That of the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1).
3. **Who gave the Revelation to Jesus?** God (1:1).
4. **Give the approximate date for the writing of the book.** Irenaeus the well known writer and defender of the faith in the second century AD (120-202), who was an intimate associate of Polycarp (who had himself been a contemporary of the apostle John) said, the Revelation "was seen not a long time back, but almost in my own lifetime, at the end of Domitian's reign" (Eusebius, p. 81). Domitian ruled the Roman Empire from AD 81-

96. Based on this testimony we date the Revelation in the latter third of that emperor's reign between AD 91 and 96. As we will note, warnings to the saints within the text make it seem evident that John wrote in the early part of the last decade of the first century – probably about 91- and it was in the hands of the churches by 92. Like other emperors Domitian, besides his murderous tactics, used exile or banishment to punish those who opposed him and his policies. In this regard there were two periods of banishment, which stand out. These were in 89 and 93 (Pliny, Book 3, 11). Pliny says about the first date that, "the philosophers were expelled from Rome," and it *may* have been that some official who was mimicking the Emperor's tactics exiled John about that same time from Ephesus. We certainly have no evidence as to the date or reason as to why John was exiled instead of receiving worse, but the period of banishment did give God the opportunity to use John to record Jesus' revelation as He had used Paul's imprisonment at Caesarea and Rome.

Besides wanting to know the date the book was written it is extremely useful to find certain places within the text where we can ascertain a date for an event-taking place. One such place is chapter 5:7, where the Savior's coronation at the Father's right hand is symbolized. Thus we can write "Pentecost, May 28, 30 AD beside that verse. Again the same event is symbolized in 12:5. There are others, which we will note as the book unfolds.

5. **In what manner was the Revelation given?** It was "signified." From the Greek, *semaino*, to give a sign, to indicate (Vine, p. 1043). The book is revealed in signs or symbols. "The seven lampstands," said Jesus, "are the seven churches." Thus in order to understand the Revelation we want to know what the signs or symbols mean. In everyday life we use metaphors, similes and other word pictures regularly. A man who is a drunken sot that beats his wife and children may be called a dog. A glutton who eats like a pig will be called one. A man who is a rapid runner may be called a rabbit. In the scriptures prior to the Revelation such were often used. For example, John called Jesus the "lamb" (John 1:29,36). Jesus spoke of Himself as the "door" (John 10:7). The Lord called Herod a "fox" (Luke 13:32). As we will see this kind of figurative speech is very much a part of prophetic language.
6. **How shall we understand the expression, "to show His servants the things which must shortly come to pass" (1:1)?** Many things spoken of in the Revelation had been previously revealed; for example, (1) the presentation of the blood of the lamb in heaven (Hebrews 9:14,24), (2) the beginning of the reign of Christ from Pentecost (Acts 2:30-36; Ephesians 1:18-23), (3) final judgment (Matthew 25:31-46), (4) heaven (John 14:6; Hebrews 9:24), and (5) hell (Mark 9:42-48). Thus these things would hardly fit into the framework of things to be shown or revealed to the persecuted churches of the first century. The things to be shown to the churches, which were to "shortly come to pass," were to be things they needed to know at that time. This was in order that they might have the advantage of knowing about those things in advance. Such things as the impending plagues on imperial Rome, God's assurance of His protection and the final victory over the beast. It is interesting to note that the judgment on Rome was to be so like the final judgment that the mention of the latter in the book is very appropriate. That does not mean the final judgment of the earth and similar things revealed earlier were to shortly take place. The twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew is written after the same fashion; 24:4-34 deals with the temporal destruction of Jerusalem (70 AD) and 24:35-51 leaps over time and deals with Jesus' second coming and final judgment upon the earth.

There are three other places in the book, besides verse one, that tell us the things to be revealed were to take place very soon. The first of these is found in 1:3 where the term "the time is near" is used. Again in 22:6 the warning of the "things, which must shortly take place" is given and 22:10 says, "for the time is at hand." In light of these four statements it is astonishing to know that many commentators find Muhammad, Pope Martin the 5th, the reformation, the Roman Catholic Church and so on in the book.

7. **To what three things does John say he bore witness?** (1) To the word of God, (2) To the testimony of Jesus Christ, and (3) To all things he saw (1:2).
8. **Upon whom does John pronounce a blessing in Revelation 1:3?** Blessed is (1) He who reads, (2) Those who hear the word of this prophecy and (3) Keep it.
9. **Tell how many times the word seven is found in the Revelation and tell what it signifies.** Forty-four times. Seven is used as a sign or symbol of completeness, perfection or all as in "all power." For example the seven churches represented all churches of Christ in the last decade of the first century and all His churches for all time. The word "seventh" is used five times. That the number seven held a special place in the thinking of the Jews is brought out in the comments of Josephus as he spoke of the treasures the Romans had taken from the temple at Jerusalem: "These lamps were in number seven, and represented the dignity of the number seven among the Jews..." (Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, Book VII, 5).
10. **The book was primarily addressed to whom?** It was addressed to the seven churches in Asia (1:4). Asia was a Roman province, located in what is now southwestern Turkey.
11. **What two words of greeting does John send to the churches from God?** Grace and peace (1:4).
12. **How does John in the Revelation (1:4) first describe God?** From Him who is and who was and who is to come."
13. **Whom do the seven spirits before God's throne signify?** The Holy Spirit. It is interesting to note that Isaiah, more than 700 years before Christ, gave seven titles to the Spirit that would rest upon the Messiah. They were (1) "the Spirit of the Lord...(2) the Spirit of wisdom and (3) (the Spirit) of understanding, (4) the Spirit of counsel and (5) (the Spirit) of might, (6) the Spirit of knowledge and (7) (the Spirit) of the fear of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:2).
14. **What kind of witness is Jesus Christ? He is "the faithful witness"(1:5).** See His testimony in John 14:2.
15. **What does the term "first born from the dead" mean?** Although, others had been raised from the dead (e.g., Lazarus - John 11), they died again. The meaning of this text (1:5) is that Jesus was raised from the dead never to die again. The Holy Spirit by the pen of Paul testified the very same thing concerning the Christ saying, He is "the firstborn from the dead" (Colossians 1:18).
16. **Of whom is Jesus Christ the ruler? He is "the ruler over the kings of the earth" (1:5).** Jesus took this position of authority after His resurrection and His coronation at the right hand of the Father. Peter and the rest of the apostles first proclaimed this message on earth on the day of Pentecost, which was May 28 in the calendar year 30. It

was the year of our Lord 33. This is one of the five clues in chapter one which helps us gain a proper understanding of the book. Jesus had been King of Kings many years before the book was written.

On Pentecost the apostles affirmed that Jesus had been "exalted to the right hand of God" (Acts 2:33-36) as Lord and Christ. From which position He was expected to rule until all enemies were put under His feet. The prophet David had foretold this fact saying, "The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool" (Psalm 110:1).

Paul to the Corinthians wrote, "For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death" (I Corinthians 15:25-26). The destruction of death will take place when Jesus raises the good and the evil in the same hour (John 5:28-29) at "the last day" (John 6:40).

Throughout the Messianic age Jesus rules all governors, kings, presidents and prime ministers. This reign began "when (God) raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:20-21). Since Jesus is seated on God's throne He is also seated on the throne of David for He is the Son of David (Romans 1:3) and was raised for that purpose (Acts 2:30, cf., Luke 1:31-32). David's throne over Israel was in truth God's throne, even as it is written, "then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father..." (I Chronicles 29:23, cf., I Chronicles 28:5). Jesus' rule at "the right hand of the throne of the Majesty" (Hebrews 8:1) as both high priest and king (Zechariah 6:13) began (as noted) on Pentecost fifty days after His resurrection and continues until this hour. As the writer of Hebrews affirmed, "this Man (Jesus), after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool" (Hebrews 10:12-13).

17. **How did Jesus cleanse us from our sins?** He washed us from our sins in His own blood (1:5). See Hebrews 9:14. This verse, like a hammer, smashes the lies of modernists who deny the effectiveness of Jesus' blood in cleansing our sins. This is one of fifteen places where the English version known as "Good News for Modern Man" has removed the word blood from the sacred text. That version would be more appropriately called, "Good News for the Modernist."
18. **Christians have been made what two things to God?** They have been made kings and priests (1:6). They are kings because they reign on the earth (See 5:10). They are priests, having been made such through the word of the living God, even as it is written, "You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood..." and again, "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood..." (I Peter 2:5,9). There is no clergy in the church of Christ for all are priests. We serve under the monarch, Christ the Lord; therefore it is "a royal priesthood." We serve the king, Jesus, on planet earth, in His kingdom, which is His church. The popes of Rome have for centuries forbidden women to be priests, but all women in the church of Christ are priests. In prayer they go directly to the heavenly Father through the great high priest, Jesus (Hebrews 4: 14-16).
19. **How is Christ's second coming described?** He is coming with clouds (1:7). See Acts 1:9-11.

20. **Who will see Christ at His second coming?** "Every eye will see him and they also who pierced Him" (1:7). This latter group being the ones who showed particular hatred toward God is set forth as an example of evil men who will see the Lord. They along with the righteous will be raised at the same hour (John 5:28-29), that is, the last day (John 6:40) when Christ returns to destroy death and judge the living and the dead. The idea of a Rapture is a false idea. This (1:7) is one of the many texts, which show the absurdity of the claim that there will be a thousand years between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. This text also shows the wicked are not annihilated.
21. **Who will mourn because of Christ's second coming?** "All the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him" (1:7). The Lord Himself prophesied that all nations (Greek – *ethnos*) would be gathered before Him at the time of judgment (Matthew 25:31-46). Here is a text (1:7) for world evangelism. All will see him and mourn at His coming. Just so, all ought to hear His message. Those who have received that message ought to tell others what to expect if they do not confess Him now; they will confess Him then (Philippians 2:9-11), but too late.
22. **How does the Lord God describe Himself in Revelation 1:8?** Like Alpha and Omega stand to the Greek alphabet, even as the "Beginning and the End" and as "He who is, who was and who is to come, the Almighty."
23. **What two words did John use to show his association with other Christians in tribulation?** He said he was a brother and companion (1:9) with them in such. John alludes to the tremendous persecution the Christians were enduring in the last decade of the first century under the evil influence of the Emperor Domitian. John's reference to his own confinement on Patmos speaks directly about the problem. Even though the Emperor had not executed him, it would have been very difficult for John to suffer in exile away from the Christians who loved and needed him.
24. **Discuss the fact that John said he was in the kingdom.** This is another of the five keys in chapter one to the understanding of the Revelation (1:9). This statement by John that he was in the kingdom in the first century proves that the kingdom had come in his lifetime (cf., Mark 9:1). If an individual accepts this testimony by the very one who penned this great book, he will not later assume that some verse in the Revelation contradicts this affirmation. This one verse ought forever to close the mouths of those who claim that Christ's kingdom is yet future. Such want to abuse this divine book and pretend it later tells of a future kingdom on earth. There are other scriptures also, which show the kingdom of Christ came in the first century, e.g., Luke 9:27, Colossians 1:13 and Hebrews 12:28. Jesus' kingdom was founded on Pentecost, May 28, 30 AD, with about 3000 on the first day (Acts 2:36-41). John said he was in it.
25. **For what two reasons did John say he was on the isle of Patmos?** "For the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ" (1:9). Here we see John, as an old man, exiled to Patmos because he would not give up the word nor his testimony of Jesus. This banishment was part of the cruel persecution by Domitian and his government on the people of God. Many people had died under the rule of this emperor who acted more like a savage beast, than as a human being. Men, young and old, are needed in every generation, who will sacrifice their comforts and their lives for the word. Some sixty years before his banishment to Patmos, John, as a young man, was ordered by the highest ruling body in Israel not to give his testimony of Jesus in Jerusalem. To this John, with Peter, had said, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts

- 4:19-20). Unfortunately many often give up the word for fear of government or family, crying you can't buck the government or such wicked cliches, as "blood is thicker than water." They will also give it up for friends, work or other reasons of this world. They clutch the physical bird in hand, erroneously believing the spiritual to be like two in the bush.
26. **How does John describe his state on the Lord's day?** He said, "I was in the spirit"(1:10). Ezekiel was similarly transported to see visions of Jerusalem in his time (Ezekiel. 8:1-3), and Paul spoke of visions and revelations of paradise whether in the body or out (II Corinthians 12:2-4).
 27. **How shall we identify the Lord's day?** The Greek word (*kuriakos*) used for Lord in this place is used in only one other place in the Greek New testament, where it applies to the Lord's (that is to Jesus') supper (I Corinthians 11:20). Because of this we contend the term "Lord's day" means the day of the Lord Jesus, the day of the resurrection, the first day of the week, in other words the day of breaking bread (Acts 20:7) in memory of His death (I Corinthians 11:23-26). In the Russian language the very word "resurrection" is used for the name of this day, the first day of the week
 28. **How does Jesus describe himself in Revelation 1:11?** As "the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," words just like those used in verse 8 for the Almighty. This is clear evidence that Jesus is one with the Almighty.
 29. **What did Jesus command John to do in Revelation 1:11?** "What you see write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia."
 30. **List the cities where the seven churches of Asia were located.** They are Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. (1:11)
 31. **Who was standing in the midst of the seven golden lampstands?** When John turned to the voice that commanded him he saw a person standing in the midst of the seven golden lampstands like the Son of Man (1:13). That is, the one who was dead, but is alive forevermore (See 1:18).
 32. **Describe the clothing, the head, the eyes, the feet and the voice of the Lord in Revelation 1:13-15.** (1) He was clothed with a long garment down to His feet with a golden band about His chest. (2) His head and His hair were white like wool, even as white as snow. (3) His eyes were like a flame of fire. (4) His feet were like fine brass refined in a furnace. (5) His voice was like the sound of many waters.

This vision of the Son of Man reminds us of Ezekiel's vision of the appearance of the glory of the Lord God at the River Chebar (See Ezekiel. 1:1-28; 10:20). It is also a reminder of Isaiah's vision of the Lord (Hebrew –*YHWH*) in chapter 6 of the book that bears his name (cf., John 12:37-41). Ezekiel (1:28) fell on his face and Isaiah (6:5) cried out "Woe is me, for I am undone!" These two prophets did not interpret the individual parts of their visions, but expected their readers to be impressed with the awe and majesty of the living God. Both were moved to action by the Godhead after seeing the manifestation of God. This vision of Jesus in Revelation 1 is not so much to be interpreted, as it is to stun us into listening. It is a great evil that "The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society," the so-called Jehovah's Witnesses deny that Jesus is designated in the scriptures as *YHWH*. To combat this anti-Christ doctrine all should know that John

applied the name *YHWH* from the prophecy in Isaiah 6:5-10 to the Lord Jesus in John 12:37-40.

33. **What was Jesus holding in His right hand, what was going out of His mouth and what was His countenance like?** (1) In His right hand were seven stars (See below), (2) out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword and (3) His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength (1:16). The shining countenance is a symbol of His divine glory like Peter and the other two saw on the mount (Mark 9:2-3; II Peter 1:16-18).
34. **What does the sharp two-edged sword out of the mouth of the Son of Man signify?** The sharp sword is the well-known symbol of the word of God. As it is written, "for the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews. 4:12). The word is the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17).
35. **How does the Lord Jesus describe Himself in Revelation 1:17-18?** "I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives and was dead ...I am alive for evermore." Again note that Jesus affirms for Himself the very attributes of the eternal Father (compare 1:8,11,17,18). And no wonder for He said while on earth, "The Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father" (John 5:22-23). Those who say Jesus is simply "a mighty God" or was a preexisting angel as the *Watchtower* does are teaching anti-Christ doctrine.
36. **What keys did Jesus affirm He had? "The keys of Hades and death" (1:18).** Hades is from the Greek and literally means the unseen realm. It was to the paradise of rest for God's people in the unseen realm that the Eternal Spirit of the Lord Jesus went from the cross. For he had told the thief, "today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). Later on the third day Jesus came forth from Hades (Acts 2:31).
- There is also a place of torment (cf., II Peter 2:4, Greek, *tartarus*) in the unseen realm (Hades) for the rich man was confined to it during the time that Moses and the law were in force (Luke 16:22-24, 29). Hades and death are like prisons and only King Jesus has the "keys" to unlock them, because He Himself came out from both. Therefore "the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear his voice and come forth" (John 5:28-29).
37. **Describe the full scope of John's writing (1:19)?** This is another of the five keys in chapter one as noted above (See question 1). John was told "write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this." In other words John was commissioned to write of the past, present and future, not just things that were to "shortly take place." Yet, in order to understand the book we must recognize it was primarily for the saints at the close of the apostolic age, which coincided with the decade that was dominated by the beast-like emperor, Domitian. By understanding how it was applied in that time we can properly and rightly apply its eternal principles to our own time.
38. **Discuss the mystery of the seven stars and seven lamp stands.** The seven stars were the symbols of the seven messengers for the churches, and the seven lamp stands were the symbols for all churches of Christ in the first century and throughout all centuries (1:20).

CHAPTER TWO

39. **Where is the letter to the church at Ephesus found in the Revelation?** Revelation 2:1-7.
40. **How does the author of the letter to the church of Ephesus describe himself?** As the one who holds the seven stars in His right hand and walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands (2:1).
41. **Name four things the Lord Jesus said He knew about the church at Ephesus?** (1) He knew their works, (2) labor, (3) patience and (4) that they could not bear those who were evil (2:2).
42. **What testing had the church at Ephesus done, and with what result?** They had tested those claiming to be apostles and had found them liars (2:2). This reminds us of the Holy Spirit's warning of false apostles in II Corinthians 11:13-14 where it is written, "such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." John had earlier written, "Beloved ... test the spirits (individuals), whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). In our own times there are many who lay claim to the power of Pentecost and like other false apostles they have their "signs and lying wonders" (II Thessalonians 2:9). They babble a nonsensical jargon and claim that God works through them to give prophecies, signs and wonders. In all these things they hope the unsuspecting will believe they have the power of the apostles to speak in other languages and do wonders, signs and miracles. The apostles of Christ spoke real tongues of real people, but Pentecostals' utter nonsense. Well did Ezekiel prophesy of such saying, "you have spoken nonsense and envisioned lies, therefore I am indeed against you, says the Lord God" (Ezekiel 13:8). The Mormons also have pretenders to the role of apostles. The church at Ephesus did not give place to such charlatans.

43. **Name four other things (2:3) the Lord said He knew about the church at Ephesus.** (1) They had persevered, (2) had patience, (3) had labored for His name's sake and (4) had not become weary in well doing. This reminds us of the admonition "do not grow weary in doing good" (II Thessalonians. 3:13).
44. **What did the Lord say He had against the church at Ephesus?** They had left their first love (2:4), that is, a deep-seated love for the things of Christ. They were like a husband who continues his responsibilities toward his bride, but the love is not there. How amazing to hear such compliments and then hear this rebuke for losing their love of the cause. They had in time past, from the heart, been on fire for the Master, but now their service was routine without sincere love for Christ and His kingdom.
45. **What was required for the Ephesians to overcome their fallen state?** Remember, repent and do the first works (2:5); that is, repent and bring forth fruits worthy of repentance (Matthew. 3:8; Acts 26:20).
46. **What would the Lord do if those at Ephesus did not repent?** He would come quickly and remove their lampstand (2:5). We note this coming did not refer to his literal presence, but to a spiritual coming in His on-going role as Shepherd (cf., I Peter 5:4) of the churches. If they did not repent He would see to it that their light was removed. Isaiah 19:1 shows us a similar coming of the Lord (that is not literal) upon Egypt in a temporal punishment for its idolatry and wickedness. God said He would do this by giving them "into the hand of a cruel master, and a fierce king..." (19:4). Jesus states six times in His letters to the seven churches that He will come in such a manner, either to comfort or correct, Ephesus - 2:5, Pergamos - 2:16, Thyatira - 2:25, Sardis - 3:3, Philadelphia - 3:11, and Laodicea - 3:20.
47. **The Lord commended the Ephesian Christians for hating what?** He commended them for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitans (2:6). Although the deeds of these heretics are not specified, this statement reminds us it is right for God's people to hate some things. As it is written, "you who love the Lord, hate evil" (Psalm 97:10), and again the Psalmist wrote, "I hate every false way" (119:104; cf., Proverbs 6:16,17). The Holy Spirit declared in the New Testament, "Abhor what is evil" (Romans 12:9). Christians are to hold some very negative attitudes toward false doctrines and evil deeds. Another lesson from this statement is that it is right to call names in exposing sin and error. We must speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), but false teachers must be exposed so that the children of God may recognize them for what they are, wolves. This name Nicolaitans, we have little doubt, derives from the name of some heretic.
48. **How were the Christians at Ephesus to hear the Holy Spirit?** With their ears (See 2:7), that is through the word, which John was recording for them and for us. Often the denominational clergy in their conventions will declare, "the Holy Spirit is moving in this great meeting." Yet, the outcome from such "conventions" proves to be the pooling of spiritual ignorance from unregenerate hearts. Once I saw Jimmy Swaggart on television claim that God had laid a message on his heart. God did no such thing. It was, as Jeremiah would say, "after the imagination of his own heart" (Jeremiah 23:17).

The Holy Spirit speaks through His word (I Timothy 4: 1). How sad it is that even some in the church claim a literal, personal and actual indwelling of the Holy Spirit that gives them direct strength in "nudges," while others claim "non-informational help." Whatever

that is! This text (2:7) as the others like it (2:11; 2:17; 2:29; 3:6; 3:13; 3:22; 13:9) help us to remember that the Holy Spirit is a person and that He communicates with words (cf., I Corinthians 2:13). His revealed truth, which makes us free (John 8:32) and complete, furnishes us unto every good work (II Timothy 3:16-17), so that there is no ambiguity about serving Christ or bearing the fruits of the Spirit.

One does not have to strain his brain to find out if the Holy Spirit has put some “non-informational” aid into it. The recorded message is of such a nature that through the knowledge and promises therein we can “be partakers of the divine nature” (II Peter 1:3-4). Those who claim direct aid from the Spirit do not know if that help comes by feeling, tasting, seeing, hearing, smelling or extra sensory perception (ESP). They seem to envision it as a gas, dust, fog or mist that one sucks through the nose into the brain (mind or spirit) to obtain what is said to be “supernatural,” “non-miraculous,” “non-informational” “direct” help from the Holy Spirit.

Most brethren who claim they have the direct aid of the Holy Ghost to help them are not bold enough (yet) to claim any signs or wonders. Pentecostals, and those of the so-called Holiness sects who have more audacity, have attempted to be more consistent in their claims. For at least the last 125 years or so, they have been proclaiming this direct aid of the Holy Ghost doctrine and along with their claim they have at least tried to perform “signs,” but alas they have only been able to perform fake “signs and lying wonders” (cf., II Thessalonians. 2:9). See also question 50.

49. **How many times does "he that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" occur in the Revelation?** Seven: 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13, 22. See also 13:9 for a portion of this quote.
50. **Tell why believing the following statement is so important, "He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says..." (2:7).** This is very important because it is through the means of hearing the word (Romans 10:17), by which the Spirit speaks to the hearts of men to convict them of sin. It is also by means of the word that the Holy Spirit lives in and sanctifies the child of God (Galatians. 3:14; Acts 2:38; 5:32; John 17:17). Thus a person who walks by the Spirit (Romans 8:1) is one who uses his ear to hear the words of the Spirit as written by John and the other apostles. Again it is written, "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God these are the Sons of God" (Romans 8:14). To be led by the Spirit one must use his ear to hear the things spoken by the Spirit in His word.
51. **What did Christ promise to those who would overcome at Ephesus?** To give them to eat of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God (2:7). The tree of life was lost for us by our first parents when they got themselves put out of the garden. What a joy to know that through faith we can overcome sin and partake of that tree which keeps on giving life. The term "tree of life" is a symbol of the manner in which God bestows immortality. The word "paradise" is a Persian word that means park or garden. It is found three times in the scriptures. Twice it refers to the dwelling place of the righteous in hades between death and the resurrection (Luke 23:43 and II Corinthians 12:4). See Acts 2:27, 31 to ascertain that Christ returned from paradise in hades at the time of His resurrection. Paul in the Second Corinthians text says he was caught up "into" paradise. The text here (2:7) is the third reference to paradise and it is used as a symbol of the eternal abode of God's people where they will partake of the tree of life. This Paul calls the third heaven "to" which he was caught up (II Corinthians 12:2). Solomon called it "the heaven of heavens" (II Kings 8:27).

52. **What is the reference for Jesus' letter to the church at Smyrna?** Revelation 2:8-11.
53. **How does Jesus describe Himself to the church at Smyrna?** As the First and the Last, who was dead and came to life (2:8).
54. **What four things did the Savior say He knew about the situation at Smyrna?** He knew their (1) works, (2) tribulation, (3) poverty, and he knew of (4) the blasphemy of those who said they were men of God (Jews), but in truth were a synagogue of Satan (2:9). This reminds us of the statement: "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly... but he is a Jew, who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart..." (Romans 2:28-29). Well did Paul speak of such men, "who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and do not please God and are contrary to all men" (I Thessalonians. 2:15).
55. **How could the church at Smyrna be in poverty, yet be rich?** It was because they were spiritually rich in purity of life and good works (2:9). They were the opposite of the church in Laodicea, which was rich by this world's standards, but in truth were "poor, blind and naked" (See 3:17).
56. **What is symbolized by the ten days tribulation?** It symbolized sure persecution, but of short duration. The saints could take comfort in the fact that perseverance for Christ's sake would sustain them in tribulation and that great blessings would come to those who would overcome. Suffering was surely coming, but they were to twist their courage to the staying point and not fear. Paul in his first letter to the saints in Thessalonians made it clear that those who are called into Christ should be warned of the necessity of suffering for His sake. He wrote, "that no one should be shaken by these afflictions (the persecution they were under); for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. For, in fact we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened and you know" (I Thessalonians. 3:3-4; cf., Matthew 5:10-12).
57. **What is the great and precious promise of 2:10?** "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." This is a beautiful and wise promise for it challenges the saint to be faithful all his life until death comes, but it also strengthens those threatened by persecutors to be faithful in the face of imminent death. The "crown of life" is a symbol of immortality and is spoken of in other places in the scriptures (See II Timothy 4:8; James 1:12). What mockery it is for Calvinists to pretend Jesus also taught "he that is not faithful unto death will receive a crown of life," for their affirmation is that once a person is saved they are always saved, no matter how unfaithful or how many faithful saints they betray.
58. **What promise did Jesus make to the church at Smyrna about the second death?** "He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death" (2:11). As the basic meaning of death is separation, the second death also means separation - separation "from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (II Thessalonians 1:6-9). The second death will find the disobedient in the lake of fire (Revelation 21:8).
59. **What is the reference for Jesus' letter to the church at Pergamos?** Revelation 2:12-17.
60. **Jesus affirmed to the church at Pergamos that He had what kind of sword?** He had the sharp two-edged sword, which is the word of God (2:12; See Ephesians 6:17;

Hebrews. 4:12).

61. **How does the Lord describe a seat of iniquity in Pergamos?** He described it as "Satan's throne" (2:13). Pergamos was the Roman capital of Asia, that is, the local "throne" of the Emperor. It was therefore the regional center for the bureaucracy which enforced the worship of Domitian. Here was the Asian seat of those who demanded that believers acknowledge Domitian as "Lord and God" in their minds and burn incense to him with their own hands.
62. **Identify Antipas. Christ's faithful martyr in Pergamos (2:13).** One (or a symbolic name for such) of the faithful in Pergamos, who had laid down his life for the affirmation: there is but one God Eph. 4:16) and Jesus Christ "is Lord of all" (Acts 10:36).
63. **Why can the church at Pergamos be called a compromising church?** Because they had in their fellowship those who held to the doctrine of Balaam and others who held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (2:14-15). Observe the Lord held it against the church because, as He said to them, you "have those who hold the doctrine." It is not only wrong for brethren to teach error but wrong for them to hold on to such.
64. **What was the doctrine of Balaam?** Balaam the son of Beor was a Gentile prophet of God, whom the king of Moab (about 1406 BC) hired to put a curse on the children of Israel after they had spent forty years in the wilderness (Numbers chapters 22-25). When Balaam realized God would only use him to bless Israel as long as they were righteous, he used his knowledge of God's dealing with men and advised Balak to corrupt the men of Israel. This advice led the women of Midian and Moab to entice the men of Israel into fornication and idolatry in their heathen temples. One can understand why this doctrine is so abhorrent to the Godhead for it advises the corruption of righteous people by getting them involved in fornication, idolatry or other sins in order to bring them into enmity with God. This doctrine is so vile the Holy Spirit condemned it three times in the New Testament - II Peter 2:15, Jude 11 and here, Revelation 2:14.
65. **In what two references does it say Jesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans?** They are Revelation 2:6 and 2:15. See comments above on 2:6 (question 47). While the church at Ephesus was commended for their hatred of this doctrine, the church at Pergamos was condemned for tolerating those who held it. Again the Lord Jesus repeats "this thing I hate;" and again we make note that God hates some things. There is a dearth of good men who will oppose error, ungodliness and immorality. We must maintain a spirit of love always and "be gentle to all" (II Timothy 2:24). Yet, this does not mean we will neglect our responsibility to stop the mouths (Titus 1:10-11) of those who would subvert the souls of the saints. The truth must not be compromised.
66. **If the church at Pergamos did not repent of such compromise what would Jesus do?** The Lord said if they did not repent of compromise with the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans He would come to them quickly and fight against them with the sword of His mouth (2:16). Here He uses the sword to warn them of greater forces within the word that could be brought to bear upon them. Paul's statement that he had delivered certain ones unto Satan (I Timothy 1:20; cf., II Timothy 2:17) is an example of such. The church could be turned over to Satan. Such warfare with the sword of the Spirit against a compromising church is brought about through faithful preachers, who rise up to expose the duplicity of such churches and their leaders. It is evident that sound gospel preachers must speak out against error and sin in the brotherhood (See I Peter

2:17; Titus 2:15; Isaiah 58:1). Churches of Christ are autonomous, but a congregation or its elders cannot hide behind autonomy, practice sin and teach false doctrine, and claim immunity from reproof by faithful preachers. Jesus had already threatened one church that He would come quickly to remove its lampstand if it did not repent (See 2:5). Faithful saints in other places have an obligation to love the brotherhood and call those in error back to the old paths.

67. **What three things did Jesus promise those at Pergamos who would overcome?** He promised them (1) "the hidden manna to eat," and (2) "a white stone," and (3) on the stone a new name written (2:17). Bear in mind the term, "to him who overcomes," means those who would persevere in the severe persecution of that time under the beast like government. As such they would receive immense spiritual blessings because of it. The same is a true principle for us today.
68. **What does the hidden manna symbolize?** The "manna" is a symbol of Jesus for He described Himself saying, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me shall never hunger..." (John 6:35), and again He said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever..." (John 6:51). We must consume Jesus by devouring His life as found in the word. The "hidden" manna is the richness found in the word by those who through faith have had their mettle tested in trials and tribulations as though by fire (See I Peter 1:5-7). They have learned more than ever that the promises in the word are true. For example it is written, "the angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him" (Psalm 34:7; See also Hebrews 1:14). A very beautiful old gospel hymn asks, "When my soul needs manna from above, tell me where could I go but to the Lord?" Those who learn to depend on the Lord receive enormous sustenance from this bread of life that is hidden to the weak or untested Christian.
69. **Discuss the symbolism of the white stone and the new name.** The white stone is a symbol of the solid, no compromising, bedrock faith within the believer, which has been established in his heart through the endurance of trials. The apostle Peter, in writing to the persecuted believers some thirty years before, made mention of a similar promise. He wrote, "the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 1:7).

This promise of which Peter speaks pertains to our eternal glorification, but the white stone with the new name symbolized something very precious given to the believer in *this* life when his tenacity has been tested in the crucible of persecution. Such a blessing or gift from Christ comes to the Christian when he realizes in his own soul that God has walked with him "through the valley of the shadow of death;" and that the rod and staff of God Himself has protected him (Psalm 23). In other words, the believer individually and personally knows that the following statement belongs to him: "Yet, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).

As the title "HOLINESS TO THE LORD" (Exodus 28:36-38) was engraved on a plate of pure gold and placed on the forehead of the high priest; just so the name, "God's" or "Christ's" (see 3:12) are "on the white stone" given to the saint who has persevered in tribulation. Remember it is a symbol. The newness of the name and no other knowing it comes from the personal and deep seated realization in the very soul of the tested Christian that he wears in a worthy manner the name: "**This One Has Overcome.**" The

- captain of king David's guard was Benaiah (I Chronicles 11: 24). In giving an account of this man's prowess and courage the inspired historian recorded, "he had also gone down and killed a lion in the midst of a pit on a snowy day" (I Chronicles 11:22). Such a deed would surely earn the warrior a title of Lion Heart or some more resplendent title. So saints who overcome all adversity are Conquerors? – No, not just Conquerors, for they have the name: "**More Than Conquerors**" (cf., Romans 8:37).
70. **What is the reference for Jesus' letter to the church at Thyatira?** Revelation 2:18-29.
71. **How did the Lord describe Himself to the church at Thyatira?** As the Son of God, "who has eyes like a flame of fire and His feet like fine brass" (2:18).
72. **Name five things the Son of God said He knew about the church at Thyatira.** He said, "I know your (1) works, (2) love, (3) service, (4) faith and (5) your patience." (2:19) We can be sure He knows those things about His congregations today and about His people.
73. **What wicked woman was calling herself a prophetess in Thyatira?** One designated as "that woman Jezebel" (2:20). The origin of this name is from the wife of Ahab, the king of Israel, who reigned BC 919-896. Of him it is written, "there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up" (I Kings 21:25). "Jezebel" is a fitting name for the one in Thyatira who was destroying the church with her lewdness.
74. **Jezebel of Thyatira was teaching and seducing God's people to practice what two sins?** She was teaching and beguiling them into fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols (2:20).
75. **What had God given the Jezebel of Thyatira time to do?** He had given her time to repent of her fornication, but she had not (2:21). Here we see the long suffering of God, who is not willing that any should perish (See II Peter 3:9).
76. **What promise did Jesus make toward Jezebel and those who committed adultery with her if they did not repent?** He said, "I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation..." (2:22). A sickbed and tribulation are fitting symbols of consequences people bring on themselves because of sexual license and promiscuity. The Holy Spirit warned, "he who commits fornication sins against his own body" (I Corinthians 6:18). Ancient men, who committed sexual immorality in such places as the pagan temples, were plagued with sexually transmitted diseases.

Some thirty years before the Revelation was written, the apostle Paul in his letter to Rome had written concerning the sexual promiscuous, such as homosexuals, saying, they receive "in themselves the penalty of their error which was due" (Romans 1:24-27). In our own time the horrible disease AIDS stalks the earth just waiting to catch the sexually promiscuous such as sodomites, fornicators and adulterers to cast them into a literal sickbed. Genital herpes and similar diseases bring physical, mental and spiritual tribulation on millions who choose the way of fornication.

Instead of the way of Jezebel, God's people must teach the world the truth that chastity, marriage and monogamy provide the only way to avoid these horrors. As the Holy Spirit tells us, "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed (of marriage) undefiled, but

- fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13: 4). All over the world sexual intercourse in marriage is right, honorable and pure (cf., I Corinthians 7: 1-5); but when men and women have so-called affairs or practice “trial marriage,” as they call it, they are living in fornication (Colossians 3:5). Those who have joined themselves together in unscriptural marriages (See Matthew. 19:6-9) are living in adultery for it, too, is fornication (cf., I Corinthians 5:1).
77. **What threat did Jesus make toward the children of Jezebel?** He said, "I will kill her children with death" (2:23). "Her children" would be *her* disciples. The Lord's threat of death carries both a spiritual and physical warning. Physical death can result from promiscuity, but the primary meaning is spiritual death both now and for eternity. For it is written, "sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (James 1:15). In relation to physical death the wise man wrote, "the years of the wicked shall be shortened" (Proverbs 10:27), then there is the second death, for Jesus Himself said, "fear Him who is able to destroy body and soul in hell" (Matthew 10:28).
78. **When Jesus had punished Jezebel's children what would all the churches know about Him?** That He was the One "who searches the minds and the hearts" (2:23). Our Lord demonstrated this, while here on earth. For example, Matthew wrote of His dealing with the Pharisees, "but Jesus knew their thoughts" (Matthew 12:25). All of us ought to reflect on the fact that the One who will judge us knows the very thoughts and the intentions of our hearts (cf., II Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 4:12).
79. **Jesus promised each one in Thyatira that He would give to them according to what?** According to their works (2:23; cf., 20:13).
80. **Discuss the expression to know "the depths of Satan as they call them."** Like so many of corrupt minds Jezebel and her children symbolize those who say, you have to delve deeply into sin to understand it. Such suggests one cannot really oppose sin or know it is wrong until it has been experienced, but that foolishness is slapped down by the simple but plain message, you don't have to eat a rotten egg to know what is wrong with it. Just the stench is warning enough, and the stench of sin is an abomination to God and to His faithful children (2:24).
81. **The faithful in Thyatira were told to hold fast until when?** Hold fast until Christ would come (2:25). This does not refer to His second coming (see question 46), but has reference to Christ's presence with them to comfort them after their severe afflictions. The apostle Paul spoke of such when he called our heavenly Father the "God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation..." (II Corinthians 1:3-4).
82. **What power did Jesus promise to those of Thyatira who would overcome and keep His works until the end?** Those who would endure and keep Christ's works until the end of that season of persecution under the beast-like government would see that *they had been given power over the nations*. The term "end" here has reference, not to the end of time, but to the end of the tribulation they were under at that time. For example, it might be comparable to saying to a Christian who had been exiled, "hold fast until the end of your period of banishment." The Greek word from which "nations" is translated is *ethnos* and is often translated Gentiles. In other words, these saints were being told if they would endure, they through the gospel would be ruling over the Gentiles. See the comment on 5:10; question 158.
83. **What reference concerning the Messiah is quoted from the Psalms to illustrate this**

power of the saints ruling with Christ over the nations? Psalm 2:9. The quote here is a divine interpretation of that prophecy: "He shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the potter's vessels shall be broken to pieces" (2:27). This is promised to the Christian who endures. In fact Jesus says at the end of the verse "as I also have received from My Father." In other words as the Father authorized the Son to rule, even so the Son authorizes the saints to rule with Him. The point is that Jesus was telling the persecuted Christians that they through the gospel would rule over Gentiles (unbelievers). This we do by dispensing the word of Jesus, which will judge all at the last day (John 12:48).

Christians through the preaching of the word determine where men and women will spend eternity. This point will be expanded (See question 126 on 3:21). The Christians' part in wielding "a rod of iron" is to send up our prayers (See 8:4-5; Question 210) for God through Christ to exercise His rule of chastisement on the nations (See 19:15; Question 489).

84. **How do saints exercise the power of ruling with Christ?** Please observe that the prophecy quoted above, as found in Psalm 2, is about the Messiah's rule; but as noted, it is here applied to the saint who would persevere during that season of persecution. Faithful Christians exercise this power through their proclamation of the gospel and their fervent prayers. See question 158 for a full discussion of how God's people exercise this rule with Christ over the nations.
85. **Discuss the phrase "I will give him the morning star" (2:28).** We are told by the Spirit in reference to the prophetic word to "heed (it) as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (II Peter 1:19). In the Revelation the Lord Jesus Himself testified, "I am... the Bright and Morning Star" (22:16). The meaning of the gift of the morning star is Christ in us, "which is ... the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). Paul in the book of Galatians makes what is a divine comment by the Spirit on this implanting of Christ in the heart of the steadfast Christian: "my little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you" (Galatians 4:19). Christ dwells in our hearts by faith (Ephesians 3:17). The Christian, who drinks deeply from the word of God, overcomes tribulation through the power of that word, and keeps the works of Christ, receives enormous blessings through fellowship and friendship with Jesus. These things are simply not available to one who seldom reads, studies or puts to use the word of God in his life (cf., I Thessalonians 2:13).

CHAPTER THREE

86. **What is the reference for Jesus' letter to the church at Sardis?** Revelation 3:1-6
87. **How did Jesus describe Himself to the church at Sardis?** As He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars (3:1). As noted earlier the "seven Spirits of God" are a symbol of the Holy Spirit with whom Jesus was anointed (Acts 10:38), and the seven stars are the seven messengers to the churches. The use of these two symbols to the church at Sardis is to remind those brethren that the Lord Jesus speaks with the authority of the Godhead. It is He who is sending the messenger. They should not blame the messenger for the strong rebuke they are about to receive.
88. **What was the terrible pronouncement on the church at Sardis?** "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead" (3:1). Jesus knows this about dead churches today.
89. **What were those at Sardis to do in order to rescue the things that were ready to die?** "Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain" (3:2). See Matthew 26:41.
90. **Name three things Jesus commanded (3:3) the church at Sardis to do in order for them to recover their spiritual life.** (1) Remember the things you have received and heard. (2) Hold fast. (3) Repent. The first statement from Jesus is very much like the words of John in his first letter: "Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning ..." (I John 2:24). It can hardly be emphasized too often that the Godhead communicates with the spirit of man through teaching, hearing and learning (John 6:45); that is, through *words* and not just any words but, "the word which is by the gospel" (I Peter 1:25). This is because the gospel is God's power unto salvation (Romans 1:16). Through it the Holy Spirit both saves the sinner (Acts 11:14) and sanctifies and indwells the saint (John 17:17; Ephesians 5:18; Colossians 3:16). This is true because justification is "by faith" (Romans 5:1) and "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17) and not by faith alone, but by "faith working through love" (Galatians 5:6). It must be an obedient faith as was that of Abraham (James 2:23-26).
91. **If Sardis did not obey the Lord how would he come upon them?** He would come upon them as a thief. (3:3). It would be with stealth, so that they would not know when He was coming to render temporal correction for their disobedience (See question 46).
92. **What was the promise to those few in Sardis who had not defiled their garments?** They would walk with Jesus in white (3:4). This is symbolic of the righteousness of Jesus being seen in the faithful Christian as he daily walks with the Christ. As the sanctified one walks in the light of God's word, he is continually cleansed by Christ's blood (I John 1:7). Therefore, his walk is worthy of the gospel (See Ephesians 4:1;

Colossians 1:10, and I Thessalonians 2:12), because he was called by the gospel, "for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth" (II Thessalonians 2:13-14).

93. **What three promises (3:5) did Jesus make to those who would overcome in Sardis?** (1) They shall be clothed in white garments (See question 92). (2) Their names would not be blotted out of the "Book of Life" and (3) Christ would confess their name before the His Father and before the angels of the Father. It is important to notice that Jesus made the two points in number three to His disciples while He was on earth (Matthew 10:32 and Luke 12:8).
94. **What is the reference for Jesus' letter to the church in Philadelphia?** Revelation 3:7-13.
95. **What does the name Philadelphia mean?** It comes from two Greek words: *phileo* - "to love", and *adelphos* - "brother;" and it means love of brethren, which is fraternal love (3:7).
96. **What two words does the Lord use (3:7) to describe His nature?** He is holy and true.
97. **What authority did Jesus tell (3:7) the church at Philadelphia He had?** The key of David with the power to open and shut and with no one to countermand His authority. This statement, which was taken by Jesus from Isaiah 22:22, shows that His exaltation to the right hand of the Father on Pentecost fulfilled the prophecy that the Messiah was to have authority over the people of God as David did. The term "key of David" is a symbol of God's authorized ruler "on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel" (I Chronicles 28:5). Jesus' affirmation that He had the key of David shows His present authority on "the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Hebrews 8:1) fulfills the prophecy that the Messiah (Psalm 132:11; Isaiah 9:7; Luke 1:32) was to be given "the throne of His father David." For in fact the throne of David was the throne of God (I Chronicles 29:23). Christ now rules on that throne from heaven. See Acts 2:30, 31.
98. **What three reasons did the Lord Jesus give for setting an open door before the church at Philadelphia?** Paul used the term "open door" as a symbol for a great and effectual opportunity for him in his work of spreading the blessed gospel (I Corinthians 16:9; cf., Acts 14:27). The church at Philadelphia, because of their loyalty to Jesus, had such an open door set before them, and, Christ said, "no one can shut it." The Lord then gave three reasons for giving them this opportunity: He declared to them, (1) you have a little strength, (2) have kept my word, and (3) have not denied my name (3:8). Here is a text for world evangelism. Christ as ruler of the churches opens doors to faithful congregations, which allows them the opportunity to bear much fruit for His name's sake.
99. **How did Jesus describe those who called themselves Jews in Philadelphia?** He called them a synagogue of Satan (3:9). This reminds us of the words of the apostle Paul who spoke of "...the Jews who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets... and they do not please God and are contrary to all men" (I Thessalonians 2:14-15). Such men are outwardly Jews, being circumcised in the flesh, but inwardly they are not "Jews;" that is, they are not circumcised in heart (See Romans 2:28-29; Colossians 2:12-13).
100. **Name two things Jesus would make those in Philadelphia, who were of the synagogue of Satan, do?** (1) Worship before the feet of the saints and (2) know that

Christ loved them (3:9). By this the Lord indicated that coming events would cause those who were jealous of the gospel going to the Gentiles to realize God's love for them.

101. **Why did Jesus say He would keep the church at Philadelphia from the hour of trial that was to come upon the whole world?** It was because they had persevered in keeping the word of Jesus (3:10). A divine comment is found on this subject in the letter to the Hebrews: "Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11). The church at Philadelphia had shown they knew how to persevere; therefore, the Lord would keep them from the hour of trial that was to come on the whole world. In saying this the Lord reiterated a very important principle that God applies to His people: "My son do not despise the chastening of the Lord ... for whom the Lord loves He chastens..." (Hebrews 12:5,6). See Job 5:17; Proverbs 3:11,12.

102. **Why was the hour of trial coming on the whole world?** In the text under consideration (3:10), Christ shows the above-designated principle (whom the Lord loves he chastens) is applicable to the whole human family; for He says, "the hour of trial" was to "come upon the whole world to *test* those who dwell on the earth." This makes it clear that calamities, sufferings, sorrows, illnesses and disasters, which come on the human family because this is a sin-cursed world, do not come because they are sent arbitrarily by God, but come to bring mankind to repentance. All humanity needs to know that death, dying and disease (cancer, heart ailments, diabetes, etc.) are in this world not because God put it here. He made everything "very good" (Genesis 1:31). Death and all its attendant evils are in this world because Satan introduced sin into this realm where man dwells (Genesis 3:1-19).

The apostle Paul tells us "through one man (Adam) sin entered the world (through the instigation of Satan – Genesis 3:4), and death through sin (which brought the consequence of being put away from the tree of life, which meant physical death – Genesis 3:22), and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:10). That is, all sinned representatively in Adam so when he and our mother Eve were put away from the tree of life all of us were separated from that tree. In other words we were cut off (Romans 5:12) from that which could have given us the power of continuous life and health on earth.

Since we cannot eat of the tree of life on this planet and live forever (Genesis 3:22), God has "cursed the ground (because of sin being upon it) for (man's) sake" (Genesis 3:17). In spite of the fact that infidels may scoff at this principle, God, out of a heart of love, tolerates, allows and uses suffering to persuade men to give up things that are earthly, sensual and devilish for those things that are spiritual and eternal. As it is written: "The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

103. **How many times does the Revelation declare Jesus' coming?** Twelve times: six times to the churches in His pastoral care of them (see question 46) and in six other places: 1:7, 16:15, 22:7,12 and 22:20.

104. **Why was the church at Philadelphia told to hold fast?** Jesus said, "hold fast... that no one take your crown" (3:11). The symbol of a crown of righteousness and of life (II Timothy 4:8; James 1:12) is very familiar to students of the word. It is a fitting symbol of immortality (cf., Romans 2:7).

105. **How many times in the Revelation are blessings pronounced on those who overcome?** Eight times: 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3: 5, 12, 21 and 21: 7.
106. **How did Jesus say one could become a pillar in the temple of God?** He said, "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God" (3:12). The temple is the church (see Zechariah 6:12-13; Ephesians 2:21; and I Peter 2:5). This was a promise to the Christians of the last decade of the first century that they through perseverance in the season of fiery persecution under Domitian could become pillars in the local churches. We use the same figure today for faithful, godly elders who endure and hold up the truth in the congregations where they serve and in the communities about them.
107. **What three names were promised to saints at Philadelphia?** (1) The name of God, (2) the name of the city of God and (3) that of Christ's new name (see question 69) (3:12).
108. **What is the name of God, the name of God's city and Christ's new name?** (1) God's name is the Lord of Host (2 Samuel 6:2; I Chronicles 17:24; Jeremiah 46:18; James 5:4). The name Jehovah is an Anglicized rendering of the Hebrew, *YHWH*. This Hebrew word for the "Lord" God was translated in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint) by the word, *kurios* (Lord). The inspired writers of the New Testament used it when they quoted Old Testament passages about God (Matthew 3:3; John 12:38).
- (2) The name of the city of God, "the New Jerusalem" is "Heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22). It is a symbol of the eternal domicile of God's people, that is, the place of their everlasting inheritance. The symbol of it coming down out of heaven indicates its place of origin. Christ called it "the kingdom prepared for (His people) from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34). Under another figure He called it, "My Father's house" (John 14:2). Paul called it the "heavenly kingdom" (II Timothy 4:18). Those who are in the kingdom of Christ on this earth as John was (1:9; cf., Colossians 1:13) are to receive their inheritance in the "new Jerusalem;" that is, in the kingdom home prepared for them.
- (3) Christ's new name is "He Who Has Overcome" (John 16: 33). It is called Christ's new name because He earned that title or name (See 3:21) by means of His death, burial and resurrection. In the picture of the conquering Messiah entering the portals of glory after His ascension found in Psalm 24, He is designated as, "The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle" (Psalm 24:7-10).
109. **What is the scripture reference for the letter to the church of Laodicea?** Revelation 3:14-22.
110. **What kind of witness is Jesus?** He is the faithful and true witness (3:14). Read His testimony in John 8:58; 14:6 and Revelation 1:18, and believe.
111. **How is Jesus the beginning of the creation of God?** The Greek here for beginning is *arche* and means Christ is the chief of all God's creation as Michael is spoken of as "archangel" (Jude 9). Christ is ruler of all created beings including Michael and other angels. It is absurd for the Watchtower Society to claim that Jesus is Michael. The latter is an angel and angels must not be worshipped (19:10; 22:9), but the heavenly Father Himself ordered the angels to worship the Son (Hebrews 1:6).
112. **What did the Lord say of the works of the church at Laodicea?** He said, "I know your works, that they are neither hot nor cold" (3:15).
113. **What did Jesus say He could wish about the church at Laodicea?** He said, "I could

- wish you were hot or cold" (3:15). To Christ, being lukewarm about the gospel is repulsive.
114. **What would Jesus do with the church at Laodicea because they were neither hot nor cold?** He said, because you are "neither hot nor cold, I will spew you out of my mouth" (3:16).
 115. **What was the true state of the church at Laodicea in spite of their proclamation of wealth and independence?** They were, "wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked." In other words they were absolutely bankrupt spiritually (3:17). How many wealthy churches in our time are in the exact same state seeing they are bloated on wealth, gorged on social gospel programs, and dwelling in physical plants that would make the Taj Mahal blush, while billions starve for the blessed gospel?
 116. **What two things did Jesus counsel the church at Laodicea to buy from Him?** (1) Gold refined in fire and (2) white garments. The first is a symbol of "faith ... much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, (which) may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 1:7). The "white garments" are like "fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints" and they are said to be the array of the Lamb's bride (19:8). Christians by their lives are to "adorn the doctrine of God" (Titus 2:10).
 117. **Why were the Laodiceans to buy such gold?** They were to buy this kind of "gold" by paying the price through perseverance against sin and tribulation in order that they might be spiritually rich (3:18).
 118. **Why were the Laodiceans to buy such white garments?** They were to buy such in order that the shame of their spiritual nakedness might not be revealed (3:18).
 119. **How many times does the word "white" occur in the Revelation and what does it signify?** Nineteen and it signifies purity.
 120. **Discuss "the shame of nakedness."** The term used here (3:18) refers to the spiritual nakedness of the fruitless life of the church at Laodicea. The figure comes from the physical shame of nakedness. When sin entered the world our parents in the garden perceived this shame. Thus "they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings" (Genesis 3:7). Such was not sufficient to hide their nakedness, therefore we are told "also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21).
- Modern man in many cases with a calloused heart has obliterated any sense of shame. The malls, public pools and beaches are filled with those who do not "know how to blush" (Jeremiah 8:12). Often even professed Christians wear little or nothing to cover their nakedness, e.g., shorts, halters, pool wear, beach wear and much sportswear. Such is the clothing, or lack of it, which manifests "the works of the flesh...(in the heart, particularly) licentiousness..." (Galatians 5:19). At times, even well educated people will hold up the lack of clothing worn by poor ignorant pagan savages as justification for their own lack of decency as though they themselves had no better training in modesty.
121. **Discuss the "eye salve" needed by the Laodicean church.** They needed an anointing of spiritual discernment that would let them see spiritual things. The apostles' understanding of Jesus' words about the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees in

Matthew 16:6 illustrates how one who thinks only in fleshly terms can never understand the word of God.

When Jesus called the doctrine of those two groups "leaven," the apostles' response was concerning physical bread. With that in mind they could not understand His words. As long as a man perceives of things only in a natural way, that is, in a physical sense, he will never have eyes that are anointed to see spiritual things (cf., I Corinthians 2:14). Jeremiah cried out to Israel, "Is there no balm in Gilead" (Jeremiah 8:22).

122. **What did the Lord say He did for those whom He loved?** He said, "as many as I love I rebuke and chasten" (3:19). Here is a most difficult thing for saints or sinners to learn, "He who rebukes a man will find more favor afterward than he who flatters with the tongue" (Proverbs 28:23). The Holy Spirit through Paul told Titus, "exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you" (Titus 2:15).
123. **Name two things Jesus told the Laodiceans to do in 3:19?** "Be zealous and repent."
124. **What is the significance of "behold I stand at the door and knock" (3:20).** Here is the promise of wonderful fellowship with Christ in this life. If one will open his mind to spiritual things - things the Laodiceans could not discern, because of carnality - he will find sweet communion with Christ like he has never imagined.
125. **What did the King promise to those at Laodicea who would overcome?** That he would grant them to sit with Him on His throne (3:21).
126. **How do we enjoy the privilege of sitting with Christ on His throne?** The apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians stated the matter of Christians sitting together in Christ, he said, God "raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 2:6). The Greek in this reference for "sit" is *sugkathizo* and means, "to cause to sit down together, place together" (Thayer, p. 592).

Thus, we see that the Holy Spirit affirmed that all saints have been made to sit together in company with Christ in His throne in this present age. Earlier Paul had written that God raised Christ "from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:20). We sit together with Him in that spiritual realm known as the heavenly places. The manner in which our Lord stated (3:21) that he who overcomes would sit with Him on His throne shows the seating is not literal, but is spiritual and contingent on faithfulness to Him. This means we participate in His ruling power and authority when we faithfully proclaim His law (See Romans 8:1; Galatians 6:1) to the world.

127. **When Christ overcame where did He sit?** Christ said, "I ... overcame and sat down with my Father on His throne" (Revelation 3:21). The sweet Psalmist of Israel had foretold this (Psalm 110:1). Also we must remember that the throne of David was in truth "the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel" (I Chronicles 28:5). The throne of David, on which Solomon also sat, as we noted earlier, was "the throne of the Lord" (I Chronicles 29:23).

There has never been two thrones over God's people. The throne that David held was "the throne of the Lord over Israel." Thus the Lord Jesus Christ now occupies that throne for He overcame and "sat down with (His) Father on His throne" (3:21; cf., Hebrews 8:1), which also fulfilled the prophecies that He as the Son of man was to be seated on the throne of His father David (Isaiah 9:7, Luke 1:32; Matthew 26:64).

CHAPTER FOUR

128. **What was the first thing John saw and heard in the fourth chapter?** He saw a door standing open in heaven and a voice like a trumpet saying, "Come up here and I will show you things which must come to pass after this." John was invited to look into the heavenly realm and see and hear the things Christ would reveal (4:1).
129. **How does John describe his own state at the beginning of chapter four?** He was in the spirit (4:2). See comment on 1:10, and also see II Corinthians 12:2.
130. **What is seen in 4:2 that is the theme of chapter four?** It is a throne. In fact, the word throne is used 12 times in chapter 4 and five times in chapter 5.
131. **What was the appearance of the One on the throne in chapter four?** "He who sat upon the throne was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald" (4:3). This was symbolic of

the majesty and glory of the living God. See Ezekiel 1:26-28 where Ezekiel saw a similar vision.

132. **Describe the scene about the throne in chapter four.** There was a rainbow around the throne in appearance like an emerald and twenty-four thrones on which sat twenty-four elders in white robes wearing crowns of gold on their heads (4:4).
133. **Tell whom the twenty-four elders represented and what their dress signified.** These represented the faithful heads of the twelve tribes of ancient Israel and the twelve apostles over spiritual Israel (cf., Luke 22:30; Galatians 6:15-16). In Matthew 19:28 Jesus told the apostles that they would sit on twelve thrones in the regeneration judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This was a promise in symbol that the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42) would rule over God's spiritual nation in New Testament times. The term "regeneration" indicates this present age when men are being regenerated (born again into the kingdom of Christ - John 3:3-5; I Peter 1:23). The white robes of the elders signified that they had been washed in the blood of the Lamb (cf., 1:5). The crowns of gold signified the crown of life upon them (James 1:12).
134. **What do the seven lamps burning before the throne signify?** The seven lamps are symbols of the "seven spirits of God" which, as noted before (1:4), symbolize the Holy Spirit (4:5).
135. **Whom did the four living creatures signify?** They signified a special class of angels called Cherubim or Cherubs, which guard the holy things of God (4:6-8). See Ezekiel 1:5-28; 10:20.
136. **Describe the four living creatures.** Each of the living creatures had six wings and they were full of eyes in the front and back. The first one was like a lion, the second like a calf, the third had a face like a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle (4:6-8). These things described the vision, strength, wisdom and swiftness of these mighty angels in doing God's will. The ability to fly and thereby cover enormous distances has always held a fascination for mankind; thus the Cherubs are pictured with six wings to illustrate their great ability to deal with the work of God in the heavens and even the heaven of heavens. The many eyes signified that these servants of the throne are watchful always and can see in all directions as God grants them that ability. The lion is a well-known symbol of regal power. The calf – a male, is symbolic of strength. The translation, "calf" for the Greek, *moschos*, in this place gives a wrong picture to the English thinker. James H. Strong gives as the first definition, "a young bullock" (Strong, Greek dictionary, p. 49). The face of a man is in the vision to represent the wisdom or intelligence of the living creatures. The flying eagle is a sign of their swiftness to carry out the work of the Godhead.
137. **What did John say the four living creatures do day and night?** They do not rest day and night saying "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come" (4:8).
138. **What caused the twenty-four elders to fall down before the throne and to cast their crowns before it?** The giving of glory, honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne by the four living creatures (4:9-10).
139. **Of what did the twenty-four elders say God was worthy?** They said, "You are

worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power" (4:11).

140. **Why did the twenty-four elders say God was worthy of their praise?** They said, "For you have created all things, and by your will they exist and were created" (4:11). This shows the absurdity of the philosophy called pantheism. God is not one with creation for He is the Creator, who is over all creation and external to it.

CHAPTER FIVE

141. **What was He, "Who sat on the throne," holding in His right hand?** He was holding a scroll (5:1).
142. **Describe the scroll God was holding in His hand and tell what it signified.** It was written inside and on the back and sealed with seven seals. This scroll in symbol held God's plan for His creation, from a period briefly before Christ's first advent (See 12:1-5) until the final consummation of all things on this earth and the beginning of eternity (20:11-21:3). In particular it revealed how He was to work for His people in delivering them out of all their adversities. God's eternal plan of redemption included His design to do this from the infinite past (See I Peter 1:19) until the redeemed were with Him (22:4) in heaven. Thus we can understand why John was told at the beginning of the Revelation, not only would the Lord reveal things which were to shortly take place, but that he (John) was to write of things past, present (his own time) and future (1:19). The greater portion of the book is taken up in telling the persecuted saints at the end of the first century how they were to endure a beast-like government. This book, which strengthened them to endure an oppressive government and revealed how the Throne of Heaven would act resolutely to aid them, is a pattern for saints in all generations to overcome such brutal governments.
143. **What question did the strong angel ask about the scroll in God's hand?** Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals (5:2)?
144. **Why did John weep much according to 5:3-4?** Because it appeared that no one in heaven, on earth or under the earth was able to open or even look at the contents of the scroll?
145. **Why did one of the elders tell John not to weep?** Because he said that, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David had prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals (5:5). The Lion of the tribe of Judah had prevailed because He is the Son of God, as it is written, "For to which of the angels did He ever say: you are My Son, Today I have begotten you" (Psalm 2:7; Hebrews 1:5)?

The Messiah said, "behold, I have come to do your will, O God" (Hebrews 10:9). Again while on earth Jesus testified, "for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me" (John 6:38). The Savior conquered sin, death, hades and the grave in the Father's name. He returned to heaven as the conquering Lord, as it is written, "lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and

mighty, The Lord mighty in battle... The Lord of hosts, He is King of glory" (Psalm 24:7-10).

146. **Discuss the two symbols used of Jesus in Revelation 5.** In this throne vision of chapter 5 Jesus is pictured as two animals, a "lion" (5:5) and a "lamb" (5:6). Both symbolize His work on the throne of God. The symbols portray the message of the prophet that the Christ was to be ruler and priest at the same time. As it is written, "He shall sit and rule on His throne; so He shall be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zechariah 6:13). As noted above (3:21) Christ's throne is the Father's throne. Jesus is Ruler and High Priest on that throne as the writer of Hebrews so eloquently tells us (Hebrews 1:13; 8:1; 10:12-13). From it He rules the nations, as the Lion of Judah, and intercedes as the Lamb for His people. Our peace and our protection come because our Master occupies both offices, that of King and High Priest, who is "at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Hebrews 8:1).

We note the impossibility of Christ so ruling in earthly Jerusalem in the land of Israel, for it is written: "if he were on earth, He would not be a priest..." (Hebrews 8:4). He serves as king and priest at the same time. See Zechariah 6:12-13 where the prophet said His service would include both offices at the same time. That He cannot do on this planet. Christ will not return to this earth and set up a throne in Jerusalem or any other place. He will return in clouds (Acts 1:9) for the purpose of raising all the dead, both good and bad, in the same hour (John 5:28-29) on the last day of this earth's existence (John 6:40). The saints will be "caught up in the clouds, to meet Him in the air" (I Thess. 4:17). His return will be for judgment (Matt. 25:31-46), then this earth and the old physical heavens about it will be burned up (II Peter 3:10).

147. **Why is the Lion of the tribe of Judah called the Root of David?** Because Jesus is the descendent of Israel's greatest king, David (1011 - 971 BC), son of Jesse; as it is written, "Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh..." (Romans 1:3). Isaiah, in speaking of the gospel age, foretold: "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters that cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9). He then said, "in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people; for the Gentiles shall seek Him (Isaiah 11:10). Here is an urgent message for teaching world evangelism.
148. **Whom did John see standing in the midst of the throne, the elders and the four living creatures?** A Lamb as though it had been slain (5:6). Clearly this is a symbol of Jesus as "a lamb without blemish and without spot," who was slain to shed His "precious blood" to redeem us from all iniquity (I Peter 1:18-19). John the Baptist had said of Jesus to his disciples, "behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
149. **How many times is the word lamb used in the Revelation for the Messiah?** It is used twenty-two times for the Christ. It is used once in another manner in the Revelation where the second beast, which comes out of the earth (13:11), is said to have two horns like a lamb. (See discussion on chapter 13).
150. **What did the seven horns of the Lamb signify?** An animal's horns are the concentration point of its power. It fights with its horns. Horns are named in scripture as symbols of power, as it is written, "My God... my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold" (Psalm 18:2). The seven (symbol of completeness) horns (symbol of power) on the Lamb (symbol of Christ) are symbolic of the fact that Jesus has all power

or authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18)

151. **What did the seven eyes of the Lamb signify?** We are plainly told the seven eyes are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth (5:6). The seven Spirits as noted before are symbolic of the one Holy Spirit (see the comments on 1:4). The Spirit here is symbolized as being on Jesus Christ, because He was anointed with the Holy Spirit, for it is written, "that word you know...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power..." (Acts 10:38).
152. **According to 5:7, from where did the Lamb take the scroll?** From "the right hand of Him who sat on the throne" (5:7). Here is a symbol of the inauguration of Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords at the right hand of the Father, which was proclaimed on Pentecost just ten days after His ascension from the Mount of Olives back to heaven. See the comments on this point above, question 16 on 1:5. As we noted, David (about 1000 BC) had written, "the Lord said to my Lord, sit on my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool" (Psalm 110:1). This prophecy was quoted by Peter on Pentecost, and used to prove, that Jesus Christ of Nazareth had been exalted to the right hand of the Father as "both Lord (Ruler) and Christ (Messiah)" (Acts 2:33-36). Later we read the Father's statement at the time Jesus was exalted to the throne of glory: "Your throne, O God is forever and forever..." (Hebrews 1:8). After that the same writer said, "We see Jesus crowned with glory and honor..." (Hebrews 2:9). Again he wrote, "this is the main point of the things we are saying: we have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Hebrews 8:1). Again the writer of Hebrews affirmed: "This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool" (Hebrews 10:12,13).

As noted, the Lion/Lamb taking the scroll from the Father's hand symbolized the beginning of Jesus' reign. The information found in Revelation 5:1 to 11:15 covers the period of time from that inauguration until the close of the apostolic age. One of the difficult things in understanding the Revelation is trying to relate its events to specific dates. Revelation 5:7 can be marked with the date of Pentecost (28 May 30 AD). We will see later that the first few verses of Revelation chapter twelve parallel this coronation scene in chapter five. It is found in question 301.

153. **When the Lamb took the scroll what happened?** The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb to praise and honor Him as the Redeemer of God's people (5:8). Observe that angels and men were worshipping the Lamb, that is Jesus. Such is absolutely necessary (See John 5:22-23).
154. **What do the harps and golden bowls of incense represent?** They symbolize the worship and petitions of God's people before His throne. Particularly they symbolize the singing and prayers (5:8) of the saints (See 5:9-10; 14:2-3). Later we will see in chapter 8 how incense is used as a symbol of intercession by Christ and the Holy Spirit.
155. **What is the theme of the song in chapter 5?** It is one of redemption. Here is a text (5:9) that ought to be used regularly to teach the urgency of world evangelism. As disciples of Christ we have been given the greatest responsibility in the world which is to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15-16). What a tragedy it is that so many church leaders have failed to teach their congregations that spending enormous quantities of God's money on cathedrals, social programs and/or keeping large bank accounts is not a proper response to this obligation. The world population for 2003 is projected as 6.3

- billion (World Population Data Sheet). If a man gave his wife one billion dollars and gave her two rules about spending it: Spend \$10,000 every day and don't come back until you have spend it all she would be gone for more than 273 years. Yet, our Lord expects us to preach to the six billion plus, who are our contemporaries on this planet.
156. **Why was the Lamb said to be worthy?** Because He had been slain and by means of that death He had redeemed God's people out of every tribe, tongue, people and nation (5:9). We ask should the billions of our generation for whom Christ died not hear of that death for their salvation? Should they not be taught Zion's songs of redemption? "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall the call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things" (Romans 1:13-15).
157. **What had the Lamb caused the redeemed ones to become?** He had made them kings and priests (5:10). Christians, who have been redeemed from among all people, have been made such before God as was noted above (see question 18, on 1:6). Observe, this does not mean being kings and priests in a future glorified state, but the announcement was a prophetic statement in conjunction with the praise of Christ at the time He returned to heaven and became King (Acts 1:9-11). The sorely persecuted saints at the end of the first century were being reminded that servants of Christ had been rulers and priests from the beginning of His Coronation at Pentecost (See I Pet. 2:5,9).
158. **Being kings and priests the redeemed ones proclaimed they were to do what?** The redeemed sang, "we shall reign on the earth" (5:10). They were quoted as saying this as part of the praise of Jesus from the beginning of His reign when He took His seat at the right hand of the Father. From Pentecost forward those converted to Christ began to reign with Him on this earth as they proclaimed His message, which is to judge the world (John 12:48).

How do Christians reign? We noted earlier concerning the reign of Christ that it is written, "He (the Father) raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His own right hand "in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:20). Paul then speaks of the Ephesian Christians and himself saying, "when we were dead in trespasses, (God) made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 2:5-6). Thus, the Holy Spirit tells us that at the time of our rebirth of water and the Spirit into the kingdom (cf., John 3:3-5), we are made alive and made to sit with Christ where He sits "in the heavenly places." Therefore, being alive in Christ, and being seated with Him in heavenly places, we live and reign with Him. To this agrees the testimony of the Spirit to the Roman saints, "for if by one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17). Notice particularly, God's people reign *in life*, not in death.

The term "sit together" (Ephesians 2:6) is *sugkathizo* in the Greek and it means, "to give (or take) a seat in company with (make) sit (down) together" (*Strong's Concordance*, Greek Dictionary, No. 4776, page 67). This is the only use of this form of this word in the New Testament. Its use in connection with our being raised to walk in newness of life in Christ (cf., Romans 6:3-4) is most significant, because the Holy Spirit thereby makes it clear that those who are raised with Christ are made to "sit together in heavenly places in (Him)" (Ephesians 2:6). In other words when we obey the gospel we are jointly

seated as faithful ones in Christ as He sits and rules in the spiritual realm, known as “the heavenly places” (Ephesians 1:20). This fact is very important in comprehending the Revelation. It is a marvelous commentary on Christ’s words to the saints in Laodicea when he said, “to him who overcomes I will grant to sit with me on my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in His throne” (Revelation 3:21). Bear in mind the continuous requirement of faithfulness in order to reign with Christ. This makes it clear as to why Christians are designated “kings” in the Revelation (1:6; cf., Romans 5:17) and why from the time of Pentecost they proclaimed, “we shall reign on the earth (5:10).

How is that reign exercised, or to put it another way, how is it realistically accomplished in the earth? The answer is found in the manner Jeremiah the prophet ruled in his time. He exercised a rule over kingdoms and nations during his life that well illustrates the manner in which Christians rule in this dispensation under Christ. In spite of his suffering, tribulation and imprisonment, Jeremiah was set over the nations of his day. Even as God told him while he was a very young man: "see I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:10). He ruled the nations then, even as we reign now with Christ as we proclaim His gospel to the people of the earth.

In order to illustrate how we reign with Christ in judgment of the earth’s population now, let us note that the very heart of our message is, "he who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on Him" (John 3:36). Again, "he who believes and is baptized will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). Going further we proclaim "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness..." (Romans 1:18). We also preach that "the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral (fornicators), sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

This gospel, which we preach, is the universal message of salvation *and* the universal standard of what is right or wrong. It is the basic rule of law and judgment for all humans. As earthen vessels (II Corinthians 4:7) God's people, who are dispensers of this message, rule and judge with Christ in its proclamation. It is not a physical reign, but is one stronger and surer than the reign any earthly monarch ever had. For it is written, "the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Corinthians 4:18).

In order to understand this principle and the reign of God's people with Christ in this present age, one must not think as the woman at the well of Samaria thought when she first met the Savior (John 4). When Jesus spoke of water she thought of physical water; but Jesus meant spiritual water, which comes through the word of faith (Romans 10:17). With the eyes of understanding (cf., Ephesians 1:18) we must take our thinking off things of the flesh to the spiritual in order to visualize the things of God. Paul rebuked the Corinthian brethren about a carnal attitude as though they were reigning as earthly monarchs. He wrote, “You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned without us – and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we might reign with you!” (I Corinthians 4:8). He was not discussing the spiritual reign of God’s people as the context shows.

There is a second and very important way Christians serve with Christ in reigning over this earth at this present time. We should remember that the prophet foretold that the Father would say to the Son, "Ask me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; you shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Psalm 2:8-9). The way we share in this aspect of temporal punishment on nations that hate or ignore God is with our prayers. This is set forth in the eighth chapter of the Revelation where the prayers of the righteous ascended before the Father's throne and Heaven reacted by sending trumpets of wrath on wicked men and nations (See comments in chapter 8).

John set these things (concerning the Christians' reign) forth for the immediate reassurance of the saints, who were being brutalized by Domitian, his army, the praetorians and government bureaucrats, but that rule is just as much in force today as it was then. For it is still true, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34); and again, "The wicked shall be turned into hell (Hebrew, *sheol*; Greek, *hades*), and all nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17). The nations of the earth must accept the law of Christ, as it is dispensed by His people, or suffer the consequences. As it is written, "When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power..." (II Thessalonians 1:7-9).

159. **What was the number of angels around the throne of God?** It was ten thousand times ten thousand (100 million) and thousands of thousands (5:11). This symbolized the myriads of God's serving "spirits, (who are) sent forth to minister for those (Christians) who will inherit salvation" (Hebrews 1:14). Christ at the cross could truly have called more than twelve legions (72,000) of angels (Matthew 26:53) to protect Himself had He so desired.

160. **How many were the words of praise of which the Lamb was worthy according to the ten thousand times ten thousand angels?** Seven (5:12). As we have already seen, this scene in Revelation 5 is a symbol of the inauguration of Jesus at the Father's right hand after His return to heaven in clouds (Acts 1:9).

These words of praise remind us of the vision given to Daniel (about 550 BC) of Jesus' ascension from the Mount of Olives back to heaven for His coronation. Daniel wrote, "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days (the heavenly Father), and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him" (Daniel 7:13-14). The heavenly host saw these things at the time the Lamb received the scroll from the Father's hand and declared in a loud voice these seven wonderful words of praise to the conquering Lord. Thus Jesus received His kingdom from the Father with great honor from His angelic army.

161. **The creatures of what four places praised God and the Lamb?** (1) Every creature in heaven, (2) on earth, (3) under the earth and (4) such as are in the sea (5:13).

162. **This praise from these four different places symbolized what?** It signified that all creation praises the living God. Read Psalm 148 for a thorough comment on this point.

163. **The ten thousand times ten thousand angels around the throne proclaimed blessing, honor, glory and power to what two persons?** To Him who sat on the throne and to the Lamb. (5:13). This is clearly worship of the Father and the Son. As we noticed earlier such is absolutely necessary for those who would serve the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob for He has “committed all judgment unto the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father” (John 5:22-23). Such scriptures make it clear that the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society is an anti-Christ movement.
164. **When the four living creatures said, "amen" to the praise of God and the Lamb, how did the twenty-four elders react?** They fell down and worshipped Him who lives forever and ever (5:14).

CHAPTER SIX

165. **What was the first thing that John saw in chapter six of the Revelation and what did it indicate?** He saw the Lamb opening the first seal and the first living creature speaking to John with a voice like thunder, saying “come and see”(6:1). The loud voice signified that God wanted the message that followed known to all.
166. **Describe the scene when the first seal was opened and tell who was the rider on the horse.** John saw a white horse with a rider who had a bow and a crown. This rider is the Lord Jesus Christ taking His message to the world in symbol (cf., 19:11-12). The crown in the vision reminds us that Jesus was “crowned with glory and honor” (Hebrews 2:9) upon His return to heaven as the conquering Lord (Dan. 7:13-14; Psalm 24:7-10; Acts 2:30-36; Ephesians 1:18-23).
167. **What did the rider who was seated on the white horse do and what did it symbolize?** He went out conquering and to conquer (6:2; cf., 19:11). This is symbolic of the aggressive drive to take the gospel to the entire world. As we saw in chapter five the taking of the scroll by the Lamb symbolized the Messiah's coronation at the time of Pentecost. Here we have a symbol of His gospel going out from that time to conquer in His name. The bow is essentially an offensive weapon; thus, it symbolizes the militancy of taking the gospel to the entire world. God's people are not militant in the fleshly sense of that word, "for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but (they are, as the very word of God) mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God" (II Corinthians 10:3-5). Christ's command for world conquest (Mark 16:15-16) is to reach the hearts of men and women with words of the gospel and turn them from sin to righteousness and from darkness to light.

168. **What happened when the Lamb opened the second seal?** A fiery red horse came forth and the one who sat upon him was given a great sword (Greek, *machaira*) (6:4).
169. **What was the rider on the red horse granted to do?** To take peace from the earth (6:4).
170. **The violence, the killing, and the great sword of the rider on the red horse signified what?** The horse and rider with his horrible sword symbolize war on the earth, as it is tolerated or used by God to punish evil men or to frighten them out of their greed, idolatry, adulteries and lethargy. An example of this is found in Isaiah, where God foretold how He would use a heathen nation to punish the wicked nation of Israel. He said, “Woe to Assyria, the rod of my anger and the staff in whose hand is my indignation. I will send him against an ungodly nation and against the people of my wrath I will give him charge, to seize the spoil, to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets” (Isaiah 10:5-6). In the book of Jeremiah God called “Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant” whom He was going to bring against the nation of Judea, because of their corruption and rejection of His word through the prophets (Jeremiah 25:9-10; cf., II Chronicles 36:15-17).

The following quote from greatest of the Roman historians, Cornelius Tacitus, makes it clear that such a plague came in a very intense manner on the Empire during the late eighties and early nineties while Domitian was in power.

“One after another, armies were lost in Moesia and Dacia, in Germany and Pannonia, through the rash folly or cowardice of their generals; one after another, experienced officers were defeated in fortified positions and captured with all their troops. It was no longer the frontier and Danube line that was threatened, but the permanent quarters of the legions and the maintenance of the Empire. “So ... one loss followed another and year after year was signaled by death and disaster...” (Tacitus, Agricola, 41, p. 93).

171. **What was seen when the lamb opened the third seal and what did this symbolize?** A black horse came forth (6:5). The black horse symbolized economic disasters such as financial panic, drought and famine, which would be used by God in the dispensation of Christ, and specifically on the Roman Empire to bring men to repentance.
172. **What did the rider on the black horse have in his hand?** A pair of balance scales (6:5), which are a fitting symbol for an economy such as ancient Rome. In fact, such scales are still used in third world nations today.
173. **Tell what was said of the food supply, because of the black horse and his rider, and tell what those things signified.** A voice in the midst of the four living creatures said, “a quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and wine” (6:6). A denarius was a day’s wage for Roman soldiers at the time (Strong’s, New Testament Monies, Under Monies and Weights Chart) and it had great purchasing power, but the symbolism is that the food of the masses would be hit hardest by inflationary prices. Such is the usual case in the time of economic severity and the common people generally suffer the most. One historian wrote about the conditions among the poor masses in the decades following the set up of the Empire by Augustus:

“The economic expansion that followed in the wake of the peace he created thus

primarily benefited only a small minority of the population. The producing lower masses continued to live at the subsistence level and were the first in the Empire to feel the effects of economic recession, when the Augustan system became increasingly expensive to operate” (Boak, p. 297).

The poor people would have been the first to feel the pinch of high prices for their common food. A scarcity of such things would cause them to think more soberly about life and existence; and they are the very ones who are the most responsive to spiritual things when they do suffer. The purpose of the suffering being put on the masses was to cause them to stop supporting the repressive measures of the Emperor, his bureaucrats, the praetorians and others against God’s people. It is a widely known fact that the people of a nation “vote their pocket book.” This was much in evidence in the fall of 1998 when India held bye-elections in four states. At the very time of the elections the price of onions had risen enormously in the market and onions are very much in demand as a part of the Indian diet. The government lost in a landslide. Onions the following year were in great abundance, and the party in power won by a large majority.

How tragic it is that those who are well blessed materially think that they are God’s favorites in this world. Often the biggest concern of those who fare “sumptuously every day” (Luke 16:19) is not how do we get the gospel to the poor, but when do we eat? Our brother James tells us God has “chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which He promised to those who love Him” (James 2:5).

174. **What happened when the fourth seal was opened?** John heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "come and see;" and John saw a pale horse come forth (6:8).
175. **What was the name of the rider who sat on the pale horse and what did the scene symbolize?** Death was his name and the vision symbolized death and dying, often in horrible ways and intensive manners, as a force that helps to bring men to repentance (6:8).
176. **What followed the rider on the pale horse?** It was Hades (6:8), which comes from the Greek language and means the unseen realm. It is the sphere where departed spirits wait for the general resurrection.
177. **What power was given Death and Hades?** They were given power over a fourth part of the earth to kill with sword, hunger, death, and beasts of the earth (6:8). The symbol of the fourth part indicates that a large portion of mankind would suffer death in such ways as to impress on the people of the Roman Empire that death could be imminent for them; therefore, they should turn from ungodliness and from their persecution of God’s people.
178. **Give the color of the four horses of the sixth chapter of the Revelation.** The four horses of the Apocalypse (from the Greek *apokalupsis* for revelation, Vine, p. 292) were White, Red, Black, and Pale.
179. **When the Lamb opened the fifth seal of the scroll what did John see and what did it signify?** He saw “under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony, which they held” (6:9). It is important to note that the testimony of these saints had not been about Jesus, while those spoken of in 20:4 gave testimony of Him. From this we can see that the former signified the lives of the saints of

the Old Testament period.

180. **For what did the souls (lives) of the martyrs under the altar cry out?** "How long, Oh, Lord, holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth (6:10)?" Remember this is a symbol and it testifies to God's remembrance of His faithful servants in the former times. We are reminded that the blood of Abel cried out to God from the ground (Genesis 4:10) in a similar figure.
181. **What was given to the souls under the altar, what were they told and what did this signify?** A white robe was given to each of them and they were told they should rest a little longer until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed, should be completed (6:11). As was noted these souls under the altar symbolized the lives of martyrs and other saints faithful to God from the Old Testament period (cf., Hebrews 11:35-40). The giving of the white robes to them signified Christ's "redemption of the transgressions (of the saints) under the first covenant" (Hebrews 9:15). The statement that they should rest a little longer is in agreement with the statement: "that they (the righteous of the Old Testament period) should not be made perfect apart from us" (Hebrews 11:40). That is, the Old Testament saints were not made complete without the church being brought into the fold of safety.
182. **List the six great calamities, which occurred when the Lamb opened the sixth seal and tell what those things signified.** (1) A great earthquake. (2) The sun became black as sackcloth made of hair. (3) The moon became like blood. (4) The stars of heaven fell to the earth. (5) The sky receded as a scroll. (6) Every mountain and island was moved out of its place.

The opening of the sixth seal was not a prophecy of the final judgment of mankind. A comparison of this prophecy with the one given in Isaiah 13 about the coming judgment on Babylon, which took place in the latter half of the sixth century before Christ, shows these six catastrophes symbolized terrors to be brought by God on the beast-like government of the empire.

Look at the language used by the prophet as he spoke of "the burden against Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw" (13:1). "The Lord of Host musters the army for battle" (13:4). "To destroy the whole world" (13:5). "Wail, for the day of the Lord is at hand" (13:6). "It will come as a destruction from the Almighty" (13:6). "Behold, the day of the Lord comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light. The sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine" (13:9,10). "I will punish the world for its evil..." (13:11). "Therefore, I will shake the heavens, and the earth will move out of its place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts and in the day of his fierce anger" (13:13). "Behold, I stir up the Medes against them (the Babylonians)" (13:17).

The message recorded from God in Isaiah 13 is an excellent example of the manner in which the prophets used physical phenomenon to convey spiritual messages. A thorough study of the prophets shows that natural calamities like earthquakes, moving mountains, the sun being darkened, and the stars and the moon not shining are used as figures of speech, which indicate the fall or shaking of powerful men (kings, officers, advisors, etc.), governments and national economies. In fact, it is the case that when such governments, kings and economies do collapse it is like the end of the world for those

caught up in it.

Jesus used the same kind of language in His prophecy in 30 AD concerning the coming destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army (AD 70): "The sun will be darkened; and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens will be shaken" (Matthew 24:29). In Matthew 24:34 the Lord said, "this generation will by no means pass away till all these things are fulfilled." This illustrates how this kind of prophetic language was applied to such men as the Jewish national leaders in Jesus' time and the system of power and economy of the Jewish State.

Just so, the prophetic words at the end of Revelation 6 were used by Christ to comfort the persecuted saints at the close of the first century. These words revealed that God's wrath was running over in reference to the cruel government that had arisen with Nero and had reached its peak under Domitian. Catastrophic events and old fashion plagues (cf., Exodus 7-12) were to be brought to bear on the empire that would force the government and its bureaucrats to change their attitude toward God's people in order that they might spread the gospel under the umbrella of a more reasonable and tolerant government. These six signs symbolized political, economic, cultural and social upheavals in the earth that would follow God's plagues and punishments on evil men.

183. **What did the seven groups: the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man say to the mountains and the rocks?** "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb" (6:16). This is symbolic of the fear that would be manifest in the face of the plagues around them.
184. **What does Revelation 6:17 say to close the sixth seal of the scroll?** "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (6:17). The meaning of this is that God had tolerated the persecution of His people, but the time had come for Him to make the persecutors suffer.

CHAPTER SEVEN

185. **What is the opening scene of Revelation seven?** Four angels standing at the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree (7:1).

186. **What did the vision of the angels on the four-corners of the earth holding the four winds signify (7:1)?** (1) The four-corners of the earth symbolized the four directions on the compass. See I Chronicles 9:24 where the gatekeepers of the tabernacle were assigned to these four directions. (2) The angel's control of the winds symbolized that God ultimately holds power over the natural forces of this planet.

Those reading and understanding the Old Testament know well how God used the natural forces of this earth for the sake of righteousness. (cf., Deuteronomy 28:1-6,12,15-19, 23; I Kings 17:1). The Revelation shows that He was about to use such things on the government of Domitian for the sake of His persecuted people at the end of the first century, and we can be sure He uses such now to urge evil men to repent.

187. **How many were sealed of the twelve tribes of Israel?** 144,000.
188. **Give the two references where the figure 144,000 is used as a symbol of God's people.** They are Revelation 7:4 and 14:1.
189. **List the twelve tribes as found in the Revelation.** They are Judah, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Simeon, Levi, Issachar, Zebulon, Joseph, and Benjamin (7:5-8).
190. **Which two of the twelve tribes are missing from the list in Revelation seven?** Missing are Ephraim and Dan. This makes it abundantly clear that it was not the literal twelve tribes that John saw. To this the scriptures agree for, "those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as seed" (Romans 9:8).
191. **Whom did the 144,000 in Revelation chapter seven symbolize?** This number symbolized all the righteous of the nation of Israel from Sinai into the age of Christ. These constitute the "all Israel" of Romans 11:26. It includes the righteous of the time of Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Deborah, Barak, Samson, Samuel, David, the 7,000 in Elijah's day, the righteous remnant that returned from Babylon, and the Christian Jews of whom Paul spoke saying, "even so then at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5).
192. **What did John see, according to chapter seven, after he saw the 144,000, and what did they symbolize?** He saw, "a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues standing before the throne and before the Lamb" (7:9). These were symbolic of the redeemed from all nations, i.e., the righteous Gentiles. Remember this is a prophecy in picture form as God visualized the salvation of souls under Christ from the time of Pentecost.
193. **Tell what those from all nations, tribes and tongues were wearing, what they were holding, what they were saying and what those things signified.** (1) They were "clothed with white robes (2) with palm branches in their hands" and (3) were saying, "salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb" (7:10). The white robes symbolized that the blood of the Lamb had cleansed them (1:5). The symbol of the palm branches is taken from the gospel according to John where at the time of the triumphal entry the people of Jerusalem went out with palm branches to meet the Lord Jesus and cried out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! The King of Israel" (John 12:12-13)! The statement in the third point indicates that they were worshipping both the Father and the Son.

194. **What three groups fell on their faces before the throne of God when they saw the 144,000 from the twelve tribes and the redeemed from all nations?** (1) All the angels standing around the throne, (2) the 24 elders, and (3) the four living creatures (7:11).
195. **What was the number of the words of praise and honor ascribed to God by the three groups that fell down to worship Him?** Seven (7:12).
196. **What two questions did one of the twenty-four elders ask John about the great multitude from all nations?** (1) Who are these arrayed in white robes? (2) Where did they come from? (7:13)
197. **How did John answer the elder when he asked him about the great multitude clothed in white?** John said, "Sir, you know" (7:14).
198. **When John answered the elder about those clothed in white, how did the latter reply?** He said, "These are the ones who came out of the great tribulation and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (7:14). The term "great tribulation" here has reference to the tribulation the godly must suffer for the sake of the kingdom throughout this age. Acts 14: 22, tells us, "we must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." Again it is written, they "shall receive a hundred fold now in this time ... with persecutions - and in the age to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:30). The apostle Paul told Timothy, "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecutions" (II Timothy 3:12). This was particularly applicable to the churches of the last decade of the first century, which were suffering severely under the beast-like government of Domitian and his bureaucrats.
199. **Where do the redeemed in white robes serve God day and night, and to what does this refer?** They serve before the throne of God and in His temple (7:15). This vision is not of some future glorified temple, but has reference to serving in Christ's church now. For, as noted earlier, the temple is the church and God's people during the time of Christ serve Him night and day in that temple. Christians through prayer, even now, come before the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16).
200. **What does it mean when it says God dwells among the redeemed in His temple?** The statement, "He, who sits on the throne will dwell among them," had been affirmed earlier in the word of God, as it is written, "You are the temple of the Living God. As God has said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God and they shall be my people'" (II Corinthians 6:16). This means that God dwells in and among His people in this age. This is done through the word of faith, that is the gospel (cf., Ephesians 3:17; Galatians. 3:14; Romans 10:17; I Peter 1:18-25).
201. **How can it be that God's redeemed ones from all nations no longer hunger or thirst anymore nor does the sun or heat strike them? (7:16).** While the Savior was on earth He had stated, "I am the Bread of Life, he who comes to me shall never hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). This makes it clear that the Lord provides sustenance for His people on this earth that supports them in all their needs.

In reference to the sun not striking God's people, we are reminded that the physical sun with its heat can strike very hard with burning, exhaustion and even stroke. The statement "the sun shall not strike them nor any heat" is a symbol and it means that God's children will not have to bear spiritual suffering comparable to the sun's oppression in the physical world. Isaiah used the same spiritual language in foretelling the blessings of the

age of the Messiah. He wrote, "they shall, neither hunger nor thirst, neither heat nor sun shall strike them; for He who has mercy on them will lead them, even by the springs of water He will guide them" (Isaiah 49:10). Christians have been given "every spiritual blessing" in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). These statements (7:16,17) were to remind the suffering Christians, that they could truly depend on the word of Jesus for the deep needs of their soul. They could also depend on His care and concern for them and their loved ones, which He had promised (see the next question).

202. **How does the Revelation explain the protection from want and need, which was to come on the redeemed of God from all nations?** It is written, "the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd and lead them to living fountains of water" (7:17). This is like the language of the Lord, which He used while He was on the earth: "He who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the door keeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out" (John 10:2-3). Again it is written, "Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). To put it plainly, while we live on this earth each faithful Christian can say with great confidence "the Lord is my Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1). God's people can trust Jesus as their shepherd for He told them, "Lo. I am with you always even to the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20).
203. **How can it be said God will wipe away every tear?** Although it is the Christian's lot in this sin cursed world to suffer and bear tribulation, God has promised that He will cause "all things (to) work together for good to those who love God, who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). Thus, out of our tears, God can and will bring patience, joy and righteousness. The apostle Paul tells us God in this life "comforts us in all our tribulation" (II Corinthians 1:4). It is good at this point to compare Revelation 7:17 and 21:4. The first of these two references is speaking of God's care of His people during this present life on earth when it says, He "will wipe away every tear." The latter verse, which has reference to the blessedness of heaven, tells us not only will God "wipe away every tear, (but) there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain..."

CHAPTER EIGHT

204. **Give the references for the opening of the first and seventh seals of the scroll by the Lamb.** He opened the first in 6:1 and the seventh in 8:1.
205. **When the seventh seal of the scroll was opened what immediately happened?** There was silence in heaven for about half an hour. God has often commanded man's silence,

- e.g., "Be silent in the presence of the Lord God..." (Zephaniah 1:7; cf., Habakkuk 2:20; Zechariah 3:13). When a teacher, as the Spirit of God is, calls for silence He expects men to listen. This half-hour of silence in heaven is a marvelous illustration that God takes time to listen, even as it is written, "For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayers" (I Peter 3:12). We can draw this conclusion with confidence concerning the half-hour of silence, because the next four verses (8:2-5) deal with the influence of the saints' prayers on the actions of Heaven toward the earth.
206. **In which chapters do we read of the opening of the seven seals?** They are found in Revelation chapters 6, 7, and 8. We should note here that the opening of the seventh seal brought forth the seven trumpets.
207. **At what place in the Revelation do we read of the seven angels being given the seven trumpets?** It is found in chapter 8 verse 2.
208. **In which chapters do we read of the sounding of the seven trumpets?** They are chapters 8, 9, 10, and 11.
209. **When a different angel appeared in chapter eight after the seven with the trumpets, what did he have, where did he stand, what was he given, and for what purpose?** (1) He had a golden censer, (2) he stood at the altar and (3) "he was given much incense, (4) that he should offer it with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne" of God (8:3).
210. **What ascended before God from the angel's hand, and what did this signify?** The smoke of the incense ascended with the prayers of the saints (8:4). In 5:8 incense was used as a symbol of the Christians' prayers. It should be noted that our prayers are to include intercessions for "kings and all, who are in authority" (I Timothy 2:1-2). In the text before us (8:3-4) incense is used as a symbol of aid or help (intercession) with our prayers.

Concerning such intercession it is written, "He (the Lord Jesus) is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). This should remind us of the plain speech of the Hebrew writer: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.... Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14,15).

Again we are told, "He (the Holy Spirit) makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Romans 8:27). The Holy Spirit does this for us before the throne of grace just as Jesus does (I John 2:1) and as we do (I Timothy 2:1-2). It is not something the eternal Spirit does inside of us. When it speaks of "groanings, which cannot be uttered" in Romans 8:26 it is referring to our groans. This scripture speaks of the Holy Spirit interceding for us even when we are only able to couch our deepest sorrows in groans. Knowing the needs, the difficulties and sorrows of all Christians, He is able to interpret even their groans to the Father in heaven. It seems to me to be a pathetic idea to claim from Romans 8:26 that Holy Spirit is literally incarnated in the body of the Christian and what does He do? He groans! Groans! No, beloved, the Spirit intercedes for us before the throne of our Father when He sees and knows our deepest even unexpressed sorrows.

The incense "given" to the angel symbolizes the intercessory work of the Holy Spirit and of our Lord Jesus, who "by the sacrifice of Himself" (Hebrews 9:26) made it possible for us to boldly approach the throne of God with our prayers and petitions. A most crucial point to note just here is that the prayers of all the saints going up to God with the incense of intercession led immediately to the sounding of the trumpets. These, as we shall see, tell of Christ's rule of iron over the nations (12:5; 19:15) for the sake of His people. In other words the trumpets were the direct response of heaven to the prayers of the faithful.

211. **After John had seen the prayers go up before God with the incense, what did he see the eighth angel ("another angel," verse 7) do and what did it symbolize?** This angel took the censer, filled it with fire from with altar, and threw it onto the earth, which produced "noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake" (8:5). The throwing of the fire on the earth was a symbol which indicated that God had heard and was responding to the prayers of the saints. The prayers in the vision ascended up before the Lord God with the incense (the intercession of Jesus and the Spirit) from the altar, and they brought a powerful response from the Throne of heaven. The lesson is that Heaven responds directly and decisively to the prayers of God's people. James tells us, "the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16). He then illustrates this point with the prayer of Elijah, a man like us, who prayed to God and whose, prayer was answered just as he had petitioned (James 5:17-18). Elijah's prayer brought a plague that involved the sun and the earth's weather pattern on a wicked king and his nation to get them to repent of their idolatry, murder and adultery (I Kings 17 and 18).

It is interesting to note that the rain, which came in response to Elijah's prayer, came from a cloud (I Kings 18:44-45). That is, God used His natural forces to answer prayer and to seek repentance from a wicked nation. Moses provides another example of the Godhead responding to the entreaties of a godly person, for he saved Israel from destruction in the wilderness through his prayer (Deuteronomy 9:19; 10:10). The resulting noises, thunderings, lightnings, and earthquake are natural things, which symbolized God's use of His created forces to warn men to respond to the entreaties of His people. In the seventh chapter John was shown "four angels standing at the four corners of the earth holding the four winds" (7:1), which symbolized that God continually holds power over the earth's physical forces. When a person wonders how God responds to our prayers in this age, when miracles, wonders and signs have ceased, he must remember that God has at His disposal all the laws that govern the universe to answer our petitions.

212. **What happened when the first trumpet sounded?** Hail and fire mingled with blood followed the sound of the trumpet, and these were thrown to the earth (8:7). This symbolized a plague on the earth's vegetation for "a third of the trees were burned up and all green grass was burned up."
213. **What did the things that followed the sound of the first trumpet signify?** The great drought in the time of Elijah destroyed the vegetation in the land of Israel (I Kings 17:1; 18:1-5; James 5:17-18). Hail and thunderstorms with lightning are very destructive of field crops. Thus God through this symbolism told the persecuted church in the first century that He would strike the earth's vegetation to provoke evil men to repent and change their wicked ways.

The term "a third of the trees" indicates a judicious use of plagues, such as hailstorms,

drought and pests on crops and other plants to provoke the persecutors to back away from their hatred of a harmless and godly people. We can rest assured that as God used those forces to control the deeds of unregenerate man in Elijah's day and at the end of the first century He also uses them now as He through Jesus rules the nations in like manner. As we noted at the beginning, men in every generation need to "know that the Most High rules in the kingdoms of men" (Daniel 4:31-32).

An illustration of what severe weather conditions can do: in the years 2000-2002, there was a severe drought in the southern portion of India. The state of Tamil Nadu was especially hard hit, since I was in that state many times during those three years I could see the affects of the severe shortage of rain. In late August of 2002, in a four-hour car trip I was amazed to see that the grass over an extended area was completely gone. I wondered at the time what the people were doing to feed their goats and cattle. Trees were badly affected, for many of them were dead. Literally thousands of coconut palm tree trunks were standing without leaves or tops as a silent testimony to the long drought

214. **What happened when the second trumpet (angel) sounded?** "Something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood; and a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed" (8:8-9).

215. **What did the destruction of the third part of the sea creatures and the ships signify?** The throwing of something like a great mountain into the sea indicated the bringing of naval disasters on the merchant and war vessels of the Empire. The symbol of the third part of the sea becoming blood is very appropriate when one considers that ancient naval battles involved the lashing of ships together and hand to hand combat by the sailors and marines with short swords and spears. Will Durant described the war ships of Rome at an earlier period: They built ships 150 feet long (46 meters) each with 300 rowers and 120 soldiers. Most were fitted with grappling hooks and movable gangplanks that allowed the soldiers to seize the enemy ships and board them for hand-to-hand combat at which Romans excelled (Durant, p. 44).

Such sea battles would have left the sea swirling with blood. The symbol of a third of the living creatures in the sea dying, and a third of the ships being destroyed was an indication of wars and catastrophes that would overtake a large portion of Rome's naval and merchant fleet with their crews. We may read of merchant ships that, "*had three decks, many carried 250, several took a thousand tons of freight. Josephus tells of one that carried 600 persons – passengers and crew.*" Durant reports from Mommsen (Provinces, II, p. 278) concerning a ship that carried "*200 sailors, 1300 passengers, 93,000 bushels of wheat, and a load of linen paper, and glass*" and a very large Egyptian obelisk (Durant, p. 325).

216. **What happened when the third trumpet (angel) sounded?** "A great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water" (8:10).

217. **What was the name of the star that fell after the sounding of the third trumpet?** It was Wormwood. This word (Greek - *apsinthos*) refers to a type of bitterness and is used nine times in the scriptures, twice in this verse and seven times in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 29:18; Proverbs 5:4; Jeremiah 9:15; 23:15; Lamentations 3:15,19; Amos 5:7).

218. **What did the star, Wormwood, with its bitterness upon the waters signify?** It

signified disasters and plagues upon the fresh waters of the Empire. When one realizes the great care and expense the Romans incurred in providing water for the masses, i.e., the fountains that ran continuously, huge public bathing pools, reservoirs, lakes and aqueducts, then they will understand what disasters on those would mean to the people as well as to government officials.

When Augustus came to power in January 27 BC, Rome had three aqueducts. He added two and by the year 100 AD another four had been added. Those nine had a total length of 267 miles (425 kilometers) and in twenty-four hours they supplied 330,000,000 gallons (1,280,400,000 liters) to the city. The remarkable supply of water to Rome was due to the Romans' great demand for baths, fountains and drinking places. Augustus alone built 105 fountains and 700 reservoirs. Private homes received a regulated amount of water for a certain fee, thus the aqueducts provided a considerable source of income for the treasury (Nilsson, pp. 252-253).

Bad water, which would produce diarrhea, cholera, typhoid, and other diseases associated with polluted water, is well symbolized by Wormwood or bitterness. The pagans of the Empire, who were supporting the government's wicked policy against Christians, would, because of their superstitious nature, equate such disasters and plagues on the water as an evil omen; and would blame the state.

219. **What happened when the fourth angel sounded?** "A third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened; and a third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night" (8:12).

220. **The events following the sounding of the fourth angel signified what?** This symbol indicates that the celestial light bearing bodies and the powers of the heavens would be employed to turn the Empire from its beast-like ways against God's people. Heathens, who worshipped the sun, moon, stars and planets (Greek *-planetes-* "wandering stars" - Jude 13), were greatly terrified by comets, eclipses, meteor showers, other cosmic events, and even vicious storms that might hide the sun for days. They would have been quick to change their attitudes and responses to the saints when they saw such things taking place in plague like proportions. Tacitus specifically made mention of such things at the time of the last and worst period of terror under Domitian (93-96). He wrote,

"In addition to manifold tragedy on the human plane, signs and wonders occurred in heaven and earth, premonitory lightnings and tokens of things to come, auspicious or ominous, doubtful or manifest. In short, Rome's unparalleled sufferings supplied ample proof that the gods are indifferent to our tranquility, but eager for our punishment" (Tacitus, *The Histories* 1:3; p.23).

In a similar vein Suetonius recorded a brief quote from Domitian himself about terror from the heavens: *"So much lightning had fallen during the last eight months (January-August 96 AD) that Domitian cried out, 'Now let him strike whomever he pleases!'"* (Among things struck were) *The Temple of the Capitoline Jupiter, The Palace, even Domitian's own bedroom were struck; and a hurricane wrenched the inscription plate from the base of a triumphal statue of his and hurled it into a near-by tomb"* (Suetonius, *Domitian*, 15, p. 310).

221. **What did the angel flying through the midst of heaven proclaim after the first four trumpets? (8:13).** "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth because of the remaining blast of the three angels who are about to sound!" (See 9:1; 9:16; 11:14 and

12:12).

CHAPTER NINE

222. **What is the first and major event of Revelation chapter nine?** John "saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. And to him was given the key to the bottomless pit" (9:1).
223. **Discuss the use of the term heaven.** A careful study of the scriptures shows there are three places designated as heaven (See II Corinthians 12:2). The first of these is called the "firmament," that is, the space above, around, and beyond the earth. In Genesis 1:6-8 it is designated simply as "heaven." We most often say "the heavens," that is, the sky. It is the space where the celestial bodies (Genesis 1:17) are and where the birds fly above the earth (Genesis 1:20). The Greek is, *ouranos*, and carries these meanings and by extension happiness, power and others (Thayer, p.464).

The second heaven is the spiritual realm, which the Holy Spirit has designated as "the heavenly places." In the book of Ephesians the term "the heavenly places" is used five times. The first reference says, (1) Christians are "blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1: 3). (2) Christ at the time of His coronation was exalted to the Father's "right hand in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 1: 20). (3) Christians have been made to "sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6). (4) God, "by the church" has and is making known His "manifold wisdom" "to the principalities and power in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10), and (5) we wrestle "against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).

The word for "heavenly *places*" in the Greek is *epouranios*, an adjective (Vine p. 209). It means above the sky, that is, celestial. A literal translation in noun form would be the "heavenlies." From the five statements above we can see that "heavenly places" is used to mean the realm of spiritual things and events. From these statements we learn that God's people are sitting with Christ as He exercises His authority in that realm. We also have our spiritual struggle with Satan and his forces in the same arena. In the visions of John, the term heaven is very often used to apply, but not always, to what is called the heavenly places (Ephesians 1:18-22).

The third heaven is where the Father's house is (John 14:1-2). Paul in speaking of his visions in the second letter to the Corinthians said he was caught up "into" (Greek — *eis*) paradise, but was caught up "to" (Greek — *pros*) the third heaven (II Corinthians 12:2-4). This is the "heaven" that is most often used to mean the dwelling place of God. Solomon

called it "the heaven of heavens" (I Kings 8:27,30). This is the location of the throne of God where Christ was seated when He returned to heaven (Daniel 7:13-14; Zechariah 6:12-13; Hebrews 8:1, 10:12). Yet, as we have seen from the book of Ephesians, Christ exercises His power from the right hand of the Father in the spiritual realm called the heavenly places.

224. **What did the star fallen from heaven signify?** The fallen star is a symbol of Satan (See 12:10). The scene symbolized his downfall in the spiritual realm known as the heavenly places. The Lord Jesus said while on earth, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18). Jesus stated this as a prophecy when He saw the joy of the seventy after just one mission against Satan. The emphasis in the statement is that Satan's fall, which was to take place due to the death and resurrection of Jesus, was to be swift like lightning. Such swiftness is a marvelous illustration of those two great events, which took place within a period of just three days. From all of creation there had been no actual remedy for sin (Hebrews 10:1-4; I Peter 1:18-19), nor was there anyone who had ever completely escaped death (Joshua 23:14; I Kings 2:2). Yet, Jesus Christ of Nazareth accomplished both in less than 72 hours. This picture of the fallen star is a symbol of the casting down of Satan by Christ through the cross and the empty tomb. Jesus in the brief time – Friday to Sunday - so undermined the two great strongholds of Satan (sin and death), that he (Satan) can no longer hide in them. By the Savior's death He crushed the walls of the fortress of sin, and, by His resurrection, He unlocked the door of hades. Is there any wonder that He affirmed at the beginning of the Revelation, "I have the keys of death and hades" (Revelation 1:18)?

225. **To what shall we liken the bottomless pit in this text (9:1)?** It makes a dreadful, but appropriate symbol of *the mind* of this world, which is the mind or spirit of rebellion in men. The scriptures speak of it as "the course of this world" (Ephesians 2:2). In the Roman letter, after saying, "there is none righteous no not one," the Holy Spirit gave a long summary of the evils that have been and are being produced in the hearts of men and women (Romans 3:10-18; cf., Psalm 14:1-3). In the Ephesian text (2:2) the apostle Paul spoke of Satan being the ruler of this domain as "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience." The word "air" is the Greek word "*aer*," which Thayer defines as "the air, particularly the lower and denser" and as "the atmospheric region: Acts 22:23" (Thayer, p. 13). Satan is called the "prince of the power of the air," because he rules in the realm where there is atmosphere for man to live and breathe.

In other words, the bottomless pit (Revelation 9:1) is a symbol of the abysmal sinkhole that constitutes the collective mind of the sons of disobedience. This condition of heart exists in unbelievers, because of the work of Satan in them and because of the passions of lust that work in their members (James 1:14; I Thessalonians 4:5; Romans 7:23). A brief bit of reflection will make a person realize that the evils brought upon the human race by Satan are conjured up through, by and from the mind of corrupt men. Truly the collective mind of evildoers is a bottomless pit. Paul spoke to Timothy about those ensnared by "the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will" (II Timothy 2:26).

226. **What did the smoke out of the bottomless pit, which darkened the sun and the air signify (9:2)?** It signified all the evil things evil men conjure up in their minds through the spirit of rebellion in them and because of Satan's influence over them. To put it another way this smoke represents all the wicked actions and results that come on the earth because of the evil thoughts of men. Jesus Himself said, "out of the heart proceed

evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies (Matthew. 15:19). Paul states plainly that such is “the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit (Satan rules the earth where man breathes) who now works in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2).

227. **Describe the power of the locusts from the bottomless pit and tell the significance.** Their power is described as "the scorpions of the earth have power" (9:3). The sting of the scorpion is poisonous and causes intense pain in the victim. This plague was to be put personally upon the haters of God's people. This smoke and the locust that came out of it signified all the evil Satan brings on men by ensnaring them in various plagues that involve all manner of sin, deception, lies, drunkenness, murder, suicide, abortions, euthanasia, violence, crime, drug addiction, disease, adultery, fornication, prostitution, homosexuality, pornography, divorce, family disintegration, broken homes and broken lives.

228. **What were the locusts from the bottomless pit commanded not to do, and what did this signify?** "They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads" (9:4). This plague was not to involve the physical earth, but it was to be directed against the brute like persecutors themselves, that is, against the Emperor, bureaucrats, lictors, praetorians, soldiers and citizens who were persecuting God's people and crying out for their blood. The four preceding trumpets by the angels (chapter 8) had indicated God would use His powers on the earth's vegetation, the seas, the fresh water and the celestial bodies to bring a halt to the murderous practices of the Empire against His people. This horror brought by Satan on evil men, because they served him, was to come personally upon the perpetrators of evil.

The apostle to the Gentiles spoke of such consequences in the bodies of evil men that were taking place earlier in the first century. He wrote, "He who commits sexual immorality (illicit sex, fornication) sins against his own body" (I Corinthians 6:18), and again it is written of homosexual and sodomites, that they receive in "themselves the penalty of their error" (Romans 1:27). Pagan Rome gloried in those kinds of things. The leaders of Roman society were prime examples of such sexual immorality and ungodliness. The following is a comment by Will Durant on the immorality of Domitian as described by Roman writers. *"We cannot assess these stories, nor those tales of sexual license that have come down to us - Domitian swam with prostitutes, made the daughter of Titus one of his concubines, and 'was most profligate and lewd toward women and boys alike'"* (Durant, p. 290; cf., Suetonius, Domitian, 22, p. 313). Not only so, but their gluttonous feasts where men gorged themselves on rich foods and alcohol, often to vomit in order to stuff themselves again and again, brought equally horrible consequences.

229. **Instead of killing those who did not have God's seal on their forehead what were the locusts from the bottomless pit to do?** It is specifically stated, "they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months" (9:5). This five months' period for these punishments, plagues or suffering is named twice (9:5,10). This symbolized that those plagues and punishments, although very severe, would be moderated to afford the unbelievers time for reflection. God did the same through Moses when He put such plagues on the Egyptians and would then lift them (Exodus 8:13-14). Such procedure can make harder the heart of a stubborn man, as Pharaoh was (Exodus 8:15; 9:34), but it will give some men the opportunity to repent as it did the prodigal

(Luke 15:11-32).

230. **Discuss the seal of God on the forehead.** The seal of God on the forehead is a fitting symbol of commitment in the mind of the believer to God, His kingdom and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33).
231. **Discuss the subject, "men will seek death and will not find it" (9:6).** This plague of horrors was designed not to kill the evildoers, but to give them hard and brutal treatment, so that they might reflect on the crimes they were committing against the saints of God. They would know a living hell of suffering without relief from a quick death. This plague was to be short, but leave them alive with a tortured mind. A mind where the afflicted individual desires relief even in death but is afraid to die.
232. **Compare the description of these locusts with that found in Joel 1:4: 2:4-7.**

In the book of Joel we read his description of a plague of "chewing," "swarming," "crawling" and "consuming" locust: *"their appearance is like the appearance of horses; and like swift steeds, so they run. With a noise like chariots over mountaintops they leap, like a noise of a flaming fire that devours the stubble, like a strong people set in battle array"* (Joel 1:4; 2:4-5). In Revelation we have, *"The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lion's teeth. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running to battle. They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails"* (9:7-10).

I have taken the space at this point to write out both these texts in order that the reader may make a quick comparison. When we see the use of such vivid and powerful figures of speech by the Old Testament prophet to describe the desolation left by a swarm of literal locusts, we should not think it strange to have similar figures describing the horrors of sin's plague on the body and mind.

233. **Tell who was king over the locusts and give his name in Hebrew and Greek.** He was the angel of the bottomless pit, Satan. He is here designated with a name from the Hebrew, "*abaddon*," which literally means, destruction; and from the Greek "*apollyon*," which means destroyer (9:11). These are appropriate titles for the archenemy of God and man, the Devil (cf., I Peter 5:8).
234. **What did the locusts and their king symbolize?** This is a symbol of Satan unleashing his forces of evil events, wicked deeds, diseases and corruption upon those who are entrapped by him. In this text, the plague of horrors was unusually severe as they were directed toward those who did not have God's seal on their forehead (no faith in their hearts) in order that they might turn from their hatred toward the saints at the end of the first century.
235. **What were men told in Revelation 9:12 just before the sounding of the sixth trumpet?** "One woe is past (the plague of locusts from the bottomless pit). Behold still two more woes are coming after these things."
236. **Where else are the woes discussed and what are they?** (1) Woe number one, as noted,

is the locust from the bottomless pit (9:1-2). (2) Woe number two is the army of horsemen that was 200,000,000 strong (9:16, 11:14). (3) Woe number three is the symbol of Satan coming down to the earth (12:12). In Revelation 8:13 we read that John "heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven (the heavenly places), saying with a loud voice, woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels."

237. **What happened when the sixth angel sounded his trumpet?** John "heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel, release the four angels who are bound in the great river Euphrates" (9:13-15). These four angels had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, thus they were released to kill a third of mankind (9:13-14). The symbol of the four angels being bound in the Euphrates indicates that God had restrained armies east of that river from attacking the Empire until He was ready for them to make their assault. The Romans for three hundred years (c. 50 BC – 250 AD) found a people known as Parthians\Persians dangerous neighbors. Yet, there was a period during those three centuries when, for nearly fifty years, the Empire had respite from this very powerful enemy. That period began in 63 AD when the Roman commander, Domitius Corbulo, during Nero's rule, forced the Parthian ruler, Vologases, to sign a treaty with Rome, which restrained the traditional foe until 110 in the time of Trajan (Boak, pp. 307-308; Tacitus, *The Annals*, XIII, 34-41, pp. 287-292).
238. **What did the cavalry of 200,000,000 signify?** The varied colors of their breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth-blue and sulfur yellow indicate a variation in the make up of the army (9:16-17). In light of this and the great number of warriors, it seems apparent that the Lord is signifying a long series of attacks on the eastern front (the Euphrates) of the Empire - a protracted war with a brutal foe made up of many different nations. Such a war would distract the persecutors of God's people within the Empire in order that they might serve him in peace. The Parthian wars with Rome on its eastern front fit this description to a tee. These tribes had originally been a semi-nomadic people speaking a kind of Persian that had settled southeast of the Caspian Sea about 250 BC, and they had gradually extended their control over the Mesopotamian and eastern satrapies of the declining Seleucid (eastern Greek) Empire (Boak, p. 230).

The Parthian, or Arsacids' kingdom, ruled the nations that formerly made up the kingdom of the Medes and Persians including those of Assyria, Babylonia and the various tribes and nations of Mesopotamia. The Romans began to have contact with the Parthians about 92 BC during the time of Roman dictator, Cornelius Sulla. The relationship was reasonably good until 65 BC when Pompey (the great) refused to accept the Parthian king's claim to the lands in northern Mesopotamia. During the next ten years confrontations continued as Rome sought more and more to control the entire Mesopotamian region. In the year 53 BC a battle took place that clearly demonstrates that the Parthian's war tactics make them the prime candidates for an over whelming symbol of cavalry.

"Marcus Licinius Crassus, (co-ruler with Julius Caesar and Pompey), had no real excuse for opening hostilities with the Parthians except the desire for loot and glory. In 54 (BC) as the Roman ruler of Syria, he made a short incursion into Mesopotamia and then withdrew. The following year he again crossed the Euphrates with the intention of destroying the Parthian army, but he greatly underestimated the difficulties of desert warfare and the enormous power of the

Parthian army, which was almost exclusively cavalry. The Parthian commander, Surenas, had organized a force of 10,000 mounted archers, supported by a supply train of a thousand camels carrying a reserve supply of arrows, which enabled the bowmen to maintain their fire for long periods. The archers were backed by a thousand mail-clad lancers mounted on heavy war-horses; also partially protected by armor... The Romans were surrounded and cut to pieces by the Parthian horsemen. While endeavoring to lead the survivors to safety, Crassus was enticed into a conference and treacherously slain, and only a small remnant of his force of 40,000 men escaped. The Parthians were slow to follow up their advantage, and Crassus' quaestor, Gaius Cassius Longinus, was able to hold Syria. Roman prestige in the East had received a severe blow, however; (and) for the next three centuries the Romans found the Parthians dangerous neighbors" (Boak, p. 231). In fact during those centuries many Roman armies fell before the irresistible might of the mounted Parthian archers (Nilsson, p. 233).

As noted there was a lull in fighting between Rome and the Parthians between the 63 and 110 AD, but strong hostilities were renewed after the fall of the beast-like government. In the midst of Trajan's reign (110 AD) the king of the Parthians (Osroes) drove out the king of Armenia, who was a Roman client. This broke the arrangements that had preserved peace between Rome and Parthia from the time of Nero. Trajan determined that the Parthian threat was such that he personally should be involved, so he left Rome in the autumn of 113 and proceeded to the East. Once there, he invaded Armenia and drove out the king who had been appointed by the ruler of Parthia. In the spring of 116 Trajan opened a campaign directly against the Parthians in Mesopotamia. He died August 9, 117. Later we read that Antoninus Pius (138-161) had to check Parthian encroachments in Armenia. Then at the beginning of the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161-180) a new war with the same enemy broke out. The Parthians were thrust back and Rome's authority in Armenia was re-established in 163, then in 164-165 the Romans took back Mesopotamia. But the following year the Parthians again overran that region and recovered Armenia also. Another war with Parthia took place between 197-199. Again in 213 the Emperor Caracalla continued hostilities with the Parthians. In 216 he invaded and ravaged Media, which was apart of the Parthian kingdom (Boak, pp. 326-344, 419).

From this brief report it is quite obvious that the Parthians were a serious problem for the leaders of the empire continually from the middle of the first century BC, but it is amazing to read that there was a period of peace between Rome and Parthia from the time of Nero until the reign of Trajan (Boak, p. 326). The point to be noted is that God had this traditional foe restrained until a time when it could be used to preoccupy the Emperors with a foreign war. This interpretation means that all the plagues spoken of in the Revelation did not stop with the fall of the beast-like government January 25, 98, but the effects of some continued for generations

The overthrow of the Parthian Empire of the Arsacids in 227 AD by a rebellious subject, Ardaschir (Greek, Artaxerxes), and his creation of a new Persian Empire essentially only put the opposition on Rome's eastern front into the hands of a different family. For Ardaschir invaded Roman Mesopotamia in 230 and again in 231. Thus it became necessary in the spring of 232, for the Roman ruler, Severus Alexander (221-235), himself to take the field against him. Although no real success was made the Roman borders were restored. From these reports we can see that for more than one hundred years from Trajan (98-117) to Severus (died 235) that the Parthian cavalry was a

continual distraction to Rome. It is interesting to note that the Parthian\neo-Persian kings ruled the only Empire that ever truly challenged the might of Rome (Nilsson, Pg. 230-231; cf., Daniel 5:28). They controlled the territory of what is now Iran and Iraq.

239. **Describe the heads, mouths and tails of the 200 million horses.** (1) The heads of the horses were like lions' heads. (2) Out of their mouths came fire, smoke and brimstone. (3) Their tails were like serpents having heads. Their power was in their mouths and in their tails. Here we have in prophetic language the description of prolonged, cruel and vicious cavalry warfare as described in question 238. Tacitus speaking of Rome's war with the Parthians records another example of the kind of warfare the Parthians used, "*One centurion, Tarquitiuſ Cresens, ventured to defend the tower he was occupying. He made numerous sallies, and killed all the barbarians (Parthians) who came in range but finally he was overwhelmed by a shower of firebrands*" (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book XV, 11, p. 338).
240. **How did the rest of mankind, not killed by the plagues from the horses' mouths, react?** "They did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood..." (9:20). This is an indication that even the plagues of heaven cannot change the wicked habits of some men. It also indicates that other evil men need even greater terror to put the fear of God in them.
241. **Those not killed by the plagues from the horses' mouths did not repent of which six sins?** (1) The worship of demons, (2) Idols, (3) Murders, (4) Sorceries, (5) Fornication and (6) Thefts (9:21).
242. **How did John describe idols?** He said they "can neither see nor hear nor walk" (9:20). Notice from the Psalms how the Holy Spirit contrasted the God of heaven with the dumb idols of wood and stone: "Our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases. (But) their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak. Eyes they have, but they do not see. They have ears, but they do not hear. Noses they have, but they do not smell. They have hands, but they do not handle. Feet they have, but they do not walk. Nor do they mutter through their throat. Those who make them are like them; so is everyone who trusts in them" (Psalm 115:1-8; cf., Isaiah 44:12-17; Exodus 20:1-5).

CHAPTER TEN

243. **Describe what John saw at the very beginning of Revelation chapter ten.** He saw

- another mighty angel coming down from heaven clothed with a cloud, a rainbow on his head with his face like the sun and his feet like pillars of fire (10:1). These descriptive words symbolize this angel's direct association with the living God. The prophet Ezekiel saw similar visions of the cherubs around God's throne (Ezekiel 1:26-28; 10:20). This angel's message is a portion of Christ's revelation to John as angels did for Daniel (Daniel 9:20-27) and others (cf., Acts 7:53).
244. **Tell what the angel of Revelation chapter ten held in his hand, where he sat his feet, what he did and what all this signified.** (1) He held a little book in his hand, which signified the message of the apostles for the nations. Jesus had promised the apostles they would be guided into all truth (John 16:13). This had to be accomplished before John died, as he was the last of the apostles. (2) The angel sat his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, which signified that the message of the little book was for the whole earth. (3) After this the angel cried with a loud voice to get attention for the message, which he delivered to John. (10:1-3).
245. **Tell what occurred when the angel with one foot on the land and one on the sea cried with a loud voice.** Seven thunders uttered their voices (10:3).
246. **Tell what was said to John about the voices of the seven thunders and of what should this remind us?** He was told to seal up the utterances of the seven thunders and not write them (10:4). This reminds us of Deuteronomy 29:29, which tells us the things revealed, belong to us, but the secret things belong to God. The message to us is, seek wisdom (James 1:5) to understand the things revealed, but leave the things not revealed in God's hands.
247. **What did the angel of chapter ten swear by Him who lives forever and to what does it refer?** He swore, "that there should be delay no longer" (10:6). This means there was to be no longer any delay in closing "vision and prophecy" as had been foretold by Daniel and others. This is indicated in 10:7, which says, "the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His prophets" in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel.
248. **What did the angel of chapter ten affirm about the creation of the universe?** God "created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it" (10:6). We should remember that God made all these things in six days. That is, six ordinary working days of the laborer. This He personally affirmed to Israel on mount Sinai when He said, "six days you shall labor and do all your work ... for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day" (Exodus 20:9,11). Darwinists, evolutionists and other infidels look at the universe and say I cannot understand how God could have made all this in six days. Their problem is not that they do not understand it. The problem is they do not believe it. God was the only one present at the time of creation and He said that the work was accomplished in six working days of the common laborer.
249. **To what does "the mystery of God" named in Revelation 10:7 refer?** "The mystery of God" was the message of salvation for all humanity, that is, for every ethnic group. This was a dimly lit message (an unrevealed mystery) throughout the Old Testament, but was revealed through the apostles and prophets of Jesus in the New (Ephesians 3:5). As it is written, "the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints" (Colossians 1:26). That message was salvation for every person: Jews, Gentiles, Black, Brown, Red, White and Yellow (See Ephesians 3:1-

7, cf., Galatians 3:28,29). It came about because Jesus tasted "death for everyone" (Hebrews 2:9). This was "the hidden wisdom which God had ordained before the ages for our glory" (I Corinthians 2:7). It was spoken of in prophecy under the Old Covenant (e.g., Isaiah 2:1-4; 7:14; 11:10, 42:4; 53:1-12), but it was made clear and understandable in the message of the apostles of Christ, through the gospel. For Paul wrote to the saints at Ephesus, "by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote before in a few words by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" (Ephesians 3:3,4). Now according to the text (10:7) with the sounding of the seventh angel "the mystery of God would be finished, as He had declared to His servants the prophets."

250. **Name at least two places in the Old Testament prophecies where the Holy Spirit foretold He would close or finish the mystery of God.** (1) Daniel 9:24 and (2) Zechariah 13:1-5 (cf., I Corinthians 13:8-10; Ephesians 4:10-14) are such. The first of these speaks of the Messiah's work, "to finish transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, (and) to seal up vision and prophecy..." In the second text the prophet spoke of a day when "a fountain...for sin and uncleanness" (Zechariah 13:1) would be opened for the people and at that time the Lord of host would "cause the prophets ... to depart from the land" (Zechariah 13:2). The word land here means the spiritual land that is God's house or mountain in the last days, even as Isaiah wrote, "it shall come to pass in the last days...(that) many people shall come and say, come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob" (Isaiah 2:3). Again the Lord said, "But he who puts his trust in me shall possess the land and shall inherit my holy mountain" (Isaiah 57:13; cf., Ezekiel 34:25-27). The Lord's house or mountain in the last days is the church (I Timothy 3:14-15; Hebrews 12:22,23), which is His kingdom on planet earth (Hebrews 12:28).

In other words Zechariah was saying that God would cause prophets to cease from among His people in the Messianic age (the last days – Hebrews 1:1-2; I Peter 1:20). A careful reading of Zechariah 13:1-5 makes it very clear that God was going to cause true prophets to pass from His spiritual land during the age of Christ's reign. The same scripture makes it clear that false prophets will never cease out of the literal earth or land (Zechariah 13:3-5). To which the New Testament agrees (II Peter 2:1-2).

The Old Testament prophets foretold that "vision and prophecy" would be sealed up, and the apostle Paul in the New Testament prophesied to the Corinthians concerning the same. He affirmed by the Spirit, that the partial gifts, such as supernatural or miraculous "knowledge," "tongues" and "prophecies," which came by the Apostles' hands (Acts 8:18; 19:6) would cease when the "perfect" or "complete" gift had come (See I Corinthians 13:8-10). Thus the Lord in the Revelation, revealed through John, "when the seventh angel is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished." That is, the revealing of the mystery of God, the gospel, would be complete. In simple words the New Testament would close and all "vision and prophecy" would be sealed up. This is one of the best clues in the Revelation that we have for the time frame for the sounding of the various trumpets.

251. **How shall we date the sounding of the seventh angel, which signaled the finishing of the mystery of God, the gospel?** The seventh trumpet must be dated with the close of revelation through the apostles at the time of John's death, which was about the year 98. In other words some time around the turn of the first century. This is the case, because

- Jesus had revealed to the apostles (John 16:13), that it was they, who would be guided into "all truth." Thus at the time John died, the gospel, the New Testament was complete, and the laying on of hands to impart the partial gifts ceased. Eusebius wrote that the apostle John was still living in the time of Trajan (**Eusebius**, p. 83). That emperor's reign is dated from January 25, 98 (Boak, p. 323). Today when a person claims to be a prophet, he is, as Zechariah said, "ashamed of his vision when he prophesies" (Zechariah 13:4). This is true because he knows in his own heart that he is a liar.
252. **What was John told to do concerning the little book in the angel's hand and what did the angel tell John, which came to pass?** He was told to eat the book and it would be sweet in his mouth, but bitter in his stomach (10:9).
253. **Explain the eating of the little book by John.** This sweetness pertains to the enjoyment of the gospel as a personal possession, but the bitterness is reflected in the tribulations one encounters in preaching it to a wicked and adulterous generation. This was especially true of the apostles for as Paul said of them, they had "been made a spectacle to the world... fools for Christ's sake... beaten and homeless" (I Corinthians 4:9-11). The Holy Spirit said, "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12). We should do what Paul did for the new Christians at Thessalonica. He forewarned them that they "would suffer tribulations just as it happened" (I Thessalonians 3:4). Ezekiel also "ate" a book or scroll that was sweet in his mouth before he had to preach to an "impudent and hard-hearted" nation (Ezekiel 3:1-4). That this assessment of the text is true is reflected in the angel's next statement to John.
254. **After John had eaten the little book what did the angel tell him?** The angel said, "you must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues and kings" (10:11). John had to complete the writing of the Revelation, before multiple copies could be made and dispatched by messengers to the churches. He would record stronger and more specific prophecies aimed directly at the beast-like government and the client states, which supported it.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

255. **What was John given at the very beginning of chapter eleven?** He was given a reed like a measuring rod (11:1).
256. **What was John commanded to do with the measuring rod, and what did this**

- symbolize?** He was told to "rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there" (11:1). (1) The temple of God is the church (II Corinthians 6:16; cf., Zechariah 6:12-13; Ephesians 2:19-22; I Peter 2:5); thus John was to use the reed to measure the church of Christ, (2) to examine its spiritual strength symbolized by the altar representing its faithful worship and (3) the individuals who made up the church. These things were to be done by John just prior to the vision of the two witnesses of God. John was being given an opportunity to learn the true strength of the church at the end of the first century at the time it was undergoing severe tribulation. That tribulation was to intensify in a period of violent persecution symbolized by the forty-two months (11:2) or the one thousand two hundred and sixty days (11:3).
257. **What did the angel command about the court outside the temple?** The angel said for John not to measure the court outside the temple for it had been given to the Gentiles (11:2). The term Gentiles is used here as it is in Matthew 6:32 where it is applied to carnally minded unbelievers.
258. **For how long were the Gentiles to tread down the holy city and to what did this refer?** They were to tread the holy city, another symbol for the church, under foot for forty-two months (11:2). This refers to a definite period of severe persecution that was coming on the church at the end of the first century by the evil emperor, his praetorians, his army and his bureaucrats. It was to begin in mid-94 and continued until January 98.
259. **What did the three time periods: 42 months (11:2; 13:5), 1260 days (11:3) and *time, times and a half time (12: 14) symbolize?** Some have suggested a standard like the Lord gave Ezekiel in chapter 4:6 where a day was to be regarded as a year. Yet, this hardly accounts for the time being given in three different ways. The context of the Revelation indicates that the time is given in three symbols in order to convey to the saints that the time spoken of was three and one half years. As we will note later the beast-like government ended in January 98 AD with the death of Marcus Cocceius Nerva, thus the three and one half years (given in code in 11:2,3 and 13:5) would extend from the summer of 94 until that date (January 98). The saints, in order to steel themselves against this impending three and one half years of severe persecution, would have needed the information a reasonable length of time before it began. With this in mind it is reasonable to understand that the Revelation may very well have been sent to the churches as early as 92. This would have given time for the information to be spread among the churches not only in Asia Minor, but also to other places in the Empire. *This third expression (12:14) symbolized the same length of time (compare 12:6 to 11:3). It is applied, not to the last three and one half years of the beast-like government's rule, but to the period of the remnant's protection in the wilderness from the forces of Satan. This would have extended from the death of Stephen (Acts 7:58 – 8:1) until the persecution, which was at first lead by Saul of Tarsus, but died down after his conversion and absence from Jerusalem (Acts 9:31).
260. **In what chapter of the Revelation do we read of the two witnesses?** Revelation 11.
261. **Whom did the two witnesses symbolize?** The two witnesses of the testimony of Jesus Christ are the Holy Spirit and the apostles. Jesus stated this just prior to his return to heaven, "the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father... will testify of Me; and you (the apostles) also will bear witness..." (John 15:26-27). The apostles themselves testified to this same fact before the Jewish Sanhedrin, saying of Jesus and His resurrection: "we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit..." (Acts

5:32, cf., Hebrews 2:3-4).

262. **How long were the two witnesses to prophesy?** They were to prophesy 1,260 days (11:3). This corresponds to the forty-two months the Gentiles were to tread down or to severally persecute the church. Both these symbols of time as noted refer to three and one half years. This symbol of the final testimony of the apostles and the Spirit covered the same period as the severe persecution of the church.

Eusebius quotes Clement of Alexander saying, “*when the tyrant (Domitian) was dead (September 18, 96) ...John...moved from the isle of Patmos to Ephesus...*” (Eusebius, Book 3, 23. p. 83). A quote from Irenaeus in *Against Heresies* (Book III 3.4) also quoted by Eusebius (Ibid.) says, “*the church at Ephesus was founded by Paul, and John remained there till Trajan’s time...*” This would indicate that John returned to Ephesus in late 96 or early 97, and continued to live at least until 98. Thus the close of the two witnesses’ testimony would have taken place at that time or not long after as John was a very old man. Since the last three and a half years (11:3) of the two witnesses testimony coincided with the forty-two months (11:2) that the beast like government was to continue its persecution of the church, then that period would have extended from the middle of 94 until January 98. At which time the government got a new master, Marcus Ulpius Trajanus (Trajan). With his accession a thorough restructuring of the government began for he was a capable general, who not only disciplined his subordinates, but himself also. As Martin P. Nilsson observed,

“He maintained order and discipline with severity, favored merit alone, and took his share of the toils and dangers of a soldier’s life. Hence he obtained the unquestioning obedience of his men. His first measure was to apprehend the praetorians who had compelled the executions of Domitian’s murderers. He had them punished and the other praetorians did not dare oppose him. They had found their master” (Nilsson p. 49).

The Praetorian Guard (about 9000 strong) was essentially the private police force of the emperors and was in great measure responsible for the atrocities of the beast-like emperors from July 64 until January 98. Just prior to Trajan’s reign this animal-like brutality in the government had continued for the sixteen months that Nerva was in power mainly because of the guard. Thus, the above quote from Nilsson is most significant.

263. **How were the two witnesses to be clothed and what did this symbolize?** In sackcloth (11:3). The Holy Spirit and the apostles prophesied throughout the apostolic age (30-98 AD). Here as the Revelation speaks of the end of that period not long before the death of the last apostle John, the two are symbolized as wearing clothes for mourning. Three reasons may be observed for the sorrow. (1) The last apostle would be gone from the earth. (2) The direct work of the Holy Spirit in revealing and confirming the truth with “signs, and wonders, with various miracles” (Hebrews 2:4) was coming to a close; and (3) the church was under going a period of severe persecution.

264. **Tell how the two witnesses are described in Revelation 11:4 and explain.** They are spoken of as the “two olive trees, and the two lamp stands standing before the God of the earth.” The two olive trees are used as symbols in both testaments of God’s inspired messengers and the Holy Spirit. Here they have reference to the apostles and the Spirit. Jeremiah’s cry, “Is there no balm in Gilead?” (Jeremiah 8:22) was a reminder to the Jews that they needed the oil of God’s words to sooth their woes. The church at Laodicea had

been told, "anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see" (3:18), which meant they were to apply the spiritual oil of God's word to produce spiritual understanding. John in his first short letter to the Christians spoke of the words of Christ, which they had received as "the anointing, which ... abides in you" (I John 2:27). The symbol of the word of truth as a lamp and a light from God is found throughout the scriptures; for example: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105; cf., 119:130). Again the wise man said, "for the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light..." (Proverbs 6:23).

265. **Tell where the two olive trees are first mentioned in the scriptures as a symbol and explain?** Zechariah 4:2, 3, 11, 14. In the Old Testament the two olive trees represented the Holy Spirit and the prophets.
266. **How did the two witnesses kill their enemies and what did it mean?** They killed their enemies by fire proceeding from their mouths (11:5). This is a symbol of the power of the word proceeding from the Holy Spirit and the apostles. The scriptures proclaim "is not My word like a fire? Says the Lord, and like the hammer that breaks the rocks in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29).

And again we read of the Messiah, "He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked" (Isaiah 11:4). Jeremiah boldly reminds us that God said, "Behold I will make my words in your mouth fire and this people wood and it shall devour them" (Jeremiah 5:14).

267. **List three other powers held by the two witnesses.** (1) They had the power to shut up heaven so that it would not rain. (2) They had power over waters to turn them to blood. (3) They had the power to strike the earth with all plagues (11:6).
268. **What did the power of the two witnesses to stop the rain from heaven, turn waters to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues symbolize (11:6)?** It meant that John, the last apostle, through the power of the Holy Spirit could call all manner of afflictions upon the beast-like government of the Empire. These plagues, used here as symbols of apostolic powers, were like the ones performed by Moses on Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Elijah is another example of such, for he called a burning drought of three and one-half years on Israel during the wicked rule of Ahab and Jezebel (I Kings 17:1; Luke 4:25). At this point in the Revelation the angel is saying that the apostle, through the power of the Holy Spirit working in him, would continue to have such powers right up to the end of his work on earth. Even though the forty-two months (11:2) of persecution coincided with the remaining time (1260 days, 11:3) that the two witnesses would be with the church, the fact that such powers continued to be available through them would have been of great comfort to the saints.
269. **Tell what the two witnesses did just before they were killed and discuss its significance.** They finished their testimony (11:7). This is symbolic of the closing of God's revealed will to man. It indicates the perfecting (I Corinthians. 13:8-10) or finishing of the mystery of God (10:7) or the sealing up of vision and prophecy (Daniel 9:24). In simple language the Bible was complete when the gospel was fully revealed. This, as we have noted, was to coincide with the sounding of the seventh trumpet (See 10:7; 11:15).
270. **What did the death of the two witnesses signify?** This was the close of the apostolic age in symbol. On this point, it is of most importance that one keep in mind this is

- symbolic* language for the Holy Spirit was most certainly not killed, nor did He die. It is ***a symbol of the end of His direct operations*** through the apostles. The very purpose of miracles, wonders and signs was to confirm the word (Mark 16: 20). In John 16:13 the Lord Jesus had promised the apostles that they would be guided "into all truth." With the close of the mystery of God that had been accomplished. As the apostle Paul had foretold, "that which is perfect" had come, which meant that God's revelation to man had been perfected or completed. Thus, partial gifts such as "prophecies," "tongues," and miraculous "knowledge," which were given by the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 8:18), ceased (I Corinthians 13: 8 -10).
271. **Tell who "killed" the two witnesses and identify him?** The beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit (11:7). This was the symbol of the Roman government that had evolved through the influence of the dragon (Satan) (13:4) from being a reasonably tolerant government (Romans 13:1-7) into a beast that was brutalizing and murdering God's people. This beast-like character of the Imperial government had first manifest itself in 64 under Nero. It reached its peak under Domitian although it did not truly come to an end until sixteen months after his death. Even before the beast-like period it had been a puppet king of Rome, Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:1-2), who had killed John's brother, James (44 AD). It had been beast-like emperors, governors, kings and others who had persecuted, imprisoned, banished or killed the apostles until the last, John, the beloved. Although he may have escaped execution he was severely persecuted by the government. This is the first mention of the beast, who is described in 17:1-18.
272. **Where did the dead bodies of the two witnesses lay and what did it signify?** "In the streets of the great city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified (11:8). Sodom and Egypt are used here as symbols of the world; that is, the world that God's people are told not to love; as it is written, "do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever" (I John 2:15-17). The symbol of the two witnesses lying dead in the streets of the world for a short time was an appropriate symbol for the scorn unbelievers had heaped upon God's agents in the earth.
273. **What happened to the dead bodies of the two witnesses for three and one half days?** They were to be seen by people, tribes, tongues and nations, who would not allow them to be put into graves (11:9). This action, as noted above, by "Gentiles" appropriately symbolized the dishonor the world heaped on the apostles and the work of the Holy Spirit through them. The world still heaps ridicule on the work, which they accomplished in the earth.
274. **What did the three and one-half days signify?** Those of us living today can hardly imagine the fear that those saints must have felt when they heard that John, the last of the apostles was dead. Thus the three and a half days symbolized a short period of time between the death of the last apostle, the Christians' momentary fear, and the realization that they as God's people through the fully revealed word continued to have Christ with them as He had promised (Matthew 28: 20).
275. **Tell how the world was to react to the death of the two witnesses and discuss the meaning.** The world rejoiced over the death of the two witnesses (11:10). As noted, the statement in verse nine symbolized the dishonor, which the world heaped upon the apostles and their work. Just so, this merry-making symbolized the world's joy over their "death." This is illustrated by the way the world reacted to the murder of the apostle

- James (Acts 12:1-3).
276. **Name three things that happened to the two witnesses after the three and one half days.** (1) The breath of life from God entered them. (2) They stood on their feet. (3) They ascended up to heaven (11:11).
277. **What is signified by the revival of the two witnesses and their ascension to heaven?** It signified the revival in the spirits of God's people when they realized that Christ was very much with them and through the completed word they would continue to sit with him in the heavenly places. This knowledge and zeal in the spirits of the saints was a revival of the cause for which the apostles had given their lives and for which the Holy Spirit had labored.
278. **Tell what occurred at the same hour the two witnesses ascended to heaven and explain the significance.** In the comments on question 182 (cf., Isaiah 13) it was pointed out that earthquakes and other natural calamities are used in prophetic language to symbolize upheavals in governments, society, culture and national economies. These symbols are used here to signify such events in catastrophic proportions that took place with the close of the apostolic age, the fall of the beast-like government in January 98, and subsequent events that arose following that fall. (1) There was a great earthquake. This was a symbol of a great upheaval in the society and culture of the Empire at the close of the apostolic age because of the work, which the apostles and the Holy Spirit had accomplished. (2) A tenth of the city fell. Here is a symbol of a portion of the unbelieving population coming over to the gospel at that time. (3) In the earthquake 7000 men were killed. This is, another symbol of those in opposition to the gospel being "killed" with the sword of the Spirit. That is they were "killed" by the fire of God's word which had come out of the mouths of the two witnesses. (4) The rest were afraid and gave glory to God (11:13). See the comment on related points in question 417.
279. **Where does John speak of the second woe being past and the imminent coming of the third woe?** Revelation 11:14.
280. **Where does the writer refer to the first woe and what was it?** In Revelation 9:1-2. It was the locusts out of the bottomless pit.
281. **What were the second and third woes?** The second woe was the plague of the army of 200,000,000 on horses (9:14-17). The vision of Satan coming down to the earth (12:12) symbolized the third woe.
282. **Which angel sounded his trumpet according to Revelation 11:15?** The seventh angel.
283. **According to Revelation 10:7, with what was the sounding of the seventh angel to coincide?** "In the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished as He declared to His servants the prophets." As we have noted this is one place in the Revelation where we may point to a historical date. That is, the sounding of the seventh trumpet occurred about AD 98 with the death of John. This meant according to 10:7 that "the mystery of God" was completed. In other words, the New Testament was complete (See I Corinthians. 13:8-10), and the apostolic age was closed. The Revelation as the last book of the New Testament was completed at the beginning of the last decade of the first century in order to allow time for its distribution among the churches; but vision and prophecy continued until John's death and the death of those on whom the apostles had laid hands (cf., Acts 8:18).

284. **After the seventh angel sounded what did the loud voices from heaven say?** "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" (11:15). This is a most significant statement for it points to the time that God regarded the law of His Son (Roman's 8:1-2; Galatians 6:2; James 1:25) as having been fully proclaimed as the universal standard for all kingdoms.

285. **Of what was the statement: "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ" a sign?** The Lord Jesus Christ from Pentecost became ruler of the Kings of the earth (Acts 2:33-36; Ephesians 1:18-22; Revelation 1:5), and His law went out of Zion that day (Isaiah 2:3; Acts 2:22-24, 37-42), yet it was necessary that that law be proclaimed in all the earth. Paul declared in the letter to the Colossians (1:6, 23) that the gospel had gone into the entire world. In the text under consideration (11:15) at the end of the apostolic age loud voices from heaven declared that the completed law of Christ (cf., Romans 3:27; 8:2; Galatians 6:2, James 1:25) was the universal criterion for all kingdoms. In other words, the *completed* New Testament was the world wide standard for laws, morals, ethics and right conduct. By the year 98, it had been preached orally to the earth's kingdoms, and it had been written down (John 20:30-31; I Corinthians 4:6; II Peter 1:12-14; 3:1; Revelation 1:3,11).

Obviously there was and is enormous rebellion against Christ's rule of law, yet it is the universal benchmark for which all human law should strive. The empire of Rome at its peak ruled from Hadrian's Wall on the border of Scotland to the Persian Gulf, but there were many rebels under its rule. We must also recognize that the prophet foretold that Christ's rule would be in "the midst of (His) enemies" (Psalm 110:2).

286. **In which four chapters of the Revelation do we read of the twenty-four elders?** 4, 5, 11, 19.

287. **Why did the twenty-four elders in Revelation 11 say they gave thanks to God?** "Because you (Lord God) have taken your great power and reigned" (11:17).

288. **List four things stated in 11:18 by the 24 elders, which form a parenthetical clause or prophecy in the text about the final judgment.** (1) The time of God's wrath had come. (2) The time of the dead that they should be judged had also come. (3) The time that God should reward His servants, the prophets, the saints and those who feared God's name small and great. (4) The time that God should destroy those who destroyed the earth. This abrupt parentheses about the final day of wrath is comparable to the words of our Lord in Matthew 24 where he speaks in 24:34 about the generation of His earthly sojourn, and then, immediately in 24:35ff speaks of heaven and earth passing away at His second coming.

289. **What special vision was seen at the end of chapter eleven and what did it signify?** The temple of God was open in heaven and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple (11:19). This is a beautiful symbol of the completed New Covenant being in the hands of the church. Recognizing this we must remember that the temple - the church - is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15). That is, the church must uphold the truth to the world if the world is to know the standard of Christ by which it will be judged (John 12:48; Revelation 20:12).

290. **Comment on the relationship of chapters eleven and twelve.** In chapter five a series

of visions was begun with the Lamb taking the scroll from the right hand of the One on the throne. This as we noted signified the coronation of Jesus at the right hand of God at the time of Pentecost. Chapter 11 ends that series of visions from Pentecost until the end of the apostolic age (11:15). The statement by the twenty-four elders (11:18), as we have noted, was a prophetic utterance that leaped over to the events of the final judgment. Thus chapters 5-11 (verse 18 excepted) are a panorama of events from Pentecost till the close of the apostolic age. From the opening of chapter 12 we will see the inspired writer open another series of visions that began a short time before Pentecost and concluded with the end of the apostolic age in chapter 19. In other words, chapters 5-11 and 12-19 are virtually parallel. The two recordings of this period by John are like the synoptic accounts of the gospel. They overlap and coincide.

CHAPTER TWELVE

291. **What is seen in the first vision of chapter twelve?** "A woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars" (12:1).
292. **What period of time did the events of chapter 12 cover?** The period of time symbolized was the first sixty-five to seventy years of the Messianic age. The vision revealed a period from the time when the godly remnant of the Old Testament brought forth the Messiah (12:1-5) up until the Roman government evolved into a beast (13:1). The dates would be from a time just prior to the birth of Christ until Nero turned the force of the state (July 64 AD) against the most harmless and godly people under his rule. That

is from late 5 B. C. until 64 AD (cf., Durant, p. 280).

293. **How shall we view the term "heaven" as used in the scene of the woman clothed with the sun?** John saw both the woman (12:1) and the dragon (12:3) "in heaven." Please see the discussion on the three heavens in question 223. It is clear from the scriptures that the spiritual warfare of God's servants with Satan and his forces takes place in the "heavenly places" (cf., Ephesians 3:10; 6:12). Thus the conflict between the woman and Satan do not take place in the throne room of the universe, that is the third heaven (II Corinthians 12:2), but in that spiritual realm called the heavenly places.
294. **Whom did the woman clothed with the sun symbolize (12:1)?** This woman with a garland of twelve stars symbolized the righteous people of the Old Testament period, who because of their godly lives served as God's means through whom He could bring His Son to the world.
295. **What was the condition of the woman clothed with the sun?** She was with child and cried out because she was in pain to give birth (12:2). This signified the struggle of saints in Old Testament times against Satan; which struggle demonstrated to God that they were worthy of His confidence in order that He might bring Christ into the world through them.
296. **What other sign appeared in heaven after the woman great with child was seen?** There appeared a fiery red dragon with seven heads, ten horns and seven diadems on his head (12:3). This hideous monster is also spoken of in 20:2.
297. **Discuss the symbolism of the fiery red dragon and his pulling down of stars.** In 12:9 the same monster is called the serpent of old, the devil and Satan. In another place Peter spoke of him as the adversary of Christians, then said, "the devil walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8). In 12:4 we are told, "his tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth." This makes it clear that Revelation 20:1-10 is not to be interpreted literally. For if the dragon is a literal beast, then his tail would have to be at least 93 million miles (150 million km) long to reach the nearest star, our sun. This drawing down of stars to the earth symbolized his attack, persecution and the killing of some of Old Testament saints (See Hebrews 11:36-38). The prophet Daniel recorded, "those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3). The stars mean the saints of God.
298. **What did the fiery red dragon standing ready to devour the woman's child symbolize?** This vision described in word pictures Satan's effort to destroy the Messiah, for example, by King Herod (Matthew 2:16-18) and by unbelieving Jews with Pontius Pilate and the Gentiles (Acts 4:27).
299. **Tell three things said about the child born of the woman in chapter 12, and tell whom he was.** (1) He was to rule the nations with a rod of iron. (2) He was caught up to God. (3) He was caught up to God's throne (12:5). (4) The child was symbolic of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Thus in word pictures we see the birth, ascension and investiture of the Lord Christ (cf., Acts 2:30-36; Ephesians 1:18-23). This text (12:1-5), as we briefly noted earlier, is parallel to 5:1-8 where the coronation of Christ was symbolized by His taking the scroll from God's right hand (cf., Psalm 110:1-2; Matthew 26:64; Acts 2:33-34). Thus the date of May 28, 30 (the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection) can

be placed on 12:5b as it was on 5:7.

300. **Tell what happened to the woman after she bore the child and what it signified.** The woman fled into the wilderness where she was fed 1,260 days (12:6). This would apply to the period of persecution that arose against the remnant, which was led by Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1-3; 22:4; 26:10-12).
301. **Tell who were on the two opposing sides in the war, which broke out in heaven and explain.** Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels (12:7). Again we note this warfare took place in the spiritual realm called the heavenly places (cf., Ephesians 6:12; see also question 126). In other words, what is being symbolized is the great conflict that took place in the spiritual realm at the time of the crucifixion, the resurrection, ascension and exaltation of Christ with the presentation of His blood in heaven (Hebrews 9:12, 24). Paul, by the Spirit, commented on this great accomplishment of our Lord: “having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it (the cross)” (Colossians 2:15). In the book of Daniel there is just a glimpse of a similar conflict at the time the Israelites were being rescued from their captivity in Babylon (Daniel 10:12-13). In that place Gabriel told Daniel how Michael the archangel had come to help him in dealing with the forces of evil that held God’s people in bondage.
302. **Explain “nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer” (12:8).** Prior to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, Satan had two strongholds on the human family - sin and death. No satisfactory payment for sin had ever been made until Jesus’ death, but with His crucifixion “He Himself (became) the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world” (I John 2:2).
- Others (e.g., Jairus’ daughter and Lazarus – Luke 8:40, 54-55; John 11:43-44) had been raised from the dead before Jesus was, but they died again; therefore He was the “first born from the dead” (Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5) never to die again. He testified at the beginning of the Revelation “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore” (1:18). Thus our Savior destroyed the two strongholds of Satan. This is the reason the text says there was no longer any place for the dragon and his angels in “heaven” any more. Satan had lost his two fortresses in the heavenly places. No longer could he rest in the bastions of sin and death and completely hold mankind in his power.
303. **What were the three titles and the work of the great red dragon?** (1) The serpent of old. (2) The Devil. (3) Satan and (4) His work is to deceive the whole world (12:9).
304. **Tell the result of the war in heaven and what it symbolized.** Satan was cast down and no place was found for him or his angels in heaven (12:9), that is, in the heavenly places (cf., Ephesians 6:12). Until the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Satan, as we noted, had two strongholds or fortresses in the spiritual realm. They were sin and death. Until Jesus’ death and resurrection no man or woman had ever truly been freed from sin and no one had been raised forevermore. Sin and death reigned from Adam until Jesus gave His life for sin and was raised on the third day following (See Romans 5:17-21). The date of April 7-9, 30 (that is the dates of the crucifixion and resurrection) can be placed on chapter 12:9.

Satan held those two bastions of tyranny from Eden until the morning of the resurrection, but thanks to God through our Lord Jesus Christ he has no place left to which he can cling. Note, this does not mean that Satan is no longer warring against us in the spiritual

realm, but it means he has no place to hide. How fitting is the symbol that he has been cast down. We could readily say he has been kicked out of his fortresses. However, we must be aware that his being cast down to the earth and having great wrath may well describe in symbol the guerrilla warfare by which means he is determined to destroy as many lives and souls as he possibly can.

Beloved, we are at war! Where is the missionary zeal to reach the earth's masses, which are beaten down by deprivation, disease, death and the devil? We are told that Jesus' zeal for God's house had eaten Him up (John 2:17)? Where is the Christ-like zeal? Why is there so little vim, vigor and vitality for the house of God in our generation? Why is there so much zeal for our young people to be good is athletics and so little for them to excel in the knowledge of God's word?

Since, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that (we) should follow in His steps..." (I Peter 2:21), where are those who are willing to imitate Him to get the gospel to the earth's poor as He brought it to us? Where are the evangelists who are also willing to "endure hardship as ... good soldier(s) of Jesus Christ"? (II Timothy 2:3). Years ago I read of a preacher in New Jersey, who in the late forties had trouble getting people to attend the services of his church. Thus he announced that if the people did not come to the meeting on a certain Sunday, he was going to set fire to his Bible. And he did! A reporter wrote in the local paper that if the preacher had let the Bible set fire to him, then it would not have been necessary for him to set fire to the Bible. Where is the "burning fire shut up in (our) bones" (Jeremiah 20:9), that ought to stir our hearts for world evangelism?

Jesus sent word to John by the latter's disciples that His miracles proved He was the Christ and for further evidence He added, "the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matthew 11:5). Worldly people stand up for seals, whales and dolphins and we cannot get off the back burner when it comes to lost souls. The ship of destiny with the poverty-stricken multitudes of Africa, Asia and Latin America are streaming into eternity while we are asleep in the hold of the ship and the ship's captain is saying to us, "What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your God; perhaps your God will consider us, so that we may not perish" (Jonah 1:6). We, as God's children, must fight Satan for the minds and hearts of men and women. We must act like Jesus, who came "to seek and to save that which is lost" (Luke 19:10). Did Jonah shirk his obligation to reach the teeming masses in a foreign land anymore than we do today? Jonah is going to rise up with this generation of people and say, "at least I went to Nineveh." Perhaps if more preachers got swallowed by a great fish or had to endure some other catastrophe they might be more anxious to take the gospel to those who do not know their right hand from the left when it comes to spiritual things. One preacher who had agreed to teach a month in a school of preaching in a third world country left after only two days. His excuse, "I can't stand the heat and humidity." In an attempt to excuse his early departure to a native mountain-bred brother who had eagerly awaited his arrival, he said, "back home I have an air-conditioned house, an air-conditioned car and an air-conditioned office." Well La-di-dah!!!

305. **After the great red dragon was cast down, what did the loud voice from heaven declare?** "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come..." (12:10). This is clearly an announcement following the investiture of the crucified Lamb at the right hand of the Father on Pentecost (May 28, 30). See Daniel 7:13-14 where that prophet told about His coronation some 580 years

before it took place.

306. **Who is called the accuser of our brethren?** Satan (12:10). Anytime you hear someone gossiping about a fellow Christian just remember who the accuser of the brethren is. Also follow up that memory by asking the accuser to go with you to face the other.
307. **By what three things did God's people overcome the great red dragon?** (1) By the blood of the Lamb. (2) By the word of their testimony. (3) They did not love their lives to the death (12:11). There is an important principle to be seen in the suffering of these saints for the gospel's sake. Christ suffered to give us an exemplary life (Hebrews. 4:15), His blood for our redemption (I Peter 1:18-19) and the hope of the resurrection from the dead (Philippians 3:10). It took suffering on the part of Jesus and it takes suffering and sacrifice on our part to get this gospel to the world. Thus Paul wrote, "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church" (Colossians 1:24). This ought to make us ask, "Why are there so few who are willing to suffer to get the gospel to the billions who are lost?" Do we not know that the Spirit said, "Those who sow in tears, shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:5,6). Those who are not qualified or not actually able to go *must sacrifice* that others may go to the lost, as the Spirit has said, "how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?" (Romans 10:14,15).
308. **Who were to rejoice because of the fall of Satan?** It is written, "Rejoice O heavens and you who dwell in them" (12:12). This would be all the army of God in heaven and in the heavenly places. Saved sinners (Christians) can rejoice immensely because Satan, who ruled through the sting of death, sin (I Corinthians 15:56), and the fear of death (Hebrews 2:14-15), no longer holds sway in the heavenly places. It is Christ who now rules in that realm (Ephesians 1:20) and Christians reign in life (Romans 5:17) with Him. This is true, because after our burial in baptism (Colossians 2:12), God "raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 2:5,6). Being raised in this manner from death in trespasses and sin, as we will note later, is the "first resurrection" (cf., 20:6).
309. **What was in store for the inhabitants of the earth and sea after Satan had been cast down to the earth?** It was woe because of Satan's fierce wrath. This is the third "woe" spoken of in 11:14. Again we note this is symbolic language. The idea of his being cast to the earth is a part of the picture of his loss of his complete control over humanity. We must not think that Satan does not use sin and death to harass the earth's population for that is all too plain and that is why the voice from heaven said, "woe to the inhabitants of the earth" (12:12).
310. **Discuss the great wrath of the dragon and the reason for it?** The devil having been dislodged from total control over the nations by the death and resurrection of Jesus knew he had but a short time therefore he manifested great wrath. The expression "he has a short time" should be viewed in light of the time he has been on earth. Why was Satan so angry? It was because he knew men and women could escape his clutches through the shed blood (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:22; I Peter 1:18-19) and by means of the resurrection, which had been demonstrated (Acts 17:31; I Corinthians 15:20).
311. **When the dragon saw he was cast down to the earth what did he do and what did**

- this symbolize?** He persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child (12:13). This signifies the persecution of the righteous remnant among the Jews by the unbelieving Jews.
312. **Tell how the woman escaped the dragon's persecution, how long she was nursed in the wilderness and what those things signified.** (1) She was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place. (2) Here she was nursed for a time and times and half a time from the presence of the serpent (12:14). (3) These things signify the fleeing of a large portion of the righteous remnant out of Jerusalem and Judea after the death of Stephen (See Acts 8:1-4, 11:19; cf., James 1:1; I Peter 1:1-2). That period would have been about three and one half years until sometime after the conversion of Saul (Acts 9:31).
313. **Tell how the dragon sought to cause the woman to be carried away and tell what it means.** The serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood that he might cause the woman to be carried away (12:15). This indicates that the dragon did not give up trying to destroy God's people after the conversion of Saul, but he increased his efforts. Thus the flood signifies the continued effort of Satan to destroy the godly Jews who had accepted Christ even after the first period of fiery persecution had died down. The Devil did this by stirring up the circumcision (unbelieving Jews) against the saints. Examples of this flood of anti-Christ strife and propaganda took place in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:45-52), in Iconium (Acts 14:1-6), in Lystra (Acts 14:19-20), in Thessalonica (Acts 17:5-9) and in many other places. Paul summed up this deluge of persecution in his letter to the saints in Thessalonians: "... the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they do not please God and are contrary to all men. Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved..." (I Thessalonians 2:14-16). The God fearing Jews, who had obeyed Christ, were those whom Paul called the "remnant according to the election of grace" (Romans 11:5).
314. **Tell how the earth helped the woman and tell what it symbolized.** The earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing up the flood sent out by Satan (12:16). This well illustrates how the governmental authorities and even the common people at times sided with the Lord's servants against the Jews. An example of this is found in the Acts where Gallio, the Roman proconsul of Achaia refused to hear the Jews' complaints against Paul and even certain Greeks took a hand and gave the local ruler of the synagogue a beating (Acts 18:14-17).

In Ephesus Paul spent two whole years openly and boldly preaching the gospel and thanks to the peaceful authority in the city no one harmed him (Acts 19:10). Even when the mob of silversmiths cried for his head his friends in the government showed bias in his favor (Acts 19:31,35-41).

In spite of some corrupt administrators, the way that certain Romans and their law rescued Paul from the Jews is well documented in Acts 21:32 – 28:31. Paul spoke of this to the Jews in Rome (Acts 28:18,19). These benefits, which the saints received from the government prior to 64 AD, illustrate that the Roman administration up until that time had manifested a reasonable and secular attitude (See Paul's comments in Romans 13:1-7). Generally, it (there were local exceptions, Acts 16:16-24) did not interfere with the spread of the gospel. When I say "secular" attitude, I do not mean the officials were not regularly placating the idols and icons of their pantheon of gods, yet, their attitude was not to force any religion on individuals or to persecute any particular group.

The heart of the Roman system of law was the *Twelve Tables of the Decemvirs*, which

had been accepted by the assembly of Rome as law in 449 BC. In choosing these Tables “Rome decided not to be a theocracy” and for nine hundred years (449 BC – 476 BC) they “remained the basic law of Rome” (Durant, p.32). Although the system of law did not change, in the summer of 64 the government’s attitude toward Christians did. The reasonable attitude of the government was changed to be like that of a beast. This metamorphosis was the work of Satan as the Revelator tells us, “for the dragon gave him (the beast) his power, his throne and great authority” (13:2).

315. **Being enraged with the woman, what did the dragon (Satan) do?** He went away to make war with the rest of her offspring (12:17).
316. **Identify the rest of the offspring of the woman with whom the dragon made war.** They were said to be those “who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus” (12:17). They are faithful disciples – Christians. The term “*rest* of her offspring” meant the Gentiles who obeyed the gospel through the preaching of the apostles, and prophets of Jesus (Ephesians 3:5-6; Hebrews. 5:8-9; Galatians. 3:26-27). With the close of the things recorded in chapter twelve we move to the middle of the sixth decade of the first century in chapter 13.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

317. **Tell what was the first vision of Revelation chapter 13, and tell what it symbolized.** John saw a beast rising up out of the sea having seven heads and ten horns and on his horns ten crowns and on his heads a blasphemous name (13:1). This beast is the symbol of the Roman government from the latter part of Nero’s reign, July 18, 64 - the date the great fire began (Durant, p. 280) - until January 25, 98 – the date of Trajan’s accession (Boak, p. 323). At the time of the writing of the Revelation Domitian headed it. This man, like Nero, was himself a beast-like monster.
318. **Tell where in the Revelation the beast made his first appearance and list six groups who made up the beast.** The beast’s first appearance was in 11:7. The six groups were (1) The Emperor, seven of which are referred to as heads of the beast (17:10). (2) The senate, which was generally made up of very rich men. During Augustus’ time 31 BC – 14 AD the property qualification was raised from 8,000 to 12,000 gold pieces (Suetonius, p. 77). Also during the reign of Augustus the number of senators was raised from 500 or 600 to 900. The new members were drawn from the Emperor’s partisans such as veteran officers from the army and rich men from the western provinces, e.g., Spain and Gaul (France), on whom he had bestowed citizenship (Boak, p. 240). (3) Consuls, proconsuls, petty kings under Rome’s rule, and governors of provinces. (4) The Praetorian *Guard, which was a special military body that was attached to the Emperor’s office (Tacitus, *The Histories*, p. 310). (5) The army and (6) other bureaucrats.

*The Praetorian Guard needs special attention for it was the personal army of the emperor. From the time of Augustus there were nine cohorts with a thousand in each

(Boak, p. 278). There were also ten squadrons of cavalry attached to it (Nilsson, p. 285). Six cohorts were stationed outside the city and three inside. They were “the guard of the *praetorium*, or headquarters of the commander-in-chief” (Durant, p. 216). They swore absolute allegiance to the emperor and received better pay and better living conditions than the regular army. Their main responsibility was to serve the Emperor and other state officials at his discretion.

This body of men more than anyone else gave the ruler life and death power over ordinary citizens or senators. They were at times particularly notorious for they would enforce every whim of the Emperor. This incredible power in the hands of such men as Nero and Domitian corrupted them absolutely. From the time of Claudius (41–54 AD) until that of Nerva (96-98 AD) they and the army were the makers and/or the brutal force that backed up the viciousness of the throne. From the time of the fire July 18, 64, under Nero they certainly had a great part in making the seven emperors of that period (64-98) beasts.

319. **Where in the scriptures do we first read of such a beast as that of Revelation 13?** Daniel 7:7.
320. **Give the description of the beast as found in Revelation 13.** (1) He was like a leopard. (2) His feet like that of a bear. (3) His mouth was like that of a lion (13:2). In the book of Daniel the three empires that preceded that of the Roman – the Babylonian, the Persian and Greek under Alexander of Macedonia were symbolized as a lion, a bear and a leopard (Daniel 7:1-7). In the picture of the beast in the chapter before us we see it as a composite of the three.
321. **What did the dragon give to the beast?** (1) His power. (2) His throne. (3) His great authority (13:2).
322. **Discuss the wounded head of the beast, which had healed.** Nero, who was the first beast-like emperor, had committed suicide (June 9, 68; Tacitus, *The Histories*, p. 11). Another writer, Suetonius described it,

“He stabbed himself in the throat and was already half dead when a centurion entered, pretending to have rushed to his rescue and staunched the wound with his cloak. Nero muttered: ‘too late! But, ah, what fidelity!’ He died, with eyes glazed and bulging from their sockets.” The funeral cost 2,000 gold pieces. The body was cremated and the ashes put in a white coffin by his servants (Suetonius, Nero, 49-50, p. 244-245).

The wound on the beast in the vision seen by John was a symbol of dead Nero, but John at the time of his writing, saw that the wound had been healed. That is, Satan had raised up another brute in the cruel character of Domitian, the younger son of Flavius Vespasian. We must be aware that the Emperors before Nero were notorious for their ungodly lives, e.g., Tiberius (See Suetonius, Tiberius, 61, pp. 144-145), but their personal ungodliness did not carry over to the point of making the Empire a beast-like persecutor of what was moral, good and right.

323. **How did the world react to the beast and to the dragon, who was mentor of the former?** (1) They marveled at the beast. (2) They followed him. (3) They worshipped him and (4) they worshipped the dragon, which is the Devil (13:3-4).
324. **Tell what two questions the world asked about the beast, and how the second one**

helps identify him. (1) Who is like the beast? (2) Who is able to make war with him (13:4)? Question two helps us identify the beast as the Roman Empire because its power in comparison with its neighboring nations was virtually invincible. Titus Livy (59 BC – 17 AD) the Roman historian, an observer of the formidable military power of Rome stated, “no human strength can resist Roman arms” (Simkins, p. 21).

325. **Tell how long the beast was given authority to continue, and tell what it signified.** He was given authority to continue 42 months (13:5). This signified three and one half years from mid-94 AD until January 98. This was the same time period in which the Gentiles (unbelievers) were to “tread the holy city (the church) under foot for forty-two months” (11:2). It also coincided with the “one thousand two hundred and sixty days” the two witnesses for Jesus were to continue their prophecy “clothed in sackcloth”(11:3). This calculation is based on counting backwards from January 98. The most intensive portion of Domitian’s reign of terror began in mid-93 in Rome and spread gradually to the rest of the Empire. Although, he was assassinated September 18, 96, the beast-like government continued until it received a master of its own in Trajan on January 25, 98. Tacitus says the reign of terror, especially during Domitian’s latter years (93-96), was particularly ruthless at Rome (See the quotation in the answer for 394).
326. **How did the beast react to God?** (1) He opened his mouth and blasphemed against God. This is a very apt description of Domitian for he insisted that he be addressed in person and in writing as “Lord and God.” (2) He blasphemed God’s name. (3) He blasphemed God’s tabernacle (another symbol for the church of Christ) and those who dwell in heaven (13:6). According to Suetonius he would begin a letter with the words: “*Our Lord and God instructs you to do this! Lord and God became his regular title in writing and conversation*” (Suetonius, Domitian, 13, p. 309).
327. **What was granted to the beast in reference to the saints?** He was granted to make war with the saints and overcome them (cf., 11:2). Someone might be inclined to say, “God granted it.” This does not mean God caused it. God tolerated it like Jesus tolerated the demons to enter the swine (Matthew 8:32). One reason we can say this is because at times we are told God grants a thing when He only allows it. Satan is the deceiver, the persecutor, the tempter and the injurer who brings evil – sickness, diseases, dying and death - on the human family. This was made clear when Jesus healed a handicapped woman in the synagogue where he was teaching on the Sabbath. Having observed that the woman was stooped and could not lift herself up He healed her. Then, when the ruler of the synagogue publicly objected, the Lord did not blame God for the woman’s plight, but said, “should not this woman *whom Satan has bound ... for eighteen years* be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?” (Luke 13:10-17).

God tolerated Satan’s temptation of our parents in the garden (Genesis 3:1-3). He did not cause it. The scriptures teach that God allows us to be tested as Job was. God allowed the suffering of Job, but the villain was Satan (Job 2:7). That temptation went so far that Satan caused the death of Job’s children (Job 1; 2; cf., James 5:10-11). Job came to realize that he was being tried, for he said, “when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold” (Job 23:10; cf., I Peter 1:6-7). We must all be aware that “whom God loves He chastens and scourges every son whom He receives” (Hebrews 12:6).

Two different reports in the scriptures concerning an event in the life of King David also help us to see the point about God allowing an event to take place without causing it. It concerned David numbering the people, which showed a strong lack of faith on David’s

- part, for it was totally unnecessary. God had told him “He would multiply Israel as the stars of the heavens” (I Chronicles 27:23-24). One of the inspired historians who wrote concerning this event tells us God moved David to number the people (II Samuel 24:1). Yet, in I Chronicles 21:1 the inspired writer gives us further information and we learn that Satan was the tempter who stood up against Israel and moved David against them. As we have seen (13:2) it was the dragon that gave the beast his power and here he grants further authority for him to make war on the saints.
328. **Over whom was the beast given authority?** He was given to rule over every tribe, tongue and nation (Greek, *ethnos*), (13:7). This illustrates the wide rule of the Empire over literally thousands of tribes and ethnic groups.
329. **How did John more clearly identify the worshippers of the beast in Revelation 13:8?** The people who worshipped the beast were people who did not have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life. This well illustrates the use of symbols by our Lord Jesus, which the saints could understand, but the beast's agents could not. The Lamb's Book of Life would have meant absolutely nothing to the government authorities, but was and is a symbol in which God's people rejoice.
330. **Discuss the Lamb's Book of Life.** This book is well known to Christians as the symbol of God's list of the redeemed. Moses spoke of it in Exodus 32:31-33. From that passage we learn that names can be removed from it. In the Revelation it is first spoken of in 3:5. In that text Christ promised concerning those who would overcome, “I will not blot out his name from the book of life.” Later in the revelation we are informed “anyone not found in the book of life (will be) cast into the lake of fire” (20:15).
331. **What statement is found in Revelation 13:9 that is found seven times in chapters two and three?** "If anyone has an ear, let him hear."
332. **What gives the saints patience in their times of persecution?** That which gives patience to the saints in the time of harsh persecution is that they know, "he who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword" (13:10). This is a very difficult concept for Christians at any time, but especially to those who live in an age that knows little of severe persecution. However, it would comfort a child of God who was looking death in the face from the hands of evil men. Persecutors of saints need to be informed that no matter what evil they put on Christians God will bring no less on them. Evil men need to know this whether it makes any difference to them at the time or not. In order for the child of God, who faces imminent death or severe physical persecution, to truly appreciate this promise he or she must know “precious is the death of saints in the eyes of the Lord” (Psalm 116:15). And “to depart and be with Christ is far better” (Philippians 1:23).
333. **Tell from where the second beast arose and describe him.** The second beast arose out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon (13:11).
334. **What did the second beast symbolize?** He symbolized all the pagan religions or cults of the empire and their priests. Later he is portrayed as “the false prophet” (16:13; 19:20; 20:10).
335. **Describe how the second beast exercised authority.** He exercised all the authority of

the first beast in his presence (13:12). This means that the pagan priests of the empire acted like government agents (bureaucrats) themselves and often enforced the demands of the state. A report concerning the habits of Domitian found in *The Twelve Caesars* also tells how the heads of the state cults during his time mimicked the state head even in dress. The author of that work, Suetonius, says Domitian would wear a Greek purple robe and a gold crown engraved with the images of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva while presiding over the games. At his side would be the priest of the Capitoline Jupiter and the priest of the deified Flavians (the *Flaviales*), wearing the same costume as the Emperor, only their crowns were also decorated with his image (Suetonius, Domitian, 4, p. 302).

336. **What did the second beast do for the first beast?** He caused the earth and those who dwell on it to worship the first beast (13:12). This means the religious cults joined in forcing the people to worship the Emperor and the state itself.
337. **Give an example of the signs of the second beast, which he used to deceive those, who dwell on the earth, and explain.** He performs great signs so that he makes fire come down on the earth in the sight of men (13:13). This is an example of false signs, which are termed elsewhere in the scriptures, "signs and lying wonders" (II Thessalonians 2:9). This fact is born out by the testimony in 13:14 where it is written "he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast." True signs do not deceive.

Perhaps the most notorious deceivers in this generation are the Pentecostal television evangelists, who pretend to do such wonders as "slaying them in the Spirit." Nothing is known in the word of God about smacking someone on the head and that individual falling into a swoon. Yet, that is one of the false "signs and lying wonders" that a multitude of televangelists use in pretense that they have some kind of power from on high working through them. They cannot as the apostles did, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers and raise the dead (Matthew 10:8). These so-called "faith healers" are charlatans and are like those of whom Jeremiah spoke, "everyone walked in the imagination of his evil heart" (Jeremiah 11:8).

338. **Tell what the second beast told those on the earth to do for the first beast, and tell what it means.** He told them to make an image to the beast (13:14). This means the religious bureaucracy, who is called, "the second beast," at the instigation of Domitian demanded that people establish and support a cult specifically for emperor worship. The first beast was, as we have noted, symbolic of the savage, corrupt and animal-like government from the Emperor to the lowliest bureaucratic peon that backed his brutal policies. Domitian, who was the personification of the beast, had announced the divinity of his family members and himself. "*He converted his birthplace into the temple of the Flavians*" (Suetonius, Domitian 1, p. 299). This cult was called the *Flaviales* and was set up specifically to promote the worship and service of these newly "deified" ones. Note the comments of Will Durant,

"Vanity, which flourishes even in the humble, had no check in Domitian's status: he filled the Capital with statues of himself, announced the divinity of his father, brother, wife, and sisters as well as his own, organized a new order of priests, the Flaviales, to tend the worship of these new deities, and required officials to speak of him in their documents, as Dominus et Deus Noster – 'Our Lord and God' instructs you" (Durant, p. 291-292).

339. **What did giving breath to the image of the beast signify?** It indicated that the beast-image cult (*the Flaviales*) developed to the point that it became a self-perpetuating religious bureaucracy, which was symbolized as a living organism.
340. **After breath was breathed into the image of the beast what happened?** The image of the beast was made to speak and as many as would not worship the image of the beast were killed (13:15). In other words the *Flaviales* were an order of bureaucrats or priests, who were determined to perpetuate the cult of the Emperor. The killing of those who would not worship the image gives us some idea as to what was happening to God's people under the beast-like emperor, Domitian. Those who were believers in God could in no way worship in places, which were set up as shrines to make man God's equal or in any way His rival. As He warned, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).
341. **Who were required to receive the mark of the beast?** All small and great, rich and poor, freemen and slaves were required to receive a mark on their right hand or a mark on their foreheads (13:16).
342. **To what did the mark of the beast on the right hand or on the forehead refer?** The mark of the beast on the right hand represented one who would actually burn incense with his hands or do other outward acts of obeisance toward the Emperor. Many intelligent or secular minded Romans would have rejected the idea that Domitian was a god in their hearts, but would have worshipped him and his image to save themselves from persecution, ridicule, embarrassment or inconvenience in business.

The mark on the forehead symbolized the acceptance of emperor worship in the mind. Such individuals really believed their man was "Lord and God" on earth as he claimed. It is interesting to note many idol worshippers today use marks on their foreheads to indicate that they belong to a religion that venerates images and idols in worship.

343. **What restrictions were put on those who did not have the mark of the beast?** It was required that no one could buy or sell who did not have the mark or the name of the beast or the number of the beast on himself (13:17). This symbolized that no one in the empire was allowed to trade who did not acknowledge the Emperor as "Lord and God." Such a restriction would have completely destroyed any commercial ventures small or great by God-fearing people. Christians, like Lydia, who at an earlier period (Acts 16:14) were in business, would have seen their businesses closed in short order under the beast-government. It is extremely difficult for those who live in a free society to imagine the pain and anxiety such would bring on God's people.
344. **Tell the number of the beast and what it signified.** The number of the beast was 666 and it was a symbol of "man," not "a man." It needs to be noted there is no indefinite article in the Greek language. The conclusion we may readily draw from this context (the whole chapter), which dwells on the evil of emperor worship, is that the number symbolized the deification and worship of man instead of God. Since "seven" is used in the Revelation (forty-four times) to symbolize that which is complete or perfect, 666 is a number that clearly illustrates that which, in this case is man, can never reach perfection. As three divided into twenty renders an infinitely odd number – 6.6666666 – just so that number never reaches seven. Josephus spoke of the "dignity of the number seven among the Jews" (Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, Book VII, 5).

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

345. **What did John see at the opening of the fourteenth chapter?** He saw a Lamb standing on Mount Zion and with Him 144,000 (14:1). The symbol of 144,000 in chapter 7 was applied to those saved out of fleshly Israel, then afterwards John saw an innumerable host of those saved from every nation, tribe and tongue (7:9). Yet, Jesus had promised one fold, even as it is written, "other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them I also must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one fold and one Shepherd" (John 10:16). Thus in chapter 14 we see the same number as a prophetic symbol representing *all* of God's redeemed ones, that is all the saved, Jew and Gentile. In other words the 144,000 in chapter 14, is symbolic of all the redeemed combined under Christ's rule.

The letter to the Ephesians addresses this very point, "having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times he might gather in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth – in Him" (Ephesians 1:9-10). The reader should compare this statement in Ephesians with Hebrews 12:22-24. For in that text we are told that in coming to God through Christ we came to the spiritual mountain called, Zion, and to the heavenly Jerusalem. The writer of Hebrews also affirmed that we came into fellowship with the "general assembly" of all on earth and in heaven, who serve God in Christ. See question 346 which also refers to Revelation 14:1.

346. **Identify Mount Zion (14:1).** This is the spiritual mountain of God. This mountain is spoken of in Hebrews 12 where the Jewish saints were told that in coming to Christ they had come, not to a physical mountain like old Sinai, but to the spiritual mountain called, "Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22).
347. **What was written on the foreheads of the 144,000 in chapter 14?** The name of the Lamb's Father was written on their foreheads (14:1). This means that the things of God

were written in the mind or hearts of His people (cf., Jeremiah 31:31-33).

348. **What is the name of God?** Jeremiah said, “the Lord of Hosts is His name” (Jeremiah 31:35). In the New Testament He is called, “the Lord of Sabaoth (hosts)” (James 5:4, cf., Romans 9:29).
349. **When John saw the 144,000 what was the voice like which he heard from heaven?** The voice was like the voice of many waters and like the voice of loud thunder (14:2). This symbolized the enormity of the number of those redeemed.
350. **After John heard the voice like the sound of many waters and like thunder what else did he hear?** He “heard the sound of harpist playing their harps.” The American Standard Version New Testament (1901) has for over a century been considered, from the standpoint of the Greek text, to be the most accurate English translation. It renders this phrase, “and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps” (14:4b). Thus we conclude that this is symbolic of the beautiful singing of the redeemed (14:2). The harps were symbols just as the lamb (5:6), the golden bowls of incense (5:8), the horses (6:2-8), the beasts (13:1,11), and others were. We know from the time of David instruments were used in Jewish worship (cf., Psalm 150; II Chronicles 29:25), but at no time were instruments or the playing of such ever used or named among early Jewish disciples of Christ, early Gentile Christians or any congregation. There are nine references to the singing of psalms, hymns or spiritual songs in the New Testament from Matthew to Jude (Matthew. 26:30; Mark 14:30; Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9; I Corinthians. 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews. 2:12; James 5:13), but not one to the playing of instruments. Even the Old Testament references quoted in the New Testament (Romans 15:9; Hebrews. 2:12) about praising God in song never refer to instruments.

In fact, the New Testament writers named “the heart” (Ephesians 5:19) and “the lips” (Hebrews.13: 15) as “instruments” of praise in the dispensation of Christ. Those who go to the symbols of Revelation to justify instruments of music do so in desperation. The symbols do not authorize instruments in the worship of Christians. Some will argue that when they sing outside a service designated as “worship” then the instruments may be used with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, but this is gross compromise with false doctrine. Such is a great stumbling block to denominational people for even they recognize the inconsistency of saying it is okay to use pianos, organs, guitars, drums and such like with psalms and hymns in the home, but not in the church. In fact, there are thousands of churches meeting around the world in homes. But someone says we use instruments with hymns when we are simply singing for joy. Yet, the Holy Spirit said, “Is any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms” (James 5:13). He said sing for happiness, not sing and play. Like Charles Spurgeon said, “We might as well pray by machinery as praise with it.”

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) joined the Baptist church in 1850 and was “one of the greatest British preachers of his time.” In 1854 he moved from Cambridge to London where the Metropolitan Tabernacle with 6,000 seats was built to hold the huge crowds who came to hear him preach twice a day for more than thirty years (World Book, Vol. S, p. 635). Knowing that the sacred music authorized for Christians is *accappella*, he refused to allow any mechanical instruments of music to be used in the great hall. The above quote is taken from his comments on Psalm 42:4. Here it is in context, “David appears to have had a peculiarly tender remembrance of the singing of the pilgrims, and assuredly it is the most delightful part of worship and that which comes the nearest to the

adoration of heaven. What a degradation to supplant the intelligent song of the whole congregation by the theatrical prettiness of a quartet, the refined niceties of a choir, or the blowing off of wind from the inanimate bellows and pipes! We might as well pray by machinery as to praise with it" (Spurgeon).

351. **Who were the only ones that could learn the song that was sung before the throne?** They were the 144,000 who were redeemed from the earth (14:3).
352. **What was the song the 144,000 were singing?** They were singing the new song, i.e. the song of redemption (14:3).
353. **Describe the 144,000 (verses 4 and 5).** John said, (1) "they are virgins," i.e., a symbol for spiritual purity. (2) They "follow the Lamb wherever he goes;" i.e., they obey the teachings of Christ. (3) They are "redeemed from among men." (4) They are "the first fruits to God and to the Lamb." (5) "In their mouth was no guile." (6) "They are without fault before the throne of God" (14:4-5). The first of these descriptive statements make it very clear that the doctrine of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society ("Jehovah's Witnesses"), which asserts that the number 144,000 is to be taken literally, is a lie, because all are said to be virgins, and great men of faith like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the apostle Peter were not virgins. Not only that, *if* this text is to be taken literally, *then* all the 144,000 must be male virgin Jews, who belong to the "Jehovah's Witnesses."
354. **How can we identify these "firstfruits to God and the lamb?"** These are saints, Jews and Gentiles, who are the first fruits of the earth to God. We read this term "firstfruits" in the letter of James: "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18). They were amassed as one for John to see in this vision.
355. **Tell what the first of the three angels, who is spoken of in Revelation 14, had and what was its purpose.** He had the everlasting gospel, which was to be preached to those who dwell on the earth - to every nation, tribe, tongue and people (14:6). This is a symbol of the completed gospel message, i.e., the New Testament being made available at the end of the apostolic age for all humanity. See questions 250 and 251.
356. **Give the four points of the first angel's proclamation from Revelation 14.** (1) Fear God. (2) Give glory to Him. (3) His hour of judgment has come. (4) Worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water. The term judgment (point three) is used here to apply to God's pending judgment on the Empire (14:7; cf., Isaiah 13:1).
357. **Where is the first mention of Babylon in the Revelation and what did it symbolize?** (1) It is first found in Revelation 14:8. (2) It symbolized the all-pervasive, seductive, corrupting, ungodly and immoral *society* and *culture* associated with the government, religion and economy of the Roman Empire in the last three and one-half decades of the first century (64-98 AD). It was a society where female babies were left to die of exposure at the father's whim. Where others collected such babies to raise them to be prostitutes. Where temples were known for having male and female prostitutes for the benefit of "worshippers." Where women counted their life span not by years, but by the number of husbands they had taken. Where criminals and gladiators were made to kill one another and Christians as sport for the masses. Where a "fan" could determine if a man lived or died by turning his thumb up or down. Where the good, the righteous and morally upright were forced to fight lions, tigers, wild bulls and other evil beasts. Note the summation Durant gives of such,

“The supreme events were the combats of armed men, duels or en masse. The contestants, condemned criminals, or disobedient slaves. The right of victors (in war) to slaughter their prisoners was generally accepted through antiquity, and the Romans thought themselves generous in giving captives a chance for their lives in the arena. Men convicted of capital crimes (murder, robbery, arson, sacrilege, mutiny or insurrection) brought to Rome from all parts of the Empire, were sent to gladiatorial schools, and soon appeared in the games. If they fought with exceptional bravery they might win immediate freedom; if they merely survived they had to fight again and again as holidays recurred...” (Durant, p.385). One reads of 10,000 gladiators taking part in battles in the arena in one day, of one hundred lions, then four hundred and six hundred. *“Beast fought men, men fought men and the vast audience waited hopefully for the sight of death”* (Durant, p. 133-134).

“On entering a professional gladiatorial school many a novice took an oath ‘to suffer himself to be whipped with rods, burned with fire, and killed with steel.’ ‘In the eight spectacles given by Augustus 10,000 men took part in such wholesale conflicts. Attendants in the garb of Charon probed the fallen with sharp rods to see if they were feigning death, and killed such actors with mallet blows to the head’* (Durant, pp. 386-387). *(In Greek mythology: the boatman who ferried the spirits of the dead across the river Styx, *World Book Dictionary*, p. 344).

Concerning the enormous cruelty of the Roman games and sports note the following comment about the reaction of one of the first century’s renowned philosophers and teachers:

“Seneca, dropping in at the games during the noon recess, when most of the assemblage had left for luncheon, was shocked to see hundreds of criminals driven into the arena to amuse the remaining audience with their blood. He wrote, ‘I come home more greedy, more cruel and inhuman, because I have been among human beings. By chance I attended a midday exhibition, expecting some fun, wit, and relaxation...whereby men’s eyes may have respite from the slaughter of their fellow men. But it was quite the contrary.... These noon fighters are sent out with no armor of any kind; they are exposed to blows at all points, and no one ever strikes in vain... In the morning they throw men to the lions; at noon they throw them to the spectators. The crowd demands that the victor who has slain his opponent shall face the man who will slay him in turn; and the last conqueror is reserved for another butchering.... This sort of thing goes on while the stands are nearly empty.... Man, a sacred thing to man, is killed for sport and merriment’” (Durant, p. 387).

Men gorged themselves on booze and food, then vomited and gorged even more. An example of such was given by Suetonius about one of the emperors in 69, *“Vitellius’ ruling vices were (gluttony), extravagance and cruelty. He banqueted three and four times a day, namely morning, noon, afternoon and evening – the last meal being a drinking bout – and survived the ordeal well enough by taking frequent emetics”* (Suetonius, Vitellius, 13, p. 273). It was a society where grown men counted it sport to riot and carouse in the daytime (II Peter 2:13). Where emperors took other men's wives at will. Where emperors, senators, proconsuls and officers were practicing homosexuals.

Where dramas were staged with such men as "actors" in sexual orgies.

358. **What was the second angel's proclamation in chapter 14?** Babylon is fallen (14:8). This is a prophetic statement that God would bring down Babylon. This would be through the use of three things: (1) Plagues on the empire of the beast, (2) the godly lives of the Christians in the face of dungeon, fire and sword and, (3) through their bold preaching. God was going to turn the ungodly society and culture on its head. Paul and his companions in their time were accused of this very thing, for the Jews at Thessalonica said of them, "these who have turned the world upside down have come here also" (Acts 17:6).
359. **To what did the wine of the wrath of her fornication refer (14:8)?** It meant that Rome had used its power and influence to compel men to engage in its ungodliness and immorality. The idea of wrath came from the fact that she was, through a hard and impenitent heart, heaping up for herself punishment in the day of God's wrath (cf., Romans 2:5).
360. **How many times is Babylon mentioned in the Revelation?** Six and three of these are found in chapter 18.
361. **What term is always applied when Babylon is mentioned?** Great. This clearly meant that it was overwhelming and massive. The impression to be made on the mind of the believer was that God knew the ungodliness of the heathen society was overpowering, yet, in spite of that it would be leavened (cf., Matthew 13:33) for righteousness' sake.
362. **List four who were to receive God's wrath from the third angel's proclamation in chapter 14.** (1) Anyone who worshipped the beast or (2) worshipped his image or (3) received his mark on his forehead or (4) received it in his hand (14:9).
363. **What four punishments were promised to those who worshipped the beast, his image or received the mark of the beast?** (1) They would drink of the wine of the wrath of God. (2) They would be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. (3) The smoke of their torment would ascend upward forever and ever and (4) they were to have no rest day or night (14:10,11).
364. **Explain the beast (13:1), the second beast (13:11), his image (13:14) and the beast's mark on the hand and on the forehead (13:16).** Here we will review points made earlier. (1) The first beast represented the government of the empire including the Emperor, the praetorians, the army, the senators, the consuls, the governors and the other bureaucrats. (2) The second beast, which is also designated as the false prophet (16:13; 19:20) was a symbol of the pagan cults. (3). The image of the beast was the particular cult dedicated to the worship of Domitian and his family. It was known as the *Flaviales*, which had been created for the Emperor by the second beast or false prophet. (4) The mark of the beast in the right hand symbolized actual participation in the worship of the beast. (5) The mark of the beast in the forehead was a symbol of acceptance of emperor worship in the mind and heart. Some people would go through the outward act of worship with their hands, even if he or she did not accept such in their heart.
365. **What is meant by "here is the patience of the saints" and "here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (14:12)?** See question 332.

366. **What are the two most wonderful promises found in Revelation 14:13?** (1) "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." (2) "That they may rest from their labors and their works follow them."
367. **Describe the One sitting on the white cloud in Revelation 14:14.** He was one like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown and in His hand a sharp sickle. This is a picture of Jesus as an active monarch on the right hand of the throne of heaven (Hebrews 8:1; I Peter 3:22; Revelation 3:21) ready to send His servants to evangelize the world (14:12-14) even at the very peak of the beast's power (10:7; 11:15). Not only was that the case, but as King of kings (I Timothy. 6:15; Hebrews 2:9) He was prepared to rain wrath on their persecutors (See 14:17-20).
368. **What did the angel, who came out of the temple, proclaim to the One seated on the white cloud?** "Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap. The harvest of the earth is ripe" (14:15). The time of this proclamation should be dated toward the end of the beast's power in the last decade of the first century. It was spoken concerning the Lord's zeal for evangelism. This vision was given in anticipation of the saints being poised to get the completed gospel to the world following the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The sounding of that trumpet signified the closing of the mystery of God, the gospel, which would coincide with the defeat of the beast and his supporters. See questions 249-251, 269, 282-285.
369. **When the One on the white cloud received the angel's command what did He do?** He thrust in His sickle and the earth was reaped (14:16). This vision of the Lord reaping is for His people to *take to heart their obligation to evangelize*. We must see this as a vision to inspire us to reap the fields, that are white unto harvest, even as the Master said, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His harvest"(Matthew 9:37-38). And again He asked, "Do you not say, there are still four months and then comes the harvest? I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest" (John 4:35)!
370. **What did the scene of the reaper on the white cloud symbolize?** It symbolized the preaching of the gospel to all nations in order to reap a harvest of souls for the Lord Jesus Christ. In this context the Lord is giving His people a symbol, even during the peak of the beast's power, that He was set to spur them on to evangelize the world at the close of the apostolic age.
371. **What harvest symbolism is used for the second kind of reaping in Revelation 14?** It is the symbol of using a sharp sickle to reap the clusters of the grapevine of the earth (14:17-18).
372. **How is the horror of the winepress of the wrath of God symbolized?** It is written, "Blood came out of the winepress up to the horses' bridles for 1,600 furlongs" (184 miles or 294 kilometers) (14:20).
373. **What does it mean when it says the winepress was trampled outside the city?** It means the winepress of the wrath of God was trampled outside the city of God, that is the church. The beast and his supporters were to tread down (severely persecute) the "holy city," the church, for three and one half years during the last decade of the first century as

we learned from 11:2. Here we see that during that same time Christ was to be treading the winepress of God's wrath on the beast. This we will see in the visions of the bowls of God's wrath (chapters 15 and 16).

374. **To what should the scene of the winepress of the wrath of God be applied?** This is applicable to the harsh judgment of God, which He was bringing on the empire because of its persecution of the righteous and in order to restructure the beast-like government to make it a reasonable and tolerant government that would serve as a canopy of peace under which the gospel of the kingdom could be preached.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

375. **What is the first vision of Revelation 15?** John said, "I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete" (15:1) and "something like a sea of glass mingled with fire" (15:2). The expression "the wrath of God is complete" (19:20) in the context means these bowls would fill up His wrath on the beast-like government. This portion of His wrath would be complete; because when it was finished those who made up the cruel and vicious government would be down in Hades "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7; Matthew. 11:23; Luke 16:23)
376. **Whom did John see standing on the sea of glass mingled with fire?** (1) He saw "Those who have the victory over the beast," (2) "over his image," (3) "and over his mark

and (4) over the number of his name" (15:2). This vision was given in order that the persecuted saints might see themselves as the victors over the beast-like government under which they were living when the Revelation was first read in their hearing by the messengers who had come from John.

377. **What were those standing on the sea of glass mingled with fire singing?** "The song of Moses and the Lamb (15:3)." Think of the beauty of this vision to our brothers and sisters in the last decade of the first century as they were in the midst of severe suffering at the hands of cruel praetorians, lectors, other government officials and pagan priests. This was the sweet song of redemption and victory. At the time John saw this vision on Patmos, the singing of the song was a prophetic statement of the victory the redeemed ones would have over the beast-like government. See Exodus 15:1-21 where the children of Israel sang a song of redemption and victory after being delivered by God out of the hands of Pharaoh. See also Jesus' statement of absolute victory on the eve of His greatest test (the cross): "these things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). The Lord knew His own mettle; therefore He knew the final outcome of the events of the following three days.
378. **What did the song of those standing on the sea of glass declare about God's ways?** "Just and true are your ways (15:3)." The Lord was showing the suffering Christians a picture of themselves singing the joyous song of victory. The lesson for us is that God will bring victory to His people whenever and wherever they are persecuted on this earth under despotic governments, false religions or others.
379. **After the singing of the song of Moses and the Lamb what did John see?** "The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened"(15: 5). We note this is said to be the "temple (Greek, *naos*, sanctuary) of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven," which is different terminology from that used for the church (3:12; 7: 15; 11:1-2). The vision given here is of the sanctuary in the heavenly realm, which is the depository of the very testimony of God. See 11:19 where there is a similar scene at the end of the first series of visions from Pentecost until the close of the apostolic age (chapters 5-11). In that vision the ark of His covenant, which was a symbol of the completed New Testament is seen in the temple of God. The "temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven" is a symbol of the celestial depository where the very word of God is found. The actual place is the mind of God Himself (See I Corinthians. 2:7,11,12).
380. **When John saw the sanctuary of the tabernacle open in heaven what did he see coming out of it?** He saw the seven angels having the seven last plagues (15:6). This illustrates the fact that the final group of plagues of God's wrath on the beast-like government was to come directly from God. God takes the suffering of His people as a personal attack on Himself. Jesus made this clear about Saul of Tarsus's attacks on His saints in Jerusalem and Judea. He said, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4).
381. **How were the seven angels having the seven plagues clothed?** They were clothed in pure bright linen (15:6). Such terminology is used often of righteousness and purity in the scriptures (7:9; 19:8; Matthew 17:2).
382. **What did one of the four living creatures give to the seven angels who had the seven last plagues?** Seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God (15:7).

383. **When the seven angels received the seven golden bowls of wrath what happened in the temple in heaven?** "The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed" (15:8). This symbolized God's glory in that He by His power was bringing avenging justice on those who persecuted His people and hindered the spread of the gospel. Such vengeance is God's prerogative as he said, "Vengeance is Mine, and recompense" (Deuteronomy 32:35). And again, "beloved do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay says the Lord" (Romans 12:19). Note how clearly this is expressed in Revelation 16:5-6.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

384. **What did the loud voice from heaven command the seven angels at the beginning of chapter sixteen?** "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth" (16:1).
385. **What did the seven bowls of the wrath of God signify?** Like the catastrophic forces used on Egypt in the time of Moses, these signified God's use of disasters, calamities and plagues on the evil men who made up the beast-like Roman government and the people of the empire who supported the whole ungodly system. These plagues were to punish them with pain and/or death and thereby cause them to give up their persecution of His people. It was to change the ruling power and authority of the state into a more reasonable government. These bowls of wrath were also designed to create a climate in the empire that would make men and women realize that they had greater needs than rank materialism and the fulfillment of physical lusts. They were designed to cause humanity to fear God (Romans 3:18) and death (Hebrews 2:15), in order that they might seek God (Acts 17: 27).
386. **What happened with the outpouring of the first bowl of the wrath of God?** A foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image (16:2).
387. **Discuss the symbol of the "foul and loathsome sore," which followed the first bowl of wrath.** The parallel between this plague and the one sent by God in the time of Moses on the people and the government of Egypt is most striking; "So the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, take for yourselves handfuls of ashes from a furnace, and let Moses scatter it toward the heavens in the sight of Pharaoh. And it will become fine dust in all the land of Egypt, and it will cause boils that will break out in sores on man and beast..." (Exodus 9:8-9)

This "foul and loathsome sore"(16:2) symbolized grievous afflictions that attacked the body of those who were grossly immoral. The Spirit speaking of the state of the Gentiles at the beginning of the gospel age wrote concerning such afflictions, "For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for that which is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing that which is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due" (Romans 1: 26-27). It is important to note that those who practice such ungodliness receive "in themselves the penalty of their error."

Those who are promiscuous in every age suffer from similar kinds of sexually transmitted diseases in their very persons. Even in our own time (the 21st century) such are rampant because of man's blatant disregards for God's law on sexual morality (See question 534, point 5). There is anguish in the medical community concerning the epidemic rise of such diseases as genital herpes, gonorrhea, syphilis and AIDS. Concerning the latter *The Telegraph*, Calcutta, India, October 2, 2002, p. 4, carried an article from the New York Times News Service by L. K. Altman, which projected that five countries that contain forty percent of the world's population (China, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria and Russia) would by the years 2010 have "an estimated 50 to 75 million people infected with AIDS.

388. **How was the result of the first bowl like that of the first trumpet?** Both (8:7; 16:2) were poured out upon the earth. The disasters and plagues (following the seven trumpets) seen in chapters 8–11, while promising punishment on the empire, also served as a general warning of God's power to rain various forms of wrath on the inhabitants of the earth. God's wrath as manifest in the bowls was more specific.
389. **What happened when the second bowl (16:3) was poured out?** The sea became like the blood of a dead man and every living creature in the sea died.
390. **To what shall we liken the results of the second bowl of wrath?** In this vision we see a more intense plague on the sea. The second bowl of wrath reminds us of the second trumpet for both were on the sea, so that some comments are similar. This is another symbol of violent battle and death on the sea. Yet as noted, these bowls of wrath indicate a more intense attack by the God of Heaven on the beast and his supporters. The symbol of the sea becoming blood is very appropriate when one considers that ancient naval battles involved the butchering of one another by soldiers and sailors with swords and spears. (See question 215 for a description). The appearance of the sea as the blood of a dead man indicates the utter horror of a sea thick and dark with blood. The symbol of every living creature in the sea dying is indicative of human creatures dying in great numbers and others despairing of their very lives at sea. These kinds of disasters would do much to spread fear throughout the Mediterranean, as the sailors carried the stories of blood and gore.
391. **What happened when the third bowl was poured out and how was it like the third trumpet?** Both (8:10-11; 16:4) symbolized plagues on the fresh waters. It is specifically stated, "the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and the springs of water and they became blood."
392. **To what shall we liken the results of the third bowl of wrath?** This is a vivid picture of lives, homes, businesses, government buildings, waterways, fountains and streams being covered in – swamped with blood. This is symbolic of the wholesale, killings, murders, assassinations and suicides that were practiced or spawned by the beast, which caused the waters of households, bathes and streams to be filled with blood. The symbolism at this point in the Revelation was particularly aimed at the crimes of Domitian's time. For example:

In the seventh year of the reign of that tyrant during the winter of 88-89 an imperial officer, Antonius Saturninus, in what was known as upper Germany, rebelled against the despotism of Domitian and had himself declared emperor by two legions under his command at what is now Mainz. He expected to receive help from German tribesmen

from north of the Rhine, but the river ice broke up and they could not come to his aid. Thus the Roman governor of lower Germany, who remained loyal to the Emperor, defeated him. This outbreak of hostilities against Domitian so alarmed him that he punished with death those who were even suspected of having any interest in the rebellion. Just killing these was not enough, but suspecting other plots he began killing off the senators and other members of the nobility in a reign of terror. Philosophers were banished from Italy, prominent persons were killed on charges of treason, others for "atheism," which meant that they did not honor him or his gods as deity. Among these were Christians and Jews (Boak, p. 301).

The periods of terror came in waves, besides the one in the late eighties, others are reported in the nineties. One of these was in 91, but the bitterest onslaught of brutality began in 93 and lasted until the death of Domitian in September 96. Pliny the younger who hated the man, but escaped his wrath, documents the destruction of numerous individuals who were slaughtered during these years (Pliny, pp.13, 16, 22, 240). Often a senator would be told to go home, will half or more of his property to the Emperor and then kill himself. An alternative to this would be the death of all his family and the loss of everything. Many rich men were gotten rid of in this manner. Often they would simply slit their wrists, lie on their beds and bleed to death in front of their grieving families and slaves. The latter would have the task of washing up the blood. Thus the symbolism of the waters becoming blood is very apropos. Tacitus described this kind of tragedy in Nero's time, concerning one Lucius Vetus, his mother-in-law and his daughter:

"Advice was not lacking that Vetus should leave the greater part of his estate to the emperor, thus insuring that his heirs would inherit the remainder; but this he spurned... Then, in the same room, using the same weapon, all three opened their veins. Clad only in a single garment, worn for decency's sake, they were quickly carried to the bath ...They were in their graves when formally denounced, and condemned for treason. The emperor (supposedly) had intervened to allow them to choose their own manner of death" (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book 16:10-11, p. 373-374).

Pliny also testified that Domitian during his reign was not the only one in the empire that was practicing treachery to gain power, property or money (Pliny, *ibid*).

393. **Give the reference for "the angel of the waters."** Revelation 16:5.
394. **Why did the angel of the waters say it was the just due for certain ones to drink blood?** They had shed the blood of saints and prophets (16:7). We should bear in mind that many senators, consuls, proconsuls, governors and other officials destroyed by Domitian would have been persecutors of those who had any kind of decency and honor, while they themselves were often guilty of the most despicable crimes. A note from Tacitus makes this clear:

"The reign of terror (especially in Domitian's last years, AD 93-96) was particularly ruthless at Rome. Rank, wealth and office, whether surrendered or retained, provided grounds for accusation, and the reward for virtue was inevitable death. The profits made by the prosecutors were no less odious than their crimes. Some helped themselves to priesthoods and consulships as the prize of victory. Others acquired official posts and backstairs influence, creating a universal pandemonium of hatred and terror. Slaves were suborned to speak against their masters, freedmen against their patrons, while those who had not

an enemy in the world were ruined by their friends” (Tacitus, The Histories references Book 1:2, p. 22).

395. **After the angel of the waters had stated it was just for certain ones to drink blood what did the voice from the altar say?** "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are your judgments" (16:7). Here it is made very clear that it was God who was bringing these plagues on the empire just as He had brought such on Egypt (Exodus 7-12), ancient Israel (II Kings 17:5-23), Judah (II Chronicles 36:15-21), Babylon (Isaiah 13: 1-22) and others.
396. **Upon what did the fourth angel pour out his bowl and what power was given to him?** His bowl of wrath was poured out on the sun and power was given to him to scorch men with fire (16:8).
397. **Compare the fourth bowl and the fourth trumpet.** When the fourth trumpet sounded the sun along with other celestial bodies was struck (8:12). The fourth bowl was poured out on the sun only (16:8).
398. **To what shall we liken this bowl of wrath being poured out on the sun and men being scorched with fire?** This illustrates a plague of searing heat, drought, and desert-like weather conditions as those that took place in the time of wicked king Ahab due to the prayer of Elijah (I Kings 17:1; 18:2-6; James 5:17). Such things would have created great havoc in the empire because it would have disrupted the food supply. This would have had a fearful effect on the masses in the major cities that depended so very much on the importation of wheat from Egypt and other places. Such suffering would make the people blame the government. The masses of unemployed freedmen, peasants and hangers on in the larger cities around the Empire and most particularly those in the capital, who depended on bread and circuses would have been quick to stir up strife because of the lack of grain. This kind of plague would indicate the use of weather phenomenon to terrorize the ungodly people of the Empire to make them turn from their ungodly ways.
399. **When men were scorched with the great heat what did they do?** They blasphemed the name of God, did not repent nor glorify God (16:9). This indicates there was great stubbornness in the evil hearts of those who made up the beast, those who were a part of "his image" and those who had his seal in their hearts and hands. Such indicates that the God of heaven knew and knows that an ungodly nation needs many different kinds of plagues, reverses and set backs to get them to fear Him. The peoples of Europe of the 20th century illustrate this unrepentant attitude in modern times for they suffered the most horrible kinds of troubles with the two world wars, yet they have little or no desire to seek God. We know there are a few in Europe who seek the Lord God, His Son and His kingdom, but it is a very small remnant. The vast majority are like those described by the prophet, "there is none that seeks after God" (Romans 3:11) and "there is no fear of God before their eyes" (Psalm 36:1; Romans 3:18).
400. **To what shall we liken the blasphemy of these men when they were scorched with the great heat?** It is like the cursing, swearing, griping, murmuring and complaining of men against God even today, especially when they are so very used to comforts and lose them. Many are like those described by the Spirit long ago, "Their throat is an open tomb; with their tongues they have practiced deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips,

whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness” (Psalm 5:9; 10:7; 140:3; Romans 3:13-14). Many men cannot say five words without two or three of them being a word of lewdness, filth, an oath or a word of blasphemy. Authors and scriptwriters think they must throw in grand quantities of verbal mind-polluting garbage for their works to be on the cutting edge of society. High school and university literature teachers insist that their students read gutter language to “broaden their minds,” while truly educated writers and speakers know that a scholar and statesman must be able to express him or herself without resorting to the language of the street.

401. **Where did the fifth angel pour out his bowl of wrath?** It was poured out on the throne of the beast (16:10). This was a plague on the central authority. It meant the Emperor and his closest confidants. Other plagues were directed at larger groups, but this plague was aimed directly at the ruling class, that is the Emperor, his advisers, appointees, guards, the senators and others who clustered about him.
402. **List four reactions in the beast's kingdom to the outpouring of the fifth bowl of wrath?** (1) His kingdom became full of darkness. (2) They gnawed their tongues because of pain. (3) They blasphemed God. (4) They did not repent (16:10).
403. **Comment on how the beast-like government became full of darkness.** As we noted at the beginning, the empire established by Augustus continued for five hundred years (BC 27 – AD 476). One of the major reasons for this was that he and the senate early established basic rules or standards by which the subjected nations were to be governed. At times the governors and military rulers were unprincipled men as one historian of the time wrote concerning Felix, governor of Judea when Paul came to Caesarea: *“Antonius Felix, played the tyrant with the spirit of a slave, plunging into all manner of cruelty and lust, and marrying Drusilla, granddaughter of Cleopatra and Anthony (Tacitus Histories, reference as per Book 5:9, p. 277). Yet in general, the men appointed did a good job for the government and brought peace to the subject nations.*

These men came from the senate, the senators’ families and from leading officers of the army, but during the time of Domitian it was different. For he *“ferreted out his opponents in the army and senate and had them executed. His informers were so diligent, it is said that men forgot the use of their tongues”* (Hadas, p. 65). He decimated the senate and destroyed many who would have been of great use in the Empire. Suetonius tells us, *“Domitian put many senators to death, among them a group of ex-consuls, three of whom, Civica Cerealis, Acilius Glabrio, and Salvidienus Orfitus, he accused of conspiracy; Cerealis was executed while governing Asia; Glabrio while already in exile. Others were executed on the most trivial charges”* (Suetonius, Domitian, 10, p. 306). After the tyrant was assassinated it is reported *“the (Praetorian) guard was angry, but had no candidate ready, for Domitian had extirpated his family”* (Nilsson p. 48). See also the statement by Tacitus in question 394.

Thus the beast’s “kingdom became full of darkness.” Men who were sorely needed to counsel, to guide, to manage and to run the Empire were no more. Because of the reign of terror those who made up the corrupted government are pictured as gnawing their tongue. Unlike a mad dog they suffered not because of a disease of the brain, but because of a disease of the mind. It was a malady of the spirit for they were impenitent haters and blasphemers of God and all righteousness. *Consuls were the two officers elected annually as presidents who were equal in power. Under the Roman Republic, prior to 27 BC, they had great power as executives to carry out the nation’s laws. Even

under the emperors it continued to be a very powerful and highly regarded office.

404. **Upon what did the sixth angel pour out his bowl of wrath and how is this vision like that of the sixth trumpet?** It was poured out on the river Euphrates and that great river is in both scenes (9:14; 16:12).

405. **When the sixth bowl was poured out on the Euphrates what happened and why?** The river was dried up so that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. Although the Euphrates is in both scenes (the trumpets and the bowls), the two visions concern the Empire at different points in time as related to the government. The first, Revelation 9:13-17, pictures successive waves of the Parthian nations harassing and warring with the Empire on the east, which lead to external wars during the second and third centuries. Those wars drew the government's attention away from the Christians. As noted, the cavalry of 200,000,000 (9:14-16) was a vision of hoards of tribes from beyond the Euphrates, who were to attack in successive waves the eastern border of the Empire during the years following the fall of the beast-like government; thereby keeping the government too busy to have a policy of persecuting God's people.

This scene concerning the kings of the east (16:12) falls in the second series (chapters 12-19) of visions. It is a symbol of kings* and petty rulers or aspirants to such of the east, who in the latter part of the nineties joined with the beast-like government. Their crossing of the River, in symbol, illustrated their agreement with the government in its campaign against the Christ, his people and all righteousness (17:2-14, 17; 19:19). In other words the vision relates to the collusion of client kings and would-be rulers who joined with the beast-like government against the saints prior to the battle of Armageddon, which is recorded in chapter 19. As we shall see it was a battle for the minds of men and women and it took place before the end of the first century. *Durant in *Caesar and Christ* used a term for such petty rulers or hangers on that is very descriptive, "kinglets of client states" (Durant, p. 217).

406. **Tell where John saw three unclean spirits and what they looked like.** (1) Out of the mouth of the dragon. (2) From out of the mouth of the beast. (3) From the mouth of the false prophet. (4) They looked like frogs (16:13). This is the first mention of the title "false prophet" and it has reference to the second beast, which was first seen in 13:11. It or he as noted earlier was the symbol for all the false religions of the empire, which was headed by the priest of the Capitoline Jupiter (See question 335).

407. **How did John explain the unclean spirits that looked like frogs?** They are the spirits of demons performing signs (16:14).

408. **What is the meaning of the frog like symbols of demons going out to gather the kings for the great battle?** These "frogs" are symbolic of the propaganda of the dragon (Satan), the beast (brute like government) and the false prophet (second beast - religious cults). This wicked counsel from the serpent and two of his strongest allies (beast-like government and false religion) was being fed to the client kings and their supporters against Christ and His people. The expression "performing signs" is a symbol. Such propaganda would create signs, "according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs and lying wonders and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth..." (II Thessalonians 2:9,10).

409. **Name some lessons in the statement "Behold I come as a thief" (16:15).** (1) The

- Lord's coming will be unexpected (I Thessalonians 5:3). (2) Preparation must be made ahead of His arrival (Matthew 25:1-13). (3) Knowing Christ will come in this manner makes us vigilant (Matthew. 24:42-44). (4) We must always be watchful (I Thessalonians 5:6).
410. **Christ who will come, as a thief said blessed is he who does what two things?** Watches and keeps his garments (16:15). This means we should always be prepared for Christ's return and walk worthy. After our Lord had told the apostles that no one knew the "day or the hour" for the passing away of heaven and earth He said, "Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is" (Mark 13:33). And "watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming – in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning – lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you I say to all: watch" (Mark 13:35-37).
411. **Why should one keep his garments according to Jesus?** One should guard his spiritual clothes "lest he should walk naked (that is, spiritually unclothed) and should see his shame" (16:15). As we noted earlier (See question 120) there is shame in physical nakedness, although the passions of lust make worldly people disregard the lewdness of it. Modern fashion does not lend itself to modesty and many who profess to be Christians think little or nothing of wearing little or nothing to cover the nakedness of their bodies in casual, sport or swim wear. Shorts, halters, low cut dresses, swim wear and many everyday fashions give worldly-minded people the opportunity to display their nakedness. In this passage our Lord is using the physical shame of nakedness to declare that there is a spiritual shame of nakedness. To be clothed in a spiritual manner, that pleases the Lord, Christians must put off worldly habits and sinful ways and put on new "clothes," which indicate that in Christ they are new people. The Spirit tells us, "*But now you must put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him*" (Colossians 3:8-10)
412. **Give the name of the place where the spirits of demons (symbolized by the three frogs) gathered the kings of the earth together and tell its background.** The place was designated as Armageddon (16:16). It literally means, Mount Megiddo, and refers to the mountain near the city of Megiddo (Joshua 17:11) in northern Israel. As the site of many ancient battles, it served as a fitting symbol of the spiritual battle to overcome the forces of evil that had turned the Roman government from being a reasonable government into a beast.
413. **To what does the battle of Armageddon apply?** It applied to the defeat of Imperial Rome as a beast and the false prophet, which was the pagan religious system. The defeat was not in a physical battle, but was a spiritual crushing of the beast-like government in order that a reasonable government could replace it. A summary of the battle and its final outcome is described in Revelation 19:19-21.
414. **Upon what did the seventh angel pour out his bowl?** The air (16:17). It is significant that this plague is poured out on the air. For earlier the apostle Paul used the same term in a figure to describe the sphere in which Satan is prince. He wrote to the saints at Ephesus of "trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of the world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2). The term "air" meaning the place in this universe

where men can exist and where Satan dominates.

415. **After the seventh angel had poured out his bowl what did the loud voice from the throne in heaven say?** It is done (16:17). That is, the final bowl of God's wrath was poured out on the government that had the nature of a brute.

416. **When the loud voice from heaven said, "it is done," what four things occurred?** (1) Noises, thunderings, lightnings. (2) A great earthquake. (3) The great city was divided into three parts. (4) The cities of the nations fell (16:18). The four points of this prophecy were not fulfilled at once although they started at the time the beast-like government was in power, but their fulfillment, their repercussions and effects carried on for generations.

417. **What did the noises, the thunderings, the lightnings, and the great earthquake (16:18) symbolize?** Earlier (8:5) the same four symbols "noises, thunderings, lightnings and an earthquake" were also linked together. There (question 211) we noted these things symbolize God's use of His created forces to warn men to respond to the entreaties of His people. In this text they are symbolic of heaven's forces on the corrupt society that led to a great upheaval in it. See question 357 where it was noted that Babylon in the Revelation symbolizes the all-pervasive, seductive, corrupting, ungodly and immoral **society** and **culture** associated with the government, religion and economy of the Roman Empire in the last decades of the first century.

The earthquake was symbolic of the restructuring, which God was going to bring upon the vile, cruel, ungodly and opulent society, which would cause its people to stop brutalizing His servants and to create in the masses a more open mind for things better than gross materialism. As we noted earlier, the Jews in Thessalonica used a similar figure of speech when they declared that Paul and his companions had "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17: 6). In Isaiah's proclamation against ancient Babylon he used similar language: "the earth will move out of its place" (Isaiah 13: 13). In this manner he described the enormous changes in that great city and society, which took place after it fell to the Persians under Cyrus the Great in October 539 BC.

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• The city being divided into three parts is indicative of the kinds of divisions that did and do occur when God's word begins to take effect in a society. Jesus said He had come to bring this kind of division (Luke 12:51-53). It happened time and again as Paul and other disciples spread the word in the first century (Acts 13:45-48; 17:5-8; 19:21-41).

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• "The cities of the nations fell." Here is a beautiful prophecy of the gospel claiming the cities of the "nations" (Greek, *ethnos* – Gentiles) for Jesus Christ following the fall of the beast. After the Roman Empire was restructured into being a reasonable secular government the messengers of Christ went everywhere taking city after city in the name of the Lord. In other words the beast-like government was so changed that it became a canopy of peace under which the servants of Christ could serve Him gladly.

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• 418. **Why was great Babylon remembered before God?** That she might be given the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath (16:19). This is a prophecy that those who made up the corrupt society under the rule of the beast-like government would go down to hades. This had happened to others as one of the younger brothers of Christ wrote, "as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality (fornication) and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).

Neither the city of Rome nor its daughter cities were to be literally destroyed, but this was an affirmation that those who made up the ungodly generation at the latter part of the first century would feel God's wrath and be cut off. Such a cutting off had been foretold for others; for example, Capernaum due to the impenitent attitude of its people toward Jesus was told, "And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be cast down to hades" (Luke 10:15). That generation would go down to the torment of hades where the rich man had gone (Luke 16:22-23).

419. **To what shall we liken the fleeing of the islands and mountains?** This was a prophetic symbol to show that Rome's pagan foundations of cruelty and corruption would be shaken from center to circumference because of God's plagues and by the burning fire of the gospel. The prophet Ezekiel used "isles" in a similar manner when he wrote concerning the impending doom of ancient Tyre, "will not the isles shake at your fall" (Ezekiel 26:15, KJV).
420. **What was the great plague of hail like?** The text (16:21) says, "great hail from heaven fell upon men, every hailstone about the weight of a talent," which was about forty kilograms or nearly ninety pounds. The statement that such "hail," that is, hard or crushing blows of temporal punishments and plagues would come "from heaven" indicated God's personal involvement in putting extreme pressure on those who made up "Babylon." The final plague on Pharaoh was such a plague (Exodus 12:29-30). The death of the first born in every family was like a sledgehammer on the nation of Egypt (Exodus 12:30). This symbol of a hard or heavy plague on the Roman Empire shows that God was going to make the unbelievers suffer crushing blows in order to put them in a more receptive mood to hear the gospel in the years following the fall of the beast-like government. In light of this comment see the quotation from the letters of Pliny in question 450.
421. **How did men react to the great plague of hail?** They blasphemed God (16:21). See the comments in question 399 (16:11) on a similar statement.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

422. **Who came to speak with John at the beginning of Revelation 17, and what did he**

- say he would show John?** (1) One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls. (2) He said he would show him the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters (17:1). This is the first mention of the great harlot and is a symbol of the city of Rome itself. The harlot is named four times (17:1, 15, 16 and 19:2).
423. **How shall we explain, "the kings of the earth committed fornication" with the great harlot "and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (17:1)?** These are figures of speech to describe the commerce, communication and participation in evil that kings and nations, which were ruled by Rome, had with the city in its ungodly ways.
424. **Describe the beast on which the woman in the wilderness was sitting.** He was a scarlet beast having seven heads and ten horns. He was full of blasphemous names (17:3). This is a fitting picture or symbol of the brutal government.
425. **Describe the woman sitting on the beast.** "The woman was "arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication" (17:4). Again we note these are figures of speech in the Revelation to describe the city of Rome itself and all its attendant evils.
426. **What three titles on the forehead of the woman formed her name?** The titles were (1) Mystery, (2) Babylon the Great, (3) Mother of Harlots, and (4) of the Abominations of the Earth (17:5). The city is called mystery because of the enigma it presented to the world. It represented government, which was supposed to punish evil (Romans 13:3), but instead it punished virtue, morality and God-fearing people. She is called, "Babylon the Great," because she was the one who led in the gross iniquity that composed the whole society and culture of the Empire. She is called "the Mother of Harlots and the Abominations of the Earth" because she spawned so many religious sects, cults and societies that fostered idolatry, adultery and superstition. She was an advocate and promoter of spiritual adultery and its attendant evil, sexual immorality.

Under the Empire not only did the people and their masters continue their devotion to the old pantheon of Roman gods such as Jupiter, Juno, Mercury, Mars, Venus, etc.; but they also adopted the idols of other nations and created many more. Even as early as Augustus' time we are told that between 12 and 7 BC each of 265 precincts of the city received a shrine dedicated to "the divine spirit" that watched over that emperor's fortunes (Boak, p. 280). When Augustus died the senate declared him divine and set up a cult for him. Other emperors were deified after their deaths. Domitian, as we have seen, not only declared all his family members to be gods, but declared himself to be "Lord and God." Then through the handy work of the cult leaders (the second beast) he proceeded to have a special sect set up (13:14-15) for his father, brother, sister and himself; called the "the *Flaviales*" (Durant, p. 291). These things are just the tip of the iceberg concerning Rome's push and spread of idolatry and attendant abominations between 27 BC and 98 AD.

The scriptures continually name idolatry as spiritual adultery. Jeremiah said of Israel, "she has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree and played the harlot" (Jeremiah 3:6), and again he said of Judah, "she defiled the land and committed adultery with the stones (idols carved from rock) and the trees (idols of wood)" (Jeremiah 3:9). The term "abominations" is often used in the word of God to describe things

associated with idols and similar superstitions.

In the time of Moses we find God warning Israel of these kinds of things, “*when you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. There shall not be anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritualist, or one who calls up the dead. For all, who do these things, are an abomination to the Lord...*”(Deuteronomy 18:9-12). As Rome pushed and spread its passion for idols and similar abominations, she was fulfilling her role as mother of harlots and abominations.

427. **On what was the great harlot drunk?** She was drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus (17:6). It was a Roman king, Herod Agrippa I, who became the first to kill an apostle, James the son of Zebedee (Acts 12:1-2). The year was 44 and Claudius, who served as Emperor from 41-54 AD, was ruling on the Tiber (cf., Acts 18:2; Suetonius, Claudius 25, p. 202). Some fifty years later James’ brother was banished by Domitian’s government to the isle of Patmos. The killing of Christians by the first of the seven beast-like emperors, Nero, illustrates well the kinds of suffering God’s people underwent in the last thirty-five years of the first century. (See quote below from Tacitus, question 435, under Nero). This statement (17:6), about “the blood of saints and martyrs,” clearly reveals that God’s people were suffering brutal treatment at the hands of the government during that time. This should not be doubted when one realizes that Christians could not worship the state or the emperor and this would have brought them into direct and open conflict with Domitian, his government and his bureaucrats. He claimed that he was “Lord and God” and the government agents enforced it.
428. **How did John react to the scene of the woman arrayed in purple and scarlet upon the beast?** He marveled with great amazement (17:6).
429. **What did the angel say to John when he observed John's amazement about the woman on the beast?** He said, "I will tell you the mystery of the woman - the great harlot and of the beast that carries her" (17:7).
430. **How did the angel describe the beast?** He said, "The beast you saw was and is not and will ascend out of the bottomless pit" (17:8). All the seven emperors symbolized by the seven heads were wicked, but some were far worse than others. The Emperors between Nero and Domitian, while being evil in their own right, did not attain the state of depravity reached by those two. Nero for example, was truly a man with a beast-like nature. He was like those described in the book of Romans, “filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; ... haters of God, ... unmerciful” (Romans 1:29-31). The Spirit also speaks of certain kinds of people, who “like natural brute beasts (are) made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of things they do not understand, and ... perish in their own corruption” (II Peter 2:12). Nero was the first of the beast-like emperors.
- Domitian, who was the sixth head, could well be described as a resurrected Nero. The expression “was and is not” used by John in the latter portion of Domitian’s reign was true about Nero and the statement “will descend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition” describes Domitian at that time. At this point someone may object and say that

the latter emperor by AD 91 had already shown himself to be a God-hating monster. While this is true, in the middle of the book John revealed to the saints in the seven churches that there was to be a three and half year period in which the church (the holy city, 11:2) would be trodden under foot. He also stated that the beast-like government “was given authority to continue forty-two months,” that is three and one half years also. Although some describe Domitian’s whole reign as one of terror, it was the last three years of his life that the brutality reached its peak. Tacitus says the reign of terror, especially during Domitian’s latter years (93-96) was particularly ruthless at Rome (See quotation in answer for 394).

Domitian was assassinated September 18, 96, yet his death did not immediately cause the beast-like government to come under control. That ended when Nerva died and a tough army man, Trajan, took over (January 25, 98) and brought Domitian’s praetorians, the army, the bureaucrats and prosecutors under control. The forty-two months (three and one-half years) ran from the middle of 94 until the above date. See question number 435 for a description of the Emperors who headed up the beast-like government from the summer of 64 until January 98.

431. **Whom did the angel say would marvel at the beast?** It was those on earth whose names were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life (17:8). This well illustrates how those who are not aware of the need to fear God pant, lust, dribble and drool after some other kind of leader or savior.
432. **Discuss in a clear manner the expression "was and is not and yet is."** This prophetic utterance was in reference to the two most vicious of the seven beast-like rulers – Nero and Domitian. At the time John wrote the Revelation (about 91) it was true that the monster Nero "was and is not." Yet, the reign of Domitian was so like that of Nero it could be said that the former was a resurrected Nero. (See quote by Eusibius - question 435 - under the title The Sixth Head of the Beast – Domitian). Therefore the prophetic statement was he, "yet is." Domitian (September 1, 81 – September 16, 96) like a puppet did Satan’s work for he proved himself a man of cruel nature like Nero. See the comments on 13:1-2 (question 318) for a full description of the beast’s make up.
433. **What two ways did the angel identify the seven heads of the beast?** (1) The seven heads are seven mountains (17:9). This symbol is of Rome, which is famous for its seven hills. (2) The seven heads also represented seven kings or emperors (17:10) from Nero to Nerva.
434. **The Seven Hills of Rome have been famous from ancient times; name them.** (1) Capitoline, (2) Palatine, (3) Aventine, (4) Quirinal, (5) Viminal, (6) Esquiline, and (7) Caelian. There are other cities of the world that have seven hills, but from its beginning Rome's seven hills had great influence on its inhabitants. *“Before the close of the fourth century BC Romans attributed the foundation of the city to a figure called Romulus, ... (who) was credited with the establishment of the city on the Palatine hill”* (Boak, p.39). Suetonius tells of Domitian celebrating *“the Feast of the Seven Hills”* (Suetonius, Domitian, 4, p.302).
435. **Name the seven emperors that were the seven heads of the beast and give a description of their connection to the beast-like government.**

THE BEGINNING OF THE BEAST – NERO

(1) Domitius Nero Claudius Caesar ruled for fourteen years from October 13, 54, until June 9, 68. His name was originally Domitius and he was the son of Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus and Agrippina (II), the daughter of Germanicus and Agrippina (I). The latter was a granddaughter of Augustus by his daughter Julia. In 48 Agrippina the second, a niece of the Emperor Claudius (41-54 AD), became his fourth wife. In 50 she succeeded in having him adopt her son and change his name to Nero Claudius Caesar. The boy was twelve. A year later his mother persuaded Claudius to set aside his own son, Britannicus, as heir to the throne in favor of Nero as emperor designate. In 53 the latter was married to Octavia, the daughter of Claudius and sister of Britannicus.

In 54 Agrippina poisoned her husband (Claudius). Thus Nero at the age of 16 became the supreme ruler. In 55 he had Britannicus poisoned, then in 59 he had his mother murdered. Subsequent to that he divorced his wife Octavia and married his mistress, Poppaea Sabina. Afterwards he banished Octavia from Rome and later had her murdered (Boak pp. 306-307). In 65 he kicked Poppaea in the stomach while she was pregnant with his child and she died (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book XVI: 6, p. 371).

Tacitus wrote that in 62, a series of trials began with the idea of confiscating the property of the accused. Such trials, according to Tacitus, took place not only because of greed, but due also to the fact that tyrants like Nero fear reasonable and powerful men. Many senators were put to death or forced to will the lion's share of their estates to Nero and commit suicide. Due to these horrors one, Gaius Piso, led a serious and wide reaching conspiracy to eliminate the brute, but it was discovered in 65, and hundreds of senators and other high officials were executed. No man of prominence was safe (Boak, p.308; See also Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book XV: 58-74, pp, 361-368).

Not only did covetousness, arrogance and blood lust drive Nero, but he was also a notorious sexual pervert. Tacitus gives the following report concerning a banquet given in the summer of 64, which was typical of the man's reign and life style,

"I shall quote it as a model of its kind, having no taste for repeated description of orgies. A raft was built on the lake of Agrippa, and there the banquet was served, while the raft was towed about by other vessels. These were fitted out in gold and ivory; their rowers were selected perverts, divided according to their age and the vices, which were their specialties. On the quays of the lake were brothels, filled with women of rank, and opposite them naked prostitutes, with lewd posturings and obscene gestures. Nero tried every pleasure, licensed and unlicensed. It seemed that there were no further depths of degradation for him to plumb. But then, after a few days, he entered on an actual parody of marriage with one of the filthy crowd of homosexuals, called Pythagoras. The Emperor wore the bridal veil; witnesses were present; there was a dowry, wedding torches, and a nuptial couch. Everything was in public, even down to those items which are usually performed in darkness when the bride is a woman" (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book XV: 37, p. 350). (Also see Suetonius, Nero, 27, p. 227).

Immediately after describing the gross immorality above, Tacitus wrote, "disaster

followed (July 18, 64) in the form of the most terrible and destructive fire Rome has ever known.” Nero tried to alleviate the sufferings of the thousands of homeless by opening the public gardens and building temporary shelters. He also lowered the price of grain, but the rumor persisted the he had set the fire because of his desire to build a new Rome. It was also reported and widely believed that he had “*entered his private theater and sang of the fall of Troy, comparing the modern with the ancient calamity*” (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book XV: 38-43). The historian Suetonius (60-140 AD), who was eight years old when Nero died and a contemporary of those who had lived through his reign, affirms emphatically that Nero “*brazenly set fire to the city*” (Suetonius, *Nero*, 38, p. 235), but modern historians claim there is no proof (Boak, p. 307; Durant, p. 280). Tacitus continued, saying, that nothing could

“ease the impression that the fire had been deliberately started. Nero looked around for a scapegoat, and inflicted the most fiendish tortures on a group of persons already hated by people for their crimes (e.g., the false and wicked charge of cannibalism because of the Lord’s supper). This was a sect known as Christians. Their founder, one Christus, had been put to death by the procurator Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius. Those who confessed to being Christians were at once arrested, but on their testimony a great crowd of people were convicted, not so much on the charge of arson, but of a (perceived) hatred of the entire human race. They were put to death amid every kind of mockery. Dressed in the skins of wild beasts, they were torn to pieces by dogs, or were crucified, or burned to death; when night came they served as human torches to provide lights” (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book XV, 44, p. 353).

Tacitus also declares that Nero attacked virtue itself in these words, “*after the butchery of so many distinguished men, Nero at last conceived the idea of exterminating virtue herself by the deaths of Thrasea Paetus and Barea Soranus*” (Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book XVI, 21, p. 378). The execution of the distinguished commander, Domitius Corbulo, in 67 convinced other commanders of the legions of the fate in store for them; thus in March and April of 68, serious rebellions broke out in Gaul (France), and in Spain. Nero feeling the desperation of the situation committed suicide June 9, 68 (Tacitus, *The Histories*, Introduction p. 11, and Book 1:4, p. 23). He was thirty-one years old (Suetonius, *Nero*, 57, p. 246).

Modern historians are often critical of the criticism that the contemporary historians made of the emperors from Tiberius to Domitian (Durant, pp. 264-265, 280, 281), but they quote them when they agree with their assessment (*Ibid*, 272). Durant accuses the contemporary writers, e.g., Tacitus and Suetonius, of “*mistaking the vices of ten emperors for the record of an empire and a century.*” He then says, “*Behind the adulteries and the murders an administrative organization had formed which provided, through all this period, a high order of provincial government*” (Durant, p. 293). However, when one knows of the discipline, organization, and laws (formed in 449 BC) of the Romans from the time of the republic and others by Julius Ceasar (100-44 BC) and Augustus (63 BC –14 AD), which were locked into place by the latter, then he may well judge that the empire endured in spite of the wholesale “*adulteries and the murders.*”

THE SECOND HEAD OF THE BEAST - GALBA

(2) *Galba* Servius Sulpicius was emperor for seven months only (June 9, 68 – January 15, 69). “*Old and feeble, Galba was dominated by Titus Vinius and Cornelius Laco. The*

former of these was the most vicious of men, the latter the most idle. Between them they saddled the Emperor's reputation with crimes that caused public revulsion..." "An ominous gloom was cast over the Emperor's (Galba) entry into Rome by the massacre of thousands of unarmed troops, appalling even to the perpetrators" (Tacitus, *The Histories* as per Book 1:6, p.24). Plutarch reported that Galba "put himself entirely into the hands of Vinius and Laco, who, just like the greedy crew that surrounded Nero, sold everything in the state to the highest bidder..." (Plutarch, Galba, p.555). The Guard, who had been bought with promises by Marcus Otho, murdered Galba on January 16, 69 (Tacitus, *The Histories*, Book 1, 41, p.46).

Note: See a special comment below on Marcus Salvius Otho

THE THIRD HEAD OF THE BEAST - VITELLIUS

(3) Aulus **Vitellius** held the office for eight months (April 16 – December 20, 69). He had actually been declared emperor by his troops in Germany as early as January 2, 69. In route from there to Rome in the late winter of 69, Vitellius' army under Alienus Caecina attacked the Helvetii unmercifully, destroying them by the thousands and sacking their cities. The Helvetii were a European tribe of people who lived in what is now the western part of Switzerland. In Italy after defeating Otho's troops "*the Vitellion troops embarked on a career of spoliation, violence and licentiousness. Greedy or venal to the point of utter lack of scruple, they spared nothing, whether sacred or profane.*" "*Indeed with every mile traveled towards Rome (April 69) the Emperor's (Vitellius) progress became more riotous. It was joined by actors and gangs of eunuchs and all the idiosyncrasies of Nero's court. For Vitellius was a personal devotee of Nero. He had the habit of attending the Emperor's song recitals, not-like the better sort-under compulsion, but as the slave and hireling of pleasure and gluttony.*" When his troops entered Rome itself they wandered everywhere "*amid the lures of the capital and pursuits too shocking to be described...*" Vitellius was slain by the partisans of Vespasian on December 20, 69 (Tacitus, *The Histories* as per Book 1:68; 2:56, 71, 92; 3:85; pp. 63, 115, 123, 137, 199).

THE FOURTH HEAD OF THE BEAST - VESPASIAN

(4) Titus Flavius **Vespasian** served as emperor for nine years and six months (December 20, 69–June 23, 79). A number of historians, including Josephus (*Wars of the Jews*, Book III, 2ff) wrote of this man's conquest of the Jewish nation. The conflict between the Romans and the Jews became more and more serious during the reign of Nero. Open warfare broke out in 66 and that emperor sent Vespasian to subdue the rebels. By the late summer of 69, he had, with the exception of Jerusalem and some few fortresses, conquered the whole country. Leaving his elder son, Titus, in charge of the army Vespasian hastened to Rome to accept the senate's approval as emperor.

From AD 70 Vespasian required that the temple tax (two days' wages, according to Strong's, New Testament Monies and Weights Chart), which the Jews had formerly paid to the temple in Jerusalem, be paid to the temple of Jupiter at Rome (Nelsson, p. 39; See also Suetonius, p. 308, footnote 1). The Jewish war actually ended in 73 (Tacitus, *The Histories*, p. 27, footnote). While it is true that the Lord brought the destruction which was lead by Vespasian and Titus on the Jews (See Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Zechariah 14: 1-2; Matthew 24:15; Luke 21:20) that did not mean that he would ignore their brutality. Saying this, I have in mind the fact that God authorized punishment of the

idolatrous Israelites in the eighth century before Christ by Assyria, but He then said of Assyria, “I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria” (Isaiah 10:5-12). Just so, while speaking of the coming wrath of God on Jerusalem (70 AD), God, according to Zechariah, said, “I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem ... then the Lord will go forth and fight against these nations, as He fights in the day of battle” (Zechariah 14:2-3).

Eusebius quoting an earlier writer says, “*Hegesippus also records that after the capture of Jerusalem Vespasian issued an order that, to ensure that no member of the royal house should be left among the Jews, all descendents of David should be ferreted out...*” (Eusebius 3:12, p. 79). A comment by Suetonius on Titus (see below), who succeeded his father, although brief, gives reasons as to why Vespasian is classified as one of the heads of the beast-like government. Vespasian died June 23, 79 and was succeeded by Titus.

THE FIFTH HEAD OF THE BEAST - TITUS

(5) **Titus** Flavius Sabinus Vespasian served two years and two months (June 23, 79 – September 1, 81). As you read the following comment by Suetonius keep in mind that the Praetorian Guard as the personal army of the Emperor was the enforcer of the policy of the ruler’s every whim. It must be recognized that without such a personal and brutal force to back them, emperors that were of a beast-like nature could not have carried out their evil policies. The saying is old, but appropriate, “absolute power corrupts absolutely.” If an emperor was of such a mindset, then the praetorians were the ones to give him that absolute power. Suetonius wrote, Titus

“became his father’s colleague, almost his guardian; sharing in the Judean triumph... If anyone aroused his suspicions, Guard’s detachments would be sent into the theatre or the camp to demand the man’s punishment as if by the agreement of everyone present; and he would be executed without delay” (Note this was very much contrary to the rule of law that a Roman was to have a trial and the opportunity to face his accusers) (Acts 16:37; 24:16). *Titus disposed of Aulus Caecina, an ex-consul, by inviting him to dinner and having him stabbed almost before he left the dining room... Action of this sort, although an insurance against the future, made Titus so deeply disliked at the time that perhaps no more unwelcome claimant to the supreme power has ever won it”* (Suetonius, Titus, 6, p. 294).

“He was believed to be profligate as well as cruel, because of the riotous parties which he kept going with his most extravagant friends into the night; and immoral too, because he owned a troop of invertes and eunuchs, and nursed a notorious passion for Queen Berenice (the half sister of King Agrippa II – Acts 25: 23), to whom he had actually promised marriage.”

Suetonius reports all these things about Titus while he served in his father’s government and says some even “prophesied quite openly that he would prove to be a second Nero;” yet, the same author indicates that after taking the reigns of government in his own right he proved to be a reasonable ruler. He did however continue his father’s policy about the Jews paying their temple dues to Jupiter (Suetonius, Titus, 6-7, pp. 294-295; Domitian, 12, p. 308). We should also be aware of the fact that the Emperors who followed Nero inherited a majority of praetorians and a bureaucracy with his mindset.

THE SIXTH HEAD OF THE BEAST - DOMITIAN

(6) Titus Flavius *Domitian*, who was the younger son of Vespasian, served the longest of the beast-like emperors – fifteen years (September 1, 81–September 18, 96). When John wrote, “five have fallen” he spoke of the five rulers listed above (Nero, Galba, Vitellius, Vespasian and Titus). When he wrote, “yet is” (17:8) he was speaking of Domitian and “one is,” also applied to him (17:10). It was this satanic type creature whose government had exiled John to Patmos. In nature and practice he was the epitome of the Nero. Although, Eusebius (c. 260-339) is called the father of church history, one must weigh his writings carefully, but in spite of things he got wrong his quotes from the writing of others available in his time are often very enlightening. Thus he quotes Hegesippus,

“Many were the victims of Domitian’s appalling cruelty. At Rome great numbers of men distinguished by birth and attainments were for no reason at all banished from the country and their property confiscated. Finally he showed himself the successor of Nero in enmity and hostility to God. He was, in fact, the second to organize persecutions against us... The same emperor ordered (as his father had done earlier) the execution of all who were of David’s line...” (Eusebius, Book 3:17; 3:19).

What gives weight to Eusebius’ report is that secular historians, who actually lived at the time of Domitian, paint an even more gruesome picture of a man who could be described as another Nero. For example Suetonius recorded that Domitian put many senators to death including former consuls (these were men elected as supreme civilian and military heads in Rome) and even acting governors. Others were executed on the most trivial charges. He murdered his own cousin, Flavius Sabinus, because an election-day herald mistakenly announced him as emperor instead of Consul. He would scorch the private parts of prisoners to make them reveal the hiding places of others. He cut off the hands of many more. He resorted to every form of extortion in order to confiscate peoples’ property. His agents collected the tax on Jews with a particular lack of mercy (Suetonius, 10-12, p. 306-308).

Tacitus in a tribute to his father-in-law, Agricola, who was hounded out of office by Domitian and who died at the age of 54 in August of 93, under suspicious circumstances, wrote, “*All the most energetic have fallen victims to the cruelty of the Emperor (Domitian)*” (Tacitus, *Agricola*, part 3, p. 53). Again he wrote, “*Agricola did not live to see (August 93) the senate house under siege, the senators surrounded by a cordon of troops, and that one fell stroke which sent so many consulars to their death, so many noble ladies into banishment or exile.*” In comparing Domitian’s cruel nature to that of Nero it was Tacitus’ judgment that the former was the more brutal, for he said, “*Even Nero used to avert his eyes and, though he ordered abominations, forbore to witness them,*” but Domitian would terrorize the senate with his “*eyes fixed on*” them with his “*savage*” and “*blood-red countenance which saved him from ever being seen to blush with shame*” (Tacitus, *Agricola*, part 45, pp. 97-98).

“Among Domitian’s victims were the Christians. He was heir to a policy and legislation established by Nero, and sporadically pursued under Vespasian and Titus, both of whom had links with Palestine, and each entertained some fear of any movement initiated there. But Domitian, with a sharp eye for treason and enthusiastic for the Caesar-cult justly ranks with Nero as a systematic persecutor. According to Irenaeus (Irenaeus, Heretics, V. XXX. 3) the Apocalypse of John was written during the reign of Domitian and reflected the

emperor's anti-Christian attitude" (Blacklock, p. 155).

It was customary for the Senate to bestow the titles of Emperor, Caesar and others on the ruler. But Domitian claimed the title of *dominus et deus* (lord and god), and it was used in public address and in letters to him (Boak, p. 316). According to Suetonius he would begin a letter with the words: "*Our Lord and God instructs you to do this! And Lord and God became his regular title in writing and conversation*" (Suetonius, Domitian, 15, p. 309). In the year 89, Domitian began a more intensive reign of terror. Many prominent persons—senators, consuls, high military officers and others were executed on trumped-up charges of treason and others on the grounds of "atheism." "*Among the latter were some notable converts to Judaism or Christianity,*" whose beliefs ran counter to Domitian's claim that he was "*Lord and God*" (Boak, p. 316). There was yet another season of terror concerning which Tacitus wrote, the "*reign of terror*" (especially in Domitian's last years, AD 93-96) "*was particularly ruthless at Rome. Rank, wealth and office, whether surrendered or retained, provided grounds for accusation, and the reward for virtue was inevitable death.*" (See the full quotation in the answer for 394).

Like Nero, "*Domitian was extremely lustful, and called his constant sexual activities 'bed-wrestling,' as though it were a sport. Some say that he preferred to depilate his concubines himself and would go swimming with the commonest of prostitutes*" (Suetonius, Domitian, 22, p.313).

Domitian's wife, Domitia, was the daughter of the famous general, Domitius Corbulo, whom Nero had murdered in 67. Domitian, who had stolen her from her former husband, divorced her, then took her back saying, it was "*a recall to my divine bed.*" She perhaps fearing for her own life became the center of a plot to assassinate the man. His murders, confiscations of property, banishments and other cruel acts "*made him everywhere hated and feared. Finally his friends and his favorite freedman conspired to murder him, with the connivance of his wife*" (Suetonius, Domitian, 13, pp. 308-309). Suetonius described the assassination of Domitian by the steward of his niece, Domitilla: "*Stephanus stabbed him in the groin. The wounded Domitian put up a fight but succumbed to seven further stabs*" from other assailants. He was 44 years old and the date was September 18, 96. It was a relieved and happy senate that cursed his memory. It decreed that his name was to be erased from public monuments. Other Emperors were often immoral but the life and conduct of Nero and Domitian were so despicable that the Senate formally execrated the memory of both. Although the senate was happy "*it grieved the troops (particularly the Praetorians) who had begun to speak of Domitian the God*" (Suetonius, Domitian, 18, 23, p. 314; Boak, p. 319-320).

THE SEVENTH HEAD OF THE BEAST - NERVA

(7) John stated (c. 91) concerning the last of the beast-like emperors: "the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time" (17:10). Marcus Coccus *Nerva* surely fits this prophecy for he ruled only sixteen months (September 18, 96 – January 25, 98) after Domitian had ruled for fifteen years. While Nerva himself is considered by present day historians to be one of five "good emperors" from 96 – 180 (Gibbon, p. 27), the government over which he presided continued its beast-like practices for it was made up of Domitian's partisans, his praetorians, his legions and appointees. Particularly the Praetorian Guard continued their high-handed ways. In the year 97, they mutinied against Nerva and killed those who had taken a leading part in killing Domitian (Boak, p. 323). One writer says Nerva was an insecure ruler and had to sacrifice to the

demands of the praetorians those who had killed Domitian (Nilsson, p. 48). Not only were the praetorians and the army of the mind-set put in them by Domitian, but the government bureaucracy was also determined that the misdeeds of Nerva's predecessor not be brought up. Pliny the Younger writes extensively about this in his *Letters* for when he later tried to bring to trial a man by the name of Pulicius Certus, who had been a notorious prosecutor under Domitian. He could not (Pliny, Book 9:13; Introduction, p.14).

It became obvious that the only way Nerva could save his authority and his life was by choosing a strong successor who could control the praetorians and the legions that were suspect in their regard for Nerva. In the late fall of 97 he adopted Marcus Ulpius Traianus (Trajan), a tried soldier in command of the troops in Upper Germany. The senate approved this adoption and made Trajan virtual co-emperor with Nerva. The latter died January 25, 98 (Boak, p. 323).

From the beginning of his reign, Trajan was a firm ruler. Very quickly he brought the praetorians under control and had those who had compelled the execution of the individuals who had assassinated Domitian punished, and the other members of the guard did not protest. *"They had found their master"* (Nilsson, p. 49). He also had senatorial governors who had abused their office tried before the senate (Boak, p. 324). The beast-like government had come to an end. And how did the government's policy change toward the Christians?

"The attitude of the government toward Christians in the second century is clearly seen from the correspondence between Trajan and Pliny (Book 10:97) the Younger, governor of Bithynia (north central Turkey) in 112. This letter indicated no law against being a Christian and they were not to be hunted out. Hadrian (117-138) who followed Trajan, "ordained that Christians should have a regular trial and that they should not be condemned for the name, but for some definite crime, e.g., treason" (Boak, p. 401).

Gibbon wrote of the period following the fall of the beast, *"In the second century (98-180) of the Christian era the empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth and the most civilized portion of mankind"* (Gibbon, p. 27). It was under this canopy of peace (*pax Romana*) that the kingdom of God's dear Son began to spread like wild fire. In fact, the government that emerged after January 25, 98 proved to be an even better government than that which had existed before the rise of the beast in 64. It was the series of emperors that followed Nerva that produced Rome's "golden age" of peace and stability. *"This was due to a happy combination of internal peace and well-intentioned government"* (Boak, p. 322).

SPECIAL NOTE ON MARCUS SALVIUS OTHO

Naming Nerva as the last of the beast like emperors leaves out Marcus Salvius Otho, who lived from 32-69AD. During the time of Vitellius this man was also named as emperor. But at least four reasons may be given as to why he is not considered in the Revelation as one of the seven heads of the beast. (1) The statement from John, which was quoted above, "the other has not yet come and when he comes, he must continue a short time" (17:10) fits Nerva as to the time of ruling (after Domitian) and the length of his reign. (2) The dropping of an individual or individuals from a list of kings was not unknown in the scriptures for the Holy Spirit in giving the legal lineage of Jesus leaves out three of

- Joram's descendents and picks up in the fourth generation with Uzziah (Matthew 1:8). (3) Aulus Vitellius was greeted as emperor as early as January 2, 69. In fact, Galba during his reign (June 9, 68–January 15, 69), after receiving the news that the German legions had declared Vitellius emperor, had sought to strengthen his position by adopting a younger man named Piso Frugi Licinianus. Otho did not take the oath until January 16, 69, after the praetorians had murdered Galba and Piso (Tacitus, *The Histories*, footnotes, p. 22). Tacitus says, the man in the street was perplexed as to whom (Otho or Vitellius) they should visit the temples and pray (Tacitus, *The Histories*, Book 1:50, p.51). The same writer speaks of "the army (of Germany) and its emperor (Vitellius)" (Tacitus, *The Histories*, Book 1:63, p.59). (4) The shortness of Otho's reign, which according to Suetonius, was only ninety-five days (January 16–April 16, 69). He was thirty-seven years old when he died by stabbing himself with a single stroke under the left breast (Suetonius, *Otho*, 11, p. 265).
436. **How shall we identify the woman seated on the beast (17:9)?** She is the symbol of the city of Rome itself with its pagan society and culture. The name of Babylon, which symbolized the heathen culture and society of all the empire, was also an appropriate name for the city of Rome at that time. She was the prime advocate of that wicked society and culture.
437. **What did the angel say of the seven kings?** Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come (17:10). The five who had fallen when the Revelation was penned, as we have noted, were Nero, Galba, Vitellius, Vespasian and Titus. The living head of the beast when John wrote was, Domitian. The one who was yet to come was Nerva who was to "continue (only) a short time" (17: 10). As we noted, Domitian ruled for fifteen years, but Nerva for only sixteen months.
438. **How is the beast-like government identified with the seven kings?** He (the cruel government itself) is personified as an eighth king, but is said to be of the seven. The expression "was, and is not, and yet is" (cf., 17:8) is explained in question 432 where it was applied to Domitian being raised up in Nero's stead. Here (17:11) it is made to include the beast-like apparatus of the government created by Nero, which continued through the time of Domitian, and even the short period of Nerva's rule. The statement "the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going into perdition," (17:11) lets us know that the Praetorian Guard, the senate and other government officials, who learned their animosity toward Christians under the first head of the beast (Nero) are counted as the eighth. The fact that the Lord said it would go into perdition was a prophecy at this point in the book that the whole beast-like system of government, not just the heads, was going to be completely renovated.
439. **How did John identify the ten horns of the beast?** As ten kings who had no kingdom, but would receive authority for a short period of time (12:12).
440. **How shall we identify the ten kings represented by the horns of the beast?** Daniel wrote of the Roman Empire starting from an earlier time frame than John (Daniel 7: 7-27); but Daniel was specifically told the ten horns on the terrible beast he saw were ten kings (Daniel 7:24). Here in the Revelation they were said to have "received no kingdom as yet." These were princes, former governors, and petty tyrants who were aspiring to have their own town or district to rule. They were continually approaching the Emperors to make them kings, proconsuls, procurators or other agents for the Imperial government. Such individuals would agree to almost anything to get an appointment. And many often

- did because they brought some bounty or special influence to the ruler. Josephus records many examples of how Herod and his descendents over generations were solicitors of such appointments (See Josephus, *Antiquities and Wars*, under the numerous individuals named "Herod" and "Agrippa"). Thus they would have certainly agreed with the government policy that Domitian must be recognized as "Lord and God."
441. **The ten kings were of one mind, therefore they would do what?** They would give their authority over to the beast (17:13). Although the kings indicated would rule only a brief period (symbol one-hour), they would back the central government in its determination to have all rich and poor, bond and free recognize the Emperor as "Lord and God."
442. **What, according to John, would be the result when the ten kings with the beast made war on the lamb?** The Lamb would overcome them (17:14). Their helping the beast make war on the Lamb is in reference to the battle of Armageddon (16:16), which is described more particularly in 19:17-21.
443. **Give the three places in scripture where the titles King of kings and Lord of lords are used.** I Timothy 6:15; Revelation 17:14; 19:16.
444. **How are the Lamb's followers identified just after He is called Lord of lords and King of kings in chapter 17?** They are designated as the "called, chosen, and faithful" (17:14). The apostle Peter said, "you are a chosen generation" (I Peter 2:9). We are called and chosen by the word of the Spirit through the gospel (Mark 16:15-16; II Thessalonians 2:13-14).
445. **What did the angel say the waters upon which the harlot sat represented?** As we have noted the "great harlot" (17:1) was the symbol of the city of Rome and the angel at this point explains that the waters she sat on were, "peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues" (17:15).
446. **Tell the five things the ten kings (ten horns) would eventually do to the harlot.** (1) Hate her. (2) Make her desolate. (3) Make her naked. (4) Eat her flesh. (5) Burn her with fire (17:16). These terms are symbolic of the fact that in the coming decades after the beast-like period of the empire ended; the minds of the "opinion leaders" about the empire would not support a beast-like nature in the central government. They would instead adopt policies, even though they did not mean to do so (cf., Isaiah 10:7), which would benefit the gospel in order that it would "burn" up the empire. See 19:21 where the Revelator reveals that these kings themselves were to be "killed with the sword, which proceeded from the mouth on Him who sat on the horse."
447. **John said that before the ten kings (ten horns) attacked the harlot they would fulfill God's purpose and do what?** To be of one mind and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God were fulfilled (17:17). This is indicative of the fact that God sent the petty rulers a strong delusion, because they had no love for the truth (cf., II Thessalonians 2:11), therefore He allowed them to accept the idea that the Emperor was "Lord and God." Thus, when He turned the government from its corrupt, brutal, beast-like nature into being a more reasonable government, He would conquer those corrupt client kings also.
448. **How is Revelation 17:18 one of the great identifying verses of the book?** It says the

woman, the great harlot (17:1), seated on many waters (people) was the great city which reigned over the kings of the earth; it had to be Rome. Understanding the book as the first century recipients did it would seem impossible for a different answer to come into one's mind.

At this point it is good to remember some of the things King Agrippa told (c. 66 AD) the Jews when they were rising in rebellion against Rome:

“Hath not your army been often beaten even by your neighboring nations, while the power of the Romans is invincible in all parts of the habitable earth? Nay, rather, they seek for somewhat still beyond that; for all Euphrates is not a sufficient boundary for them on the east side, nor the Danube on the north; and for their southern limit, Libya hath been searched over by them, as far as countries uninhabited, as is Cadiz (Spain) their limit on the west; nay, indeed, they have sought for another habitable earth beyond the ocean, and have carried their arms as far as such British islands as were never known before. What therefore do you pretend to? Are you richer than the Gauls, stronger than the Germans, wiser than the Greeks, more numerous than all men upon the habitable earth? – What confidence is it that elevates you to oppose the Romans?” (Josephus, *The wars of the Jews*, Book II, 4).

The United States with all its might cannot compare with the dominance Rome's power gave it over its neighboring and foreign nations for almost five hundred years.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

449. **Describe the first vision of Revelation chapter 18.** An angel coming down from heaven with great authority and the earth was illuminated with his glory. This angel is symbolic of angels sent forth as "ministering spirits for those who will inherit salvation" (Hebrews 1:14). It is vain to speculate on how these angels serve God on behalf of those who will inherit the kingdom. There is just a glimpse of the way Gabriel and Michael (Daniel 10:10-13) served to get the Jews released from their captivity in Babylon during the reign of Cyrus the great.
450. **What was the message of the angel at the beginning of Revelation chapter 18?** Babylon the great is fallen. See 14:8 where this was first stated. As noted earlier this was a prophetic statement by John that the vile society of the Roman Empire would fall, that is, it would be restructured to the extent that the gospel would prevail. In light of this it is amazing to read a letter written by Pliny the Younger, to the Emperor Trajan about 112, while he was Imperial representative in Bithynia (AD 111-113).

“It (speaking of Christians as though a cult) is not only in the towns, but villages and rural districts too which are infected through contact with this wretched cult. I think though that it is still possible for it to be checked and directed to better ends, for there is no doubt that people have begun to throng the temples which were almost entirely deserted for a long time; the sacred rites which had been allowed to lapse are being performed again and the flesh of sacrificial victims is on sale everywhere, though up till recently scarcely anyone could be found to buy it” (Pliny, letter 96, p. 295).

This letter reveals three amazing things that had taken place in what today is called north central Turkey in the fourteen years from the time the beast was tamed (January 98 until

- 112). (1) Many souls had been converted in towns, villages and rural districts. (2) Heathen temples had been forsaken to the extent that Pliny would write of them, “*which were almost entirely deserted for a long time.*” (3) This had caused sacrificial animals to go wanting for buyers. Three things had brought this about, (a) The bold preaching of the gospel, (b) the sacrificial lives of the saints and (c) the continuing effects of plagues, which God poured out on “Babylon.” This makes it clear that the Christians had gone from being almost non-influential under the beast (64 –98 AD) to being a raging inferno to burn up Roman society. Pliny’s judgment that he believed “*that it is still possible for it to be checked*” comes across as wishful thinking.
451. **Give three ways the angel described fallen Babylon and tell her identity.** (1) It had become a habitation of demons, (2) a prison for every foul spirit and (3) a cage for every unclean and hated bird. Babylon as we have noted was the symbol of the evil society and culture (18:2). See question 357 for a further comment on the identity of Babylon. According to the prophetic message in this chapter (18:8), this corrupt society would be removed because of God’s plagues and the power of the gospel, which was to be the fire to burn up the Empire (See Jeremiah 5:14; Revelation 19:21). The godly lives of the saints were a major factor that made the pagan world sit up and take notice (12:11). Concerning his own service Paul wrote, I “filled up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church” (Colossians 1: 24). In other words, not only was it necessary for Christ to suffer to give us the gospel, but a disciple “must endure hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (II Timothy 2:3) for the sake of the kingdom. How sad it is that many, preachers even, are of the mind that they must be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease while others do as Paul ordered, “fight the good fight of faith” (I Timothy 6:12).
452. **Describe how nations, kings and merchants had partaken in the evils of Babylon.** (1) They had drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. This statement means the nations had participated in the immoral activities of the Empire which would bring God’s wrath down upon them. (2) Kings had committed fornication with her, both physical and spiritual. (3) Merchants had become rich through the abundance of her luxury (18:3). Go to question 461 to see a list given by Will Durant that illustrates the trade that Rome had with the world.
453. **What was the call to God's people as Babylon was falling?** “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues” (18:4). This was a call for Christians not to be caught up in "Babylon's" worldliness. The Spirit has admonished, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life - is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world is passing away and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever" (I John 2:15-17).
454. **How high had Babylon's sins reached?** They had reached to heaven, and God had remembered her iniquities (18:5). This reminds us of the outcry against Sodom, which came to the Lord's attention (Genesis 18:20-21).
455. **What measure did the voice from heaven call upon Babylon?** Render to her just as she rendered and repay her double according to her works (18:6). Give her torment and sorrow according to her sensual luxury.

456. **How did Babylon boast against suffering?** The corrupt society (Babylon) is personified in boasting, "I sit as a queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow" (18:7).
457. **What were the three plagues that were to come upon Babylon in one day?** They were (1) Death, (2) Mourning and (3) Famine (18:7). This is a prophecy that the idol worshipping, God hating society would be changed. The statement that it would happen in one day had reference to the fact that those things were set in motion on one day (January 25, 98). It was on that day that Trajan was raised up to tame the beast. The actual changes came about due to the events of that day, but the repercussions lasted for generations. The national conscience would be so revised in its thinking that the masses, even though extremely sinful, would hold the old society as it existed under the beast as something to be shunned. They would thus be more open-minded to the gospel. Although there would be future periods of persecutions as such is the lot of faithful servants (I Thessalonians 3:1- 4; II Timothy 3:12) this change of attitude contributed greatly to the fact that in just 225 years from the beginning of Trajan's reign the religion of Christ became the religion of the Empire.
458. **Following the three plagues (death, mourning and famine) what was to happen to Babylon?** She was to be utterly burned with fire (18:8). This meant that that wicked society was to be burned up with the fire of God's message. Remember the fire from the two witnesses' mouths (cf., 11:5 - question 266). Also as we noted earlier a similar order was given to Jeremiah in his time, "Therefore thus says the Lord God of Host: Because you speak this word, Behold, I will make My words, in your mouth fire and this people wood, and it shall devour them" (Jeremiah 5:14). Thus great Babylon was to be burned up with the word of God.
459. **Tell two things the kings of the earth had done with Babylon and tell their reaction when they saw her burned up.** (1) They committed fornication with her. (2) Lived sensually with her in luxury. Their reaction was to be one of weeping and lamenting when they saw her being burned through the power of God's word, that is through the preaching of the pure and unperverted gospel (Jeremiah 23: 29; Romans 1:16; I Peter 1:25; cf., Revelation 19:15, 21).
460. **As they stood at a great distance for fear, what would the kings of the earth say about the fall of Babylon?** "Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment is come" (18:10). The term "one hour" has reference to the stroke from God, which would lead to the restructuring of the Empire. A similar statement is made about God's judgment on various nations in chapter 34 of Isaiah, telling of the impending punishment on those nations the prophet wrote, "For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance..." (Isaiah 34:8). The stroke of one hour, which broke the strangle hold of evil by a beast-like government on the Mediterranean world, was the death of Nerva and the exaltation of Trajan to the position of authority in the Empire. See question 463
461. **The merchants of the earth would weep and mourn over Babylon because of their loss of commerce in 26 listed items including the bodies and souls of men (18:11-13).** Here is a long testimony of the tremendous impact that the old society and culture had on the everyday lives of each and every person. If we reflect for a moment we can well imagine the great number of jobs, businesses, incomes and lives that were absolutely turned upside down through the influence of the godly lives and preaching by God's

servants. Their sermons would have been filled with calls to repent of ungodliness and a bold exhortation to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. Even as Paul, who set an example earlier in the century had done. He affirmed before King Agrippa, I “declared first in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God and do works befitting repentance (Acts 26:20).

In giving consideration as to why the Lord would give so much space to list these things we must realize that these things were very much a part of everyday life. There are few ways a nation or society can be more quickly affected than through economic means. The effect of Paul’s preaching in Ephesus is an outstanding example of the power of the gospel in turning an economy based on sinful trades upside down (Acts 19:21-41). The following is a summation by Will Durant of commerce in the Roman Empire from a historian’s view:

“Whoever wishes to see all the goods of the world,’ said Aelius Aristides, ‘must either journey throughout the world or stay in Rome.’ From Sicily came corn, cattle, hides, wine, wool, fine woodwork, statuary, jewelry; from north Africa corn and oil; from Cyrenaica silphium; from central Africa wild beasts for the arena; from Ethiopia and east Africa ivory, apes, tortoise shell, rare marbles, obsidian, spices, and Negro slaves; from west Africa oil, beasts, citron, wood, pearls, dyes, copper; from Spain fish, cattle, wool, gold, silver, lead, tin, copper, iron, cinnabar, wheat, linen, cork, horses, ham, bacon, and the finest olives and olive oil; from Gaul clothing, wine, wheat, timber, vegetables, cattle, poultry, pottery, cheese; from Britain tin, lead, silver, hides, wheat, cattle, slaves, oysters, dogs, pearls, and wooden goods. From Belgium flocks of geese were driven all the way to Italy to supply goose livers for aristocratic bellies. From Germany came amber, slaves, and furs; from the Danube wheat, cattle, iron, silver, and gold; from Greece and the Greek isles cheap silk, linen, wine, oil, honey, timber, marble, emeralds, drugs, artworks, perfumes, diamonds, and gold. From the Black Sea came corn, fish, furs, hides, slaves; from Asia Minor fine linen and woolen fabrics, parchment, wine, Smyrna and other figs (sic), honey, cheese, oysters, carpets, oil, wood; from Syria wine, silk, linen, glass, oil, apples, pears, plums, figs, dates, pomegranates, nuts, nard, balsam, Tyrian purple, and the cedar of Lebanon; from Palmyra textiles, perfumes, drugs; from Arabia incense, gums, aloes, myrrh, laudanum, ginger, cinnamon, and precious stones; from Egypt corn, paper, linen, glass jewelry, granite, basalt, alabaster, and porphyry. Finished products of a thousand kinds came to Rome and the West from Alexandria, Sidon, Tyre, Antioch, Tarsus, Rhodes, Miletus, Ephesus, and the other great cities of the East, while the East received raw materials and money from the West.”

“In addition to all this there was a substantial import trade from outside the Empire. From Parthia and Persia came gems, rare essences, morocco leather, rugs, wild beasts, and eunuchs. From China – through Parthia, or India, or the Caucasus – came silk, raw or manufactured; the Romans thought it a vegetable product combed from trees and valued it at its weight in gold” (Durant, pp. 328-329).

Concerning the selling of humans (bodies and souls) here are the results of Durant’s research:

*Human prices varied from 330 sesterces (\$50) for a farm slave to the 700,000 (\$105,000) paid by Marcus Scaurus for Daphnis the grammarian; the average price was now 4000 sesterces (\$600). Eighty per cent of the employees in industry and retail trade were slaves, and most of the manual or clerical work in government was performed by **servi publici** – “public slaves.” Domestic slaves were of every variety and condition: Personal servants, handicraftsmen, tutors, cooks, hairdressers, musicians, copyists, librarians, artists, physicians, philosophers, eunuchs, pretty boys to serve at least as cupbearers, and cripples to provide amusement by their deformities; there was a special market at Rome where one might buy legless, armless, or three-eyed men, giants, dwarfs, or hermaphrodites. Household slaves were sometimes beaten, occasionally killed. Nero’s father killed his freedmen because they refused to drink as much as he wished. (Durant, p. 334).*

Concerning a comparison of the above prices in recent times Durant wrote the following.

“Ignoring price fluctuations before Nero, (we) roughly equate the as, sesterce, denarius, and talent (6000 denarii) of the Roman Republic with six, fifteen, and sixty cents, and \$3600 respectively, in terms of United States currency in 1942 (Durant, p. 79).

462. **What question did the shipmasters, sea travelers, sailors and sea traders ask about Babylon when they saw the smoke of her burning?** “What is like this great city?” (18:18). With every mention of Babylon, the term "great" is used. This shows the strong emphasis by the Lord on the influence of this society and culture on the masses. The smoke of her burning must be understood in the sense of the gospel burning up the old corrupt way of life over a long period of time. Paul created such a “fire storm” with his preaching against idols in Ephesus. For Demetrius and the other smiths, “who made silver shrines of Diana” knew that his words were “burning” up their profits in the making of images (Acts 19: 26). This is a Biblical example of what the fire of the gospel can do to leaven a society and culture to the extent that peoples’ jobs and lives will be completely turned around.
463. **What did the seafarers exclaim about the great city as they threw dust on their heads with weeping and wailing?** "Alas, alas that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate" (18:19). This statement concerning shipping vessels is most appropriate when one considers that virtually all the merchandise named in the quotation from Will Durant above (question 461) came to Rome by ship. The term "one hour" must be an illusion to the fact that the fate of the lewd, immoral, God-hating and God-defying society and culture (Babylon) was sealed with the fall of the beast-like government January 25, 98.

The scriptures give us a remarkable illustration of this kind of prophetic statement. Nearly 150 years before the literal city of Babylon reached its peak of splendor under its great king Nebuchadnezzar Isaiah foretold, "Babylon, the glory of the kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It will never be inhabited..." (Isaiah 13:19-20). Later in the book of Daniel we read about the conquest of Babylon by the forces of Cyrus the great, "that very night Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was slain. And Darius the Mede received the kingdom..." (Daniel 5:30). Even though Babylon fell in one night in October 539 BC it was many years before it reached the state of desolation, which had been foretold by Isaiah. Babylon

continued in use as a city until the second century BC (*World Book*, Babylonia, p. 10). Yet, it has now for 2200 years been absolutely desolate just as Isaiah foretold.

464. **What three (18:20) were to rejoice because God had avenged them in the fall of Babylon?** (1) Heaven. (2) Apostles. (3) Prophets. Heaven here is a symbol of “an innumerable company of angels” and to “the general assembly” (Hebrew 12:22-24) of God’s servants rejoicing with the Godhead.
465. **Tell how a mighty angel used a stone to signify the downfall of Babylon (18:21).** He “took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall be found no more.” Here is the prophecy that when God's plagues and His powerful word turned the Empire away from its Babylonish ways they would not be recovered. Although corrupt regimes did come again and again across the Mediterranean world, the particular vile society, which flourished under the beast-like emperors, would be gone forever.
466. **List five things (18:22) not to be heard, found or seen in fallen Babylon.** (1) Harpists. (2) Flutists. (3) Trumpeters. (4) Craftsman. (5) And no sound of the millstone. The reason these things would never again be heard or seen in "Babylon" was because that particularly evil society would never come again. It was destined to go down to hades with the men who had created it just as Jesus said of Capernaum, “And you Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades...” (Matthew 11:23).
467. **What had Babylon used to deceive all the nations?** She had used her sorcery (18:23). Here is a point that should be observed very particularly in our times, because sorcery is still very much a part of the evils that undermine faith in God. Superstitions, luck, and chance awe people. Astrology is a prime example of the modern use of sorcery to influence people’s lives.
468. **Whose blood was found in Babylon?** The blood of prophets and saints and all that were slain on the earth was found in her. See the quotation from Tacitus about the killing of God’s people by Nero under question 435.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

469. **What was the expression of praise in Revelation 19:1, which was made by the great multitude?** "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power to the Lord our God!" Someone ought to write a hymn and make this the chorus.
470. **What two reasons were given for the great praise of God in Revelation 19?** True and righteous are His judgments: Because (1) He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and (2) He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her (19:2). The Holy Spirit reminds us in the book of Romans (See 12:19; 13:4) that vengeance belongs to God on behalf of His people, thus we find God carrying out

retribution on behalf of the saints against the beast-like government and the evil society (Babylon).

471. **What two groups joined the great multitude in Revelation 19 in saying "alleluia"?** They were the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures (19:4).
472. **When the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures said, "Amen! Alleluia!" what did the voice from the throne command?** "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great" (19:5).
473. **John heard the voice, which sounded like many waters and like mighty thunder, saying what?** "Alleluia! For the Lord our God omnipotent reigns" (19:6).
474. **The saints were to rejoice because whose marriage had come?** The marriage of the Lamb had come (19:7)
475. **Tell what was granted to the Lamb's bride and what this signified.** It was granted to her that she should be arrayed "in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints" (19:8). Here is a noteworthy statement that we as the bride of Christ should be promoting and doing righteous deeds in the name of our Lord. We must not fail to realize the great need of widows, orphans and "the poor" who need "the gospel preached to them" (Matthew 11:5). The Third World countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America are made up, with small exceptions, of those in deep poverty, but where are the preachers who like Jesus are preaching to these poor.
476. **What statement of blessing did John write concerning the marriage supper of the Lamb?** "Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (19:9)! This is true, because only those who truly belong to Christ will be called to that feast. Those who have not been born again, that is, not born of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5), will be rejected. Our Lord Himself taught this in the parable of the wedding feast for He said that the man who came without a wedding garment was cast into outer darkness (Matthew 22:1-14). The Spirit warned that Jesus at His Second Coming would be revealed from heaven "in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who know not God and on those who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (II Thessalonians 1:8-9). This should spur those who know God, and who have obeyed the gospel, to tell others who are yet in darkness. Our beloved Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Let us urgently do the same.
477. **Discuss the marriage of the Lamb.** The scriptures clearly demonstrate that the Lamb's marriage follows the pattern of that which was found among the Jews at the time of Christ's birth. The "betrothal" (Greek – *mnesteuo*) among the Jews was so binding that Joseph was "minded to put her (Mary) away secretly" (Matthew 1:19). This was because under the law she could have been stoned to death as the "betrothed to a husband" (Deuteronomy 22:23-24). The fact that Mary was his wife is confirmed by the statement of Gabriel to Joseph, "do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife" (Matthew 1:20), which he did without any further ceremony. Luke calls Mary Joseph's "betrothed wife" (Luke 2:5).

Concerning our marriage to Christ the apostle Paul wrote to those in Rome, "you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another" (Romans 7:4). God's people could not be married to two laws at the same time,

so those held under the law were released from it when Christ died bearing it in His body ("in His flesh," Ephesians 2:15). This took place in order that the saints of God could be married to the newly risen Christ through His new covenant.

Paul also declared that God's joining of husband and wife to be "one flesh," is a great mystery. He then immediately said, "but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:31-32). The same apostle stated to the Corinthians, "I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (II Corinthians 11:2). As Mary was the wife of Joseph, just so the church is the bride of Christ, and she (the church) shall enjoy the wedding feast with her husband when He comes to take her. That this is a proper analysis of the marriage relationship of Jesus and His "wife" is born out by the fact that the last chapter of the Revelation pictures the bride giving the gospel invitation to the masses at the *end of the first century*, saying "come" take the water of life freely (22:17).

478. **When John fell at the feet of the angel to worship him what did the angel say?** He said, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God!" (19:10). In light of this rebuke of John by the angel it is amazing that millions pray to angels and even the spirits of dead people and call the latter "patron saints." They will even bow before the mock images of the dead, like Peter, Mary, Joseph and others claiming such are aids to their spiritual needs. Bogus images, crucifixes and icons of Jesus have been created and sold by the millions for devotees to bow before and kiss. Such individuals' minds are so earthbound that they cannot perceive the Lord's presence without a material image.

At Sinai the Lord God gave His definition of idolatry, "you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourselves any carved image (idol) or any likeness (icon) of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them" (Exodus 20:3-5). Often those who use images or pictures in their devotions say, "Oh, we don't worship the image or pray to it, but to the one that it represents." Yet, this is exactly what the children of Israel did in the wilderness, for they said of the image Aaron had made, "this is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 32:4)! And how did the Godhead react to such a representation? He told Moses, "Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them" (Exodus 32:10). Is it any wonder that idolatry is listed among the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:20); and that John himself said, "little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21)?

479. **Discuss "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (19:10)."** As we are often informed, and rightly so, there are more than three hundred prophecies throughout the Old Testament about the coming of the Lord Jesus. This bears out the fact that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit (that is the force of spiritual life) of prophecy" is true. The driving force of Biblical prophecy was God's determination to let sin-sick men know of His righteousness in sending Jesus Christ. The apostle to the Gentiles made this comment: "Now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness of God which is through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe" (Romans 3:21-22; cf., Isaiah 53:8; John 3:16).
480. **After John recorded the statement "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" what did he see?** He said, "Then I saw heaven open and behold a white horse" (19:11).

This is another example of the Revelation giving us a prophetic vision of the spiritual warfare in the heavenly places (See Colossian 2:15; Ephesians 6:12, and consult the answer to question 223). One such scene, which we discussed earlier, was in chapter 12 where Michael was seen warring with Satan in the spiritual realm at the time of Jesus' death, burial, resurrection and coronation (cf., question 301).

481. **What did John say the one on the white horse was called?** He is called, "Faithful and True" (19:11).
482. **John said the one on the white horse judges and makes war in what?** John wrote, "in righteousness He judges and makes war" (19:11). The scriptures make it clear that Jesus' activities in the spiritual realm are counted as warfare. Paul used such language concerning Jesus' conquests by means of the cross for he wrote, "having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15). David clearly visualized the return of Jesus to heaven just before Pentecost as the conquering Lord. For he wrote, "lift up your heads, Oh you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle" (Psalm 24:7-8). Christians are also at war with spiritual wickedness (II Corinthians 10:3-4; Ephesians 6:12). Another Psalm tells us "righteousness and justice are the foundation of (God's) throne" (Psalm 97:2). Therefore it is imperative that the Son should judge and make war in righteousness.
483. **How are the eyes of the one on the white horse described?** "His eyes were like a flame of fire" (19:12). That is penetrating eyes.
484. **Discuss Jesus' many crowns.** He deserves these crowns, as He is "far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age, but in that which is to come. And (the Father) put all things under His feet and gave Him to be head over all things to the church" (Ephesians 1:21-22). This latter expression means that Christ has been given all this power and authority on behalf of the church.
485. **Discuss a name written, "that no one knew except Himself" (19:12).** We rightly draw the conclusion that this indicates there is a very deep personal relationship between the Father and the Son. The Lord Himself made such very clear while on earth: "no one knows who the Son is, but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son" (Luke 10:22). From this we conclude that the Savior has a special name that only He and the Father know.
486. **Describe the robe of the One on the white horse.** It was a robe dipped in blood (19:13). This is a clear symbol of the "clothes" of our King, which show the effect of the shedding of His blood (I Peter 1:18-19).
487. **By what name was the One on the white horse called?** He was called, "the Word of God" (19:13). See John 1:1-3,14; I John 1:1.
488. **Describe the army of the One on the white horse. His army was "clothed in fine linen, white and clean" and they "followed Him on white horses" (19:14).** This illustrates the fact that Christ's disciples are those who imitate Him and are like Him in their life and habits (cf., I Peter 2:21-22). The Christian knows that "by the grace" he has "been saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8-9). He also knows that no one can be saved by

keeping the good works of the law; for “by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight” (Romans 3:20), **and** salvation is “not by works of righteousness which we have done” (Titus 3:5). Such is impossible! The Lord’s death on the cross was God’s own sacrifice for the whole human family, even as John the Baptizer affirmed of Jesus, “Behold! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The beloved disciple many years later echoed that affirmation, saying of the Savior, “And He Himself is the propitiation (atonement) for our sins, and not for ours only but for the whole world” (I John 2:2). The Hebrew writer, also testified, “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death ... that He by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone” (Hebrews 2:9). The true disciple realizes there is no way that anyone can earn or merit salvation, for the Lord affirmed, “likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, we are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do” (Luke 17:10).

Since Jesus freely tasted death for everyone, why is everyone not saved? Because salvation comes by grace, but not by grace alone for it is “through faith” (Ephesians 2:8). God has tendered His gift of love, for “the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:23); but that gift must be accepted, by faith – obedient faith. This we affirm because the Holy Spirit Himself testified that eternal salvation comes through our learning to imitate Jesus’ life of obedience, even as it is written, “though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things, which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Hebrews 5:8-9).

A person is justified by faith when that faith moves him or her to do the Father’s will, that is, obey the commandments of Jesus for He said, “if you love me keep my commandments” (John 14:15). Again He affirmed, “He who has my commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves me” (John 14:21). Clergymen of the denominational world find Jesus’ statement, “he who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:16) **very** offensive. They find this commandment to believe **and** be baptized, so burdensome that they not only refuse to teach it, but oppose it. In their human wisdom they affirm, “he who believes and is **not** baptized will be saved.” Yet, the Spirit said, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His (Jesus’) commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome” (I John 5:3).

Christendom’s clerics are like the religious leaders (scribes and Pharisees) in the time of our Lord’s sojourn on earth. He said, “They are blind leaders of the blind, and if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into the ditch” (Matthew 15:14; cf., II Thessalonians 1:6-9). Catholic clergymen teach that good works and meritorious rituals procure salvation, while on the opposite end of the theological spectrum Protestant preachers claim salvation by “faith alone.” Both greatly err not knowing the word of God. Salvation is **not** granted because of good works **or** by faith alone, but one must accept God’s “gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus” (Romans 6:23b) by “**faith working through love**” (Galatians 5:6).

John 3:16, tells us, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” Note what the inspired writer said, the gift of God’s Son was so great that the believer “**should not perish.**” He “should not perish,” because the believing sinner is in the position to accept that wonderful gift of grace. He has “the right to become” a child of God (John 1:12). All who are saved are those who accept the gift of grace on God’s terms. We must

accept salvation, because it is “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5). In other words, through the new birth of water and the Spirit (John 3:5). Faith alone is not worth the snap of one’s fingers.

For salvation is not by faith only or any other man-made schemes such as the so-called “sinners prayer,” but on ***God’s terms in God’s way***. The Master Himself said, “not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21). In order to be saved, we must submit to the simple, non-ambiguous words of Jesus in His commission for the whole world. He said, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned: (Mark 16:16).

Years ago I read of a train wreck in New York City in the 19th century where the engineer was trapped under the wreckage of his engine. When someone came to help him he said, look at the paper in my shirt pocket, “it will show I was given the wrong orders.” There are untold millions going into eternity without God (cf., II John 9-11) because they are following the wrong orders given to them by their “pastors.”

489. **Tell what two weapons the One on the white horse wields and how they are used.**

(1) It is written, “out of His mouth goes a sharp sword that with it He should strike the nations” (19:15). This is “the word of the God, (which is) living and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword” (Hebrews. 4:12). The prophet Isaiah had foretold that the Messiah would, “strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked” (Isaiah 11:4). This he said in describing the gospel of the Jesus, about which he had written earlier, “out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:3). This latter statement was a prophecy of the gospel going out of Jerusalem or Zion on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). The words in our text are clearly speaking of the same message, which is the offensive weapon of God’s people. It is “the sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17), which we are to take and use.

A most important fact to remember is that the gospel has been committed to “earthen vessels” (II Corinthians. 4:7). The Lord God did not commit it to angels, but to those who are His disciples even unto the end of the world (Matthew 28:18-20). An angel appeared to Cornelius, but the angel told him to send for a gospel preacher, “who will tell you words (the gospel) by which you and your household will be saved” (Acts 11:14). Jesus strikes the earth with “the rod of His mouth” and He slays the wicked with “the breath of His lips.” These are figures of speech to describe the gospel, which came out of His mouth as a rod of strength and as a “sharp sword.”

We must realize that Jesus Christ strikes the earth with the rod of His mouth when gospel preachers proclaim His word faithfully. The apostle Peter confirms this, for He wrote; “Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you” (I Peter 1:25). Jesus has provided no other way for the sword of His mouth to reach the hearts of men and women except by the proclamation of the gospel by faithful disciples. Knowing this, why are churches, evangelists and elders so dilatory in obeying Two Timothy Two Two? Tracts and Bible Correspondence courses are good tools, but there must be soldiers in the trenches to occupy and hold a land for the Master. The Apostle Paul asked, “How shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans 10:14). Where, O where is the missionary zeal of the churches?

(2) The second weapon wielded by the one on the white horse is “a rod of iron” (19:15). It is significant that the text says with emphasis, “He *Himself*, will rule them (the nations) with a rod of iron” (19:15). There is no opportunity for Christians to suppose that they will crack the heads of the nations with a rod of iron. The apostle to the Gentiles told the saints in Corinth more than thirty years before the Revelation was written, “the weapons of our warfare are not carnal” (II Corinthians. 10:4). It is Jesus’ prerogative at the right hand of God’s throne, the right hand of power, to wield the rod of vengeance. For it is written, “vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord” (Romans 12:19).

God authorizes the state to punish evildoers. He uses governments made up of unregenerate men as His servants on behalf of Christians to bear the sword as “an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil” (Romans 13:3-4). Isaiah makes it clear that God uses wicked rulers to punish evil men and nations (Isaiah 10:5-11; cf., II Chronicles 36:17; Jeremiah 25:9). As we read earlier, God informed Nebuchadnezzar of His power “in order that the living (might) know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men” (Daniel 4:17). And the very first chapter of the Revelation informs all men everywhere that, Jesus Christ is “the ruler over the kings of the earth” (1:5). He has the power and authority to use a “rod of iron” upon them.

With the close of the apostolic age (c. 98) miraculous or supernatural gifts ended (See question 498). But God through the Son of His right hand is very active in world affairs in order to bring men to the point of seeking Him, so that they may hear the gospel. The Lord Jesus himself said, “For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (Matthew 7: 8). As noted at the beginning the Revelation more than any book in the Bible pulls back the spiritual veil to show the powerful role that the Father and the Lamb play in everyday life on this planet.

490. **What two titles were written on the robe and thigh of the One on the white horse?** He has a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords (19:16).
491. **Tell why the angel standing in the sun called for all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven to come together, and discuss the meaning of this symbol.** He called them together to the supper of God to eat the flesh of kings, of captains, other men and of beasts (19:17-18). This is a symbol like the one Jesus used in reference to the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:28). The analogy is taken from the fact that birds of prey would come to eat the literal bodies of dead men when a city was destroyed. Jesus was referring to the fact that charlatans, false prophets, conmen and others would prey upon the Jews when their city would be destroyed in 70 AD (See Matthew 24:11, 23-24). In the text under discussion the Lord means the masses of the Roman Empire would be preyed upon, because of the fears that would arise with the fall of the beast-like government and the exposé of the ungodly religion. Many because of these fears would open their hearts to the gospel.
492. **Who came together to make war on the One on the white horse and His army?** (1) The beast (19:19), that is, the government of the Empire, which for thirty years had been a monster set against morality, godliness and the righteousness of God. This was particularly true during the last decade of the first century. (2) The false prophet (19:20). (See question 494 for explanation) (3) The kings of the earth and their armies (19:19). These were the client kings and petty rulers around the Mediterranean that joined with the corrupt government in its policy of destroying faith in God and harassment of God’s people.

493. **What was the outcome of the battle of Armageddon?** This text (19:20) gives the outcome of the battle, which was first spoken of in 16:16. This particular spiritual war raged between God and the forces of Satan over a period of three and one half years (See 11:3; 13:5; 15:8; 16:1-11). The outcome of the battle was that the beast-like government was captured and the false prophet with him. The date that marked the downfall of the beast-like government was January 25, 98. For it was on that date a strong army man, Trajan, was raised up over the Empire.
494. **Who was the false prophet spoken of in chapter 19?** The false prophet is another symbol of the pagan religions or cults of the Empire; the major actor in that group was the chief priest of the sect of Capitoline Jupiter. The false prophet was first described as the second beast in 13:11. There he was pictured as a lamb with two horns that spoke like a dragon. Jesus in Matthew 7:15 reminded His disciples that false prophets wear "sheep's clothing," which is also a symbol of the "smooth words and flattering speech" of false teachers (See Romans 16:18).
495. **What happened to the beast and the false prophet?** The two of them were cast into the lake of fire. The capture of these two took place at the end of the apostolic age, thus the casting of them into the lake of fire is a description of their being cast down to flames of torment (Greek – *tartarus*, II Peter 2:4) in hades (Luke 16:23-24; cf., Matthew 11:23). This casting of the beast and false prophet (actually those who made up those two) into "the lake of fire" at the end of the apostolic age was like Sodom and Gomorrah going down to hades at the time of their destruction (Genesis 19:24). Those two cities were "set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude 7).
496. **What happened to "the rest" of those who had served with the beast and false prophet?** "And the rest of them were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse" (19:21). Here is a verse that is most powerful in revealing how the book of Revelation is to be explained. This shows that the battle of Armageddon was a spiritual war. This sword is the word of God out of Jesus' mouth, which is a symbol of the gospel being preached by His servants. The "rest" refers to the kings and their armies (kinglets, petty rulers, clients, hangers on and their followers) that supported the beast-like policy of the Roman government. Their being killed by the sword means their conversion to Christ and/or their being put in a position of not being antagonistic to the gospel. This is the cleaning up operations that took place in the years following the fall of the beast-like government on January 25, 98.

CHAPTER TWENTY

497. **What is the very first thing seen in Revelation 20?** John said, “I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand” (20:1).
498. **Discuss the symbolism of the key and the chain held by the angel in 20:1.** As we have noted previously, Revelation chapters 5 through 11 covers the period of time from Pentecost to the close of the apostolic age. Chapters 12 – 19 covers essentially the same period starting with a time just prior to the birth of Christ down to the end of the same age. Chapter 20 covers the period of time from the close of the apostolic age until the second coming of Christ and the final judgment. The key and the chain are symbols of the gospel completely revealed at the time of the apostle John’s death (c. 98 AD). The sounding of the seventh trumpet in chapter 11 signaled that the time for the close of the mystery of God (the gospel) had come. It was about forty years prior to the sounding of that trumpet that Paul wrote to the saints at Ephesus concerning the mystery of God. He said, “by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote before in a few words), by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ” (Ephesians 3:3-4).

In his letter to the church at Corinth the same apostle about 57 AD had written, “*love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease, whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect (complete) has come, then that which is in part will be done away*” (I Corinthians 13:8-10). With the closing of the mystery of God, “that which is perfect” had come. The “perfect” gift had come in place of the partial gifts, which had been necessary in the early childhood age of the church (I Corinthians 13:11) and for that reason had been dispersed among the early Christians “through the ‘apostles’ hands” (Acts 8:18; cf., 19:6). Those temporary supernatural gifts had been necessary while the gospel was being written down, but with the death of the last apostle (c. 98 AD) and the sounding of the seventh trumpet by the seventh angel (11:15) “vision and prophecy” as foretold by Daniel (9:24) had been sealed. “The mystery of God (was) finished as He had declared to His servants the prophets” (10:7). The gospel at the close of the apostolic age was the fully revealed universal standard of morals, ethics, right conduct and true spiritual life for the whole earth, therefore Satan could no longer hold sway over the Gentiles as he had prior to that time. Thus he was bound *in that manner*.

499. **Of whom is the dragon a symbol?** The text (20:2) tells us plainly that he is “the devil and Satan,” “the serpent of old,” who disguised himself as a snake and deceived our mother Eve (Genesis 3:1-7). Often doctors of divinity and other theologians who teach in theological seminaries, divinity and graduate schools profess to be Christians, but they show themselves to be infidels when it comes to believing what is written. For example, many are fond of denying the historical nature of the first eleven chapters of Genesis. One of their ploys to undermined the faith of the young people who sit at their feet is to say something on this order, “Adam and Eve may have been historical people; we just do not know.” Such is a calculated ploy to create doubt and skepticism. Paul did not confess to any such ignorance about the old devil, who took the form of a snake in the garden. That apostle affirmed to the saints in Corinth, “But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (II Corinthians 11:3). Such seminaries ought to be called

cemeteries, because the cynicism of the professors buries the faith of the youth, who come before them year by year.

500. **Discuss the binding of Satan.** We must note the exact way John said that Satan was bound for we know he is not bound in a literal or complete sense. This we know because Peter wrote, “the devil walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour” (I Peter 5:8). The text before us (20:3) says, “so that he should deceive the nations no more.” The word “nations” is the Greek, *ethnos*, and it has reference to the various and sundry tribes (ethnic groups) of Gentiles all over the planet at the close of the apostolic age. With the gospel completely revealed Satan’s supremacy over “all peoples, nations and languages” (See Daniel 7:14) was no longer unchecked. This curtailing of Satan’s complete dominance of the “nations” is symbolized as his being bound throughout the 1000 years.
501. **What does the 1000 years symbolize?** Just as other figures in this text, 20:1-4, (the key, the chain, the dragon and the thrones) are symbols so also is the one thousand years. It is a symbol of the period of time from the close of the apostolic age when the gospel was completed until a very short period just prior to the second coming of Jesus.
502. **What was to happen at the end of the 1000-year reign?** The text (20:3) says Satan “must be released for a little while.” This tells us that for a very brief season just before the end of all things the old serpent will again have sway over the Gentile nations as he did prior to the worldwide proclamation of the gospel.
503. **Discuss "they sat" and them (thrones) judgment was committed to them" (20:4).** We have already observed that Christians at the time of being raised out of the waters of baptism (cf., Colossians 2:12) are raised up to “sit together” in conjunction with Christ in the spiritual realm known as “the heavenly places” (Ephesians 2:5-6). Thus in the scene before him John sees a vision of “thrones and they that sat upon them” (20:4). Those whom John saw were new believers who were made to sit with Christ in that spiritual realm in the second and following centuries and with Him “wrestle against ... spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12). This they did (and do) by dispensing His law (Romans 8:2; Galatians 6:2) through the preaching of the gospel (I Peter 1:25; Mark 16:15-16), by which God rebukes the nations (Isaiah 2:3-4). It is by this means that those who are seated with Christ judge, because the gospel dispensed by them is that standard of God that determines where all will spend eternity.

The thrones are symbolic of the myriads of disciples dispensing “the law of Christ” (cf., Galatians 6:2) during the period of time from the close of the apostolic age until Christ’s second coming. It is the standard by which all are judged (John 12:48, cf., Hebrews 9:27; Acts 17:30-31). In this light, notice how Jesus used “thrones” and “the twelve tribes of Israel” (Luke 22:30; cf., Galatians 6:16) as symbols of the authority of the apostles through their doctrine (Acts 2:42) over the church. Note particularly where Paul refers to this (apostolic) authority in very strong terms to the Corinthians. He stated, “therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction” (II Corinthians 13:10). The thrones of the twelve apostles (See Luke 22:30) are not literal and neither are the thrones in this vision (20:4). Yet, if the pre-millennial view is true, that the one thousand years in Revelation 20:1-7 must be literal, then they must expect that there will be hundreds of millions of literal thrones all over the planet. That would be like all chiefs and no Indians. What nonsense!

504. **Name the three groups listed who lived and reigned with Christ during the 1000 years.** (1) Those who had been beheaded for Christ's sake. (2) Those who had not worshipped the beast or his image. (3) And those who had not received his mark on their forehead or in their hands (20:4).
505. **Discuss "they lived" (20:4).** This is a vision and it tells us that the saints (symbolized by their souls or lives), who suffered under the beast-like government from 64-98 AD were raised up in a figure in the lives of the new servants of Christ in the second and following centuries. The scriptures give us a like example in the raising up of Elijah in the life and work of John the Baptist. The prophet Malachi foretold that God would "send you (the Jews) Elijah" (Malachi 3:1; 4:5), and they believed Elijah was to be raised literally (Matthew 17:10-13), but the Lord informed them that John the Baptist was Elijah who was to come (Matthew 11:14) for he came "in the spirit and the power of Elijah" (Luke 1:17). Just so the zealous saints raised to sit with Christ in the second and following centuries were raised up in the spirit and power of those who had lived, suffered and died under the beast. Through their faithfulness they had upheld the gospel of Jesus in the face of dungeon, fire and sword and thereby made provisions for their spiritual posterity.
506. **Discuss "they reigned" (20:4).** This speaks of those same "souls", who lived (and live) with Christ in the period following the apostolic age in the lives of those raised up in their stead. As we have noted (See question 158 on 5:10), Christians "reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17), for from the time we are raised from the watery grave of baptism we are "made (to) sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:5-6). In that spiritual realm He exercises His power and authority (Ephesians 1:18-23), and we reign with Him by dispensing His universal standard of rules, laws and ordinances by which all men will be judged (John 12:48; II Corinthians. 5:10; I Peter 1:25). As noted earlier, the reign of Christians throughout this present age is like the reign of Jeremiah (1:10) over the nations of his time.
507. **What is meant by "the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years was finished?"** All die spiritually at the time of their "youth" (Genesis 8:21) when they begin to obey sin (James 1:15; Romans 3:23). While on earth, Jesus Himself made reference to such dead ones for He said, "most assuredly, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live" (John 5:25). The text (20:5) has reference to those who refuse to accept the message of salvation during their lifetime, so that they remain "dead in trespasses and sin" (Ephesians 2:1,5) until the second coming of Jesus. At that time "every eye will see Him, and they also who pierced Him" (1:7). In other words unbelievers will "awake" just in time to "appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (II Corinthians 5:10), and to learn that their names are not written in the Lamb's book of life and their eternal destiny is "the lake of fire" (20:15)
508. **What is the first resurrection (20:5)?** The first resurrection is when a sinner is raised from spiritual death. Our Lord spoke of two resurrections in John chapter five. In the verse quoted above (John 5:25; question 507) He spoke of a spiritual resurrection, then in the same context He spoke of another resurrection. As it is written, "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth – those who have done good to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28-29). This latter raising of the dead we recognize as the final resurrection at the last day just as the early disciples did.

For example Martha, the sister of Mary, said at the tomb of her brother, “I know he will rise again at the resurrection at the last day” (John 11:24).

The first resurrection for any person is his resurrection from the spiritual death of trespasses and sins when he believes and obeys the gospel (Hebrews 5:8-9; Mark 16:15-16). The apostle Paul by the Spirit told the saints at Ephesus, “God ... made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:5-6). The sinner’s resurrection takes place after he has repented and been “baptized into (Jesus’) death” (Romans 6:3). It was in His death that Jesus shed His blood (John 19:33-34). Thus, being “reconciled to God through the death of His Son,” (Romans 5:10) the individual is raised out of the waters of baptism to “walk in newness of life.” For it is written, “buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him...” (Colossians 2:12-13). The Christians in Rome were told, “therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). In the text (20:5) the picture is of individuals being raised up in generations succeeding the apostolic age by means of the gospel instead of, or in place of, those who had suffered under the beast.

509. **What three blessings were announced for those who have part in the first resurrection?** (1) Over such the second death has no power. This means that those who keep on walking in the newness of life conveyed in the first resurrection – that is, they keep walking in the light (I John 1:7) - have no reason to fear the lake of fire, which is the second death (21:8). (2) They are priests of God and Christ (cf., 5:10). This is a confirmation of what had been written earlier by the apostle Peter for he spoke of Christians as a “holy” and as “ a royal priesthood” (I Peter 2:5, 9). (3) They (multiples of them) reign with Him (Christ) throughout the gospel age (symbolized as a thousand years). This means that those who were raised up from the end of the apostolic age by means of the gospel in the second and following centuries were to reign with Christ as all Christians do (Romans 5:17; cf., Jeremiah 1:10).
510. **When Satan is released from his prison after the 1000 years what will he do (20:7-8)?** (1) Satan’s binding was the restraint of his power over the nations of the earth, which resulted from the spread of the gospel during the apostolic age and its continual proclamation by those raised up in succeeding centuries. (2) Near the end of time he will again have brief control over the nations as he did before the completed gospel was spread abroad in the apostolic age. (3) He will, through deceit, seek to destroy “the kingdom of Christ and God” (Ephesians 5:5) by using the nations of unbelievers. In other words, Satan with a passion hates the church of Christ, which is Jesus’ kingdom on planet earth, and he will, near the end of time, seek to finally remove every last vestige of it from this realm below.

At this point someone may suggest that such control of the nations would be a sign of the end, but that will not be the case. We know that our Lord in contrast to the signs he gave for the pending destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:3-34; Luke 21: 20) stated that no one would know the time of His second coming (Matthew 24:36), because no sign would be given. Someone may ask, how could Satan regain such control and it not indicate the time for the consummation of all things?

The answer to that is found in the words of our Lord, “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be” (Matthew 24:37-39). In other words the brief time in which Satan will have regained his authority over the nations will be so ordinary in the worldly affairs that humanity will not perceive of the impending destruction from heaven. The apostle Paul made this very point, “for you know perfectly well that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they say peace and safety! Then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape” (I Thessalonians. 5:2-3).

511. **Whom do Gog and Magog symbolize (20:8)?** They symbolize the Gentiles (unbelievers) that Satan will deceive into making a final assault on the church of Christ in order to eradicate it from the earth. The church is spoken of here, “as the camp of the saints and the beloved city” (20:9). The names Gog and Magog come from Gentile nations named in Ezekiel 38:2-3; cf., Genesis 10:2. To repeat, they are symbols. The vision is no more speaking of literal Gog and Magog than the name Jezebel in Revelation 2:20 is speaking of the literal woman who bore that name. Josephus in his comments on Genesis 10:2 says, Magog was a grandson of Noah by Japheth and from him came those who were called Magogites, but who were called Scythians (cf., Colossians 3:11) by the Greeks (Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book I, vi, I).
512. **Tell what happened when Satan and his army surrounded the camp of God's people and tell what it signifies?** (1) “Fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them” (20:9). This is a symbol of the final destruction of the world by fire just as Peter foretold. “But the heavens and the earth which now exist are kept in store by the same word, reserved for the fire until the day of judgment and the perdition of ungodly men” (II Peter 3:7). “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up” (II Peter 3:10). (2) Satan is described as “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who works in the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2). As we noted previously, such a statement helps us realize that Satan’s power is confined to the realm of the atmosphere where man is able to breathe. Revelation 20:9 is telling us that the works of Satan, which are so bound up with this earth, will be destroyed along with all the works of men’s hands.
513. **What happened to the devil?** He “was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are” (20:10). Here we perceive that the fire of torment in Hades (Luke 16:23-24; Jude 7) is just a precursor of *Gehenna*, that is, the final place of punishment called hell, which our Lord personally described: “do not fear those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy body and soul in hell” (Matthew 10:28).
514. **How long is the torment of Satan, the beast and the false prophet to last?** “They will be tormented day and night forever and ever” (20:10). In the judgment scene in Matthew 25 Jesus said, the Son of Man will say to those on the left, “depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41). Again He said, “these shall go away into every lasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” (Matthew 25:46).

515. **Where in the scriptures do we read of the great white throne judgment?** It is in Revelation 20:11-15. This is the picture in the Revelation of the final judgment, of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 25:31-46.
516. **How shall we identify the One on the great white throne?** It is “the Son of Man (Jesus Christ of Nazareth) ... in all His glory” (Matthew. 25:31). The Revelation pictures the heaven and earth fleeing from His face (20:11).
517. **What does earth and heaven fleeing symbolize?** This is a symbol of the physical heavens and earth being taken away at the second coming of Christ (20:11). The Spirit had said before, “the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up” (II Peter 3:10).
518. **Whom did John see standing before the great white throne?** John said, “I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God” (20:12). “Great” world leaders who have lived on the world’s stage throughout history will stand before Jesus for judgment. For it is written, “the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son” (John 5:22). Again the Spirit testified by the apostle Paul, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (II Corinthians. 5:10). Men like Mahatma Gandhi, Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great, Muhammad, Napoleon, Churchill, John F. Kennedy and other men of renown will, along with all other mortals, give an account to Jesus. As it is written again, “God ... commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead” (Acts 17:30-31). In this present time Jesus is the Savior as He said, “come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28), but on the morning of the resurrection he will be the judge. At that time it will be too late to change, for the way death finds a person so will his judgment be. Just as the angel of God reminded John in the last chapter of this great book: “he who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let his be filthy still; he who is righteous let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still” (22:11). In light of these things it is imperative that all deny “ungodly and worldly lusts, (and) live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age” (Titus 2:12). For, “it is appointed for men to die once but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27).
519. **Identify the books, which were opened (20:12).** These are the books of the Bible. Those who lived under the law of Moses will be judged by that law (cf., Romans 2:12-16). The books of the New Testament will judge those who have lived in the gospel age. Jesus said, “he who rejects me, and does not receive my words, has that which judges him - the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day” (John 12:48).
520. **How were the dead judged?** “The dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books” (20:12). In this life the kind of fruit a person bears reveals his or her real character (Matthew 3:10; 7:16-20). At the judgment bar of Christ the kind of fruit an individual has borne in this life in relation to the word will determine his or her eternal reward. While on this earth our King affirmed, “for the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then he will reward each one according to his works” (Matthew 16:27).

521. **What does, “the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and death and hades delivered up the dead who were in them,” mean? (20:13).** It is a figure of speech that indicates that all who have died in whatever place on the planet will appear at the judgment bar of Jesus Christ. People are curious as to the kind of body individuals will have after the resurrection and at judgment. Paul makes it clear in I Corinthians 15:35-38 by the use of planted seed, “perhaps wheat or some other grain,” that the body planted is not the body expected. In fact the seed that is buried does not compare with the new body gained. He wrote, “God gives it a body as He pleases” (I Corinthians 15:38). In his second letter to the same congregation the apostle said, even “if our earthly house (our physical body) is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands...” (II Corinthians 5:1). He also pointed out that “we shall not be found naked,” that is, we will not be disembodied spirits, because we will be “clothed” with the “house”(our new body) from heaven (II Corinthians 5:3-4). We are plainly told by the Spirit through John “it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He (Christ) is revealed, we shall be like Him...” (I John 3:2). In other words, it matters not if the physical body is devoured by fire, fish, vultures or vermin, the spirit will receive a new body at the resurrection in time for judgment.
522. **What is to become of death and hades?** They will be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death (20:14). This is symbolic language that conveys the fact that all such frightening spheres that have been necessary appendages to the physical world will be sent where the things of dread and fear are.
523. **Discuss the other book opened at the judgment.** It is the Lamb’s book of life (20:14). This is symbolic of the record in the mind of God of those who are saved. We read of this book first in the scriptures penned by Moses. In writing of his prayer for Israel to be spared, he said, “Yet now if you will, forgive their sin – but if not, I pray, blot me out of your book which you have written. And the Lord said to Moses, whoever sins against me, I will blot him out of my book” (Exodus 32:32-33). In light of these words by the great lawgiver of Israel it is astonishing that men fall for the foolish doctrine of John Calvin who affirmed that once a person is saved no matter how much sin he commits against God, he cannot be blotted out of the Lamb’s book of life.
524. **What happened to those not found written in the Lamb's book of life?** “Anyone not found written in the Lamb’s book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (20:15).

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

525. **What was the first thing John said he saw in Revelation 21?** He affirmed, “I saw a new heaven and a new earth” (21:1)
526. **What do the new heaven and new earth symbolize?** They symbolize the eternal home of God’s redeemed ones. Our Savior called it the Father’s house, for He said, “In my Father’s house are many mansions (dwelling places); if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2). Christians commonly speak of this eternal home as “heaven” and rightly so, for when Christ went to prepare the place for them He did not go to a place made with hands, “but into heaven itself” (Hebrews 9:24). Paul called it, “His (the Lord’s) eternal kingdom” (II Timothy 4:18). Jesus also spoke of this eternal domicile for saints as “the kingdom prepared for (them) from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:34). It is not to be confused with the kingdom of Christ founded on Pentecost, for our eternal home will be seen and received after death, resurrection and judgment, but the early disciples saw Jesus’ own kingdom before they tasted death (Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27; cf., Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:9). The prophet Isaiah was the first to speak of the new heavens and a new earth. In fact, he made it clear that the old physical earth with its earthly system of things would not even be remembered in the new dwelling place for God’s people (Isaiah 65:17; cf., 66:22; cf., II Peter 3:13).
527. **Discuss the symbol of the passing away of the first heaven and earth.** This is a symbol of the complete destruction of the physical heavens and earth in a great conflagration at the last day (See II Peter 3:10-13 and question 517).
528. **After seeing a new heaven and a new earth, what did John see coming down out of heaven from God?** He saw “the holy city, New Jerusalem ... prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (21:2). The figures used for New Jerusalem are interesting for sometimes it is pictured as a city (21:23) and at other times as a bride (19:7-9). This is comparable to the way we speak of a school; e.g., if people of a poor community organize a school and their children meet under a shade tree they speak of the cluster of children as our school. Later when the children are housed in a proper building the term school is applied to the building. Thus the bride of Christ (the body of God’s people - cf., II Corinthians. 11:2) is also pictured as a city where His redeemed ones dwell. It is the eternal home for which Abraham longed, “for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Hebrews 11:10).
529. **According to the loud voice from heaven, what was to be true when the tabernacle of God came to be among men?** The voice affirmed, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God” (21:3). Note the emphatic “God Himself” will be with them, then compare it to the statement in II Corinthians 6:16. In the latter text God says, “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God and they shall be My people.” In that scripture God spoke of dwelling in His people by faith through His word, while in the Revelation text God *Himself* is to actually be among His saints. The description of the joys found in 21:4 make it clear that this text is speaking of God’s personal and actual comfort of His people in heaven itself.

530. **Describe the joy and pleasure of living with God in the new heaven and new earth.** It is written, “And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away” (21:4). When this verse is compared to 7:17, although they have some similarity, it becomes obvious that the former is about the comfort Jesus gives in this life and the latter has reference to joys and comforts in heaven itself. While 7:17 says God will wipe away every tear it does not say that there will be no more death, nor sorrow, nor pain as 21:4 does.
531. **What did the One on the throne declare in relation to the new heaven and earth?** He said, “behold I make all things new” (21:5). It is an amazing thing that the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society proclaims that the earth is simply going to be renovated, not destroyed. God said, “I make all things new.” It will not be just a remodeled version of this old planet.
532. **The One on the throne will give the water of life freely to whom?** He said, “I will give the water of life freely to him who thirsts” (21:6). This agrees with the words of our Master who said, “Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest” (Matthew. 11:28). What a sham the doctrine called Calvinism is, for it declares that Christ died only for “the elect” and that only they can come to Him. Calvin’s foolish doctrine makes our Lord’s words appear as a cruel joke to the masses of humanity. No one outside of Christ is an elect one; the elect are in the Son. Sinners who respond to Jesus’ invitation are lost, but when they obey the gospel they are elected and chosen in Him. God before the world made the decision that all in His Son would be chosen ones or the elect (Ephesians 1:4-7). Anyone who desires may become elect by obeying Him (See Hebrews 5:8,9; Galatians 3:26,27; Mark 16:15,16; Revelation 22:17). The world over, people understand that in order for a person to be elected to a national or state assembly he or she must qualify as a candidate and then be chosen by the electorate. Then and only then is he or she among the “elect” for such a body. Since Calvin was the religious dictator behind the ruling class in Geneva, he apparently had little understanding of what elect meant. His idea was that it was an arbitrary selection by a tyrant god, which he created in his own mind. As others have noted, Calvin’s god of predestination was like a blind man at midnight in the basement, with the lights out, arbitrarily sorting out black and white marbles.
533. **What was promised to the one who overcomes?** It is written, “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be His God and he shall be my son” (21:7). This is a continuing theme of the Revelation – overcome.
534. **List eight impenitent groups to be cast into the lake of fire and define their sin (21:8).**

(1) The cowardly – Those who are afraid to serve Christ. There were rulers in the Jewish Sanhedrin at the time of Christ who showed a yellow streak when it came to publicly acknowledging Him as the Christ. The record says, “Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed on Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue” (John 12:42). How sad it is that today’s clergy tell millions that all you have to do is believe in order to be saved. Those rulers of the Jews believed but were not saved (cf., Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10).

(2) The unbelieving – The jailer was told, “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will

be saved” (Acts 16:31). Salvation is not by faith alone (James 2:24), but no one can be saved without faith (Hebrews. 11:6) as the jailer learned by hearing the word (Acts 16:32; Romans 10:17). Jesus affirmed, “I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He you will die in your sins” (John 8:24).

(3) Abominable – The Old Testament was written for our learning (Romans 15:4) and the sacred historian at the time of Josiah recorded a list of things that God called abominations, “mediums and spiritualists, the household gods and idols, all abominations...” (II Kings 23:24). Again Moses described things that were abominable to God. He wrote, “you shall not learn to follow the abominations ... one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritualist or one who calls up the dead” (Deuteronomy 18:9-11). Again he wrote, “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination” (Leviticus 18: 22).

(4) Murderers – Are those who take innocent life willfully. John tells us “you know that no murderer has eternal life dwelling in him” (I John 3:15). A great tragedy in our time is that some people claim the state’s execution of one, who is guilty of premeditated murder, is itself murder. It is a lie, for God has authorized the state to use the sword to punish murderers and such like. Even as it is written, “for he (the state authority) does not bear the sword in vain: for he is God’s minister, an avenger to *execute* wrath on him who practices evil” (Romans 13:4). The apostle Paul showed the Christian’s attitude about the government having the authority to execute wrath on evildoers when he said, “If I ... have committed anything worthy of death, I do not object to dying” (Acts 25:11). As King Solomon wrote, “six things God hates (including)...hands that shed innocent blood” (Proverbs 6:17).

(5) Fornicators – Those who are guilty of illicit sexual intercourse. The Holy Spirit made it very clear as to what is acceptable in this matter and what is not, when He testified that “marriage is honorable among all (people) and the bed (of marriage) undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4). Fornication not only includes unlawful sexual relations between men and women, but between two of the same gender. Concerning certain Gentiles it is written, “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for that which is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman burned in their lusts for one another, men with men committing what is shameful...” (Romans 1:26-27). The law clearly defined what homosexuality is when God said to the men of Israel, “you shall not lie with a male as with a woman” (Leviticus. 18:22). He also declared that mating with a beast is an abomination to Him saying, you shall not “mate with any beast, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any women stand before a beast to mate with it. It is perversion” (Leviticus. 18:23).

(6) Sorcerers – Those who practice witchcraft, black magic, tarot, séances, psychic readings, astrology and such like (Deuteronomy 18:10-11; Isaiah 44:24-25; 47:13).

(7) Idolaters – Those who bow down to images, whether they do so as though it is a god or as a representation of the true God, or a spirit or an angel. God defined idolatry when He said to Israel, “you shall not make for yourselves any carved image (idols), or any likeness (icons) of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them” (Exodus 20:4-5). It is wickedness to venerate and bow down to idols, images and icons (pictures) of “saints” or so called images or pictures of Jesus.

Another form of idolatry is covetousness or greed (Colossians 3:5). The Holy Spirit has commanded, “you shall not covet” (Romans 13:9). The present day world is swamped in such. For example, greed or covetousness is the taproot of gambling. Men’s devices, whether schemes, machines, or games to take other men’s possessions are rooted and grounded in the inordinate desire known as covetousness. Roulette, blackjack, poker, dice, slot machines, the lottery, betting on horse races and other sports events, etc., are fueled by this cancer of the soul known as covetousness. Men are so obsessed by the lust to have the possessions of others that they will risk their money and their homes in order to take away another’s goods without work or value in return. Such is idolatry. The man who stands before a “one armed bandit,” that is, a slot machine, and sacrifices dollars to it is like the person who lays his goods before a dumb idol of stone, clay or wood. Both are performing the act because they believe the object of their devotion will aid them materially. When states or nations alter their God given obligations of collecting taxes, promoting the general welfare and punishing evildoers (Romans 13:1-7) and turn to promoting greed, e.g., the lottery, casinos, etc., among their citizens, it is an abomination. Governors and legislators who do such are guilty of sin.

Covetousness or greed in other forms dominates the lives of many that would never bow before an idol or gamble a dollar, but their very lives are ruled by making money and collecting material wealth. They are money mad, but the Lord Himself testified, “no one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). Mammon is an Aramaic word for wealth (Vine, p. 704). No one can make wealth his god and please Christ. Well did the Spirit testify of such, “for this you know, that no ... covetous man, who is an idolater has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God” (Ephesians 5:5).

(8) All liars – not just those who tell “big” lies, but all including those who tell so-called little “white” lies. God said through the Psalmist, “He who works deceit shall not dwell within my house. He who tells lies shall not continue in my presence” (Psalm 101:7). As the Proverbs tell us, “these six things the Lord hates ... (and one of these is) a lying tongue...” (Proverbs 6:17).

535. **Who came and said to John, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife"?**
“One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues” (21:9).

536. **Name the four places the seven angels with the bowls of wrath are named and summarize each.**

(1) Revelation 15:1 – This is the first mention of the seven angels with the seven last plagues to be poured out on the beast-like government.

(2) Revelation 16:1 – A loud voice from the temple spoke to the seven angels saying, “go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.”

(3) Revelation 17:1 – In this text one of the seven angels came and talked with John and said, “come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters.”

(4) Revelation 21:9 – Here John, said one of the seven angels “came to me and talked with me, saying come I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

537. **What did John see as a symbol of the Lamb's wife in 21:10, which he had also seen in verse 2?** “The great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” The fact that John saw the bride, the city, descending out of heaven from God is symbolic of her origin in the mind of God (cf., Ephesians 3:10-11,21).

538. **What did John describe as "like a jasper stone, clear as crystal"?** The light of that great city appeared in this manner because it is the true light, which enlightens the heart or mind. It is “the light of life” (John 8:12).

539. **Describe the gates of the holy city (21:12,13,21).**

(1) From 21:12 we learn that there were twelve gates with an angel stationed at each gate and the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were on the gates. The appearance of angels at such strategic points about the city, which is made up of God’s people, reminds us that angels are “all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation” (Hebrews 1:14). We also remember that Michael the archangel (Jude 9) worked behind the veil, which hides the spiritual realm, to aid Gabriel when God sent the latter in response to Daniel’s prayer to free the children of Israel from Babylonian captivity (Daniel 10: 12-13).

(2) From 21:13 we learn there were three gates on each of the four sides of the city - east, south, north and west.

(3) From 21:21 we learn that each individual gate was one pearl. This is a symbol, which seeks to describe to the human mind the enormous beauty in size and appearance of the heavenly and eternal dwelling place for the people of God.

Note: Many foolish jokes are made about Peter standing before the “pearly gates,” with “the keys,” but the keys committed to Peter (Matthew 16:19), and to all the apostles for that matter (Matthew 18:18), were keys of knowledge or information. That information was “settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89; Mark 13:11; Luke 21:14-15), and delivered to them by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; Acts 2:4). It was the doctrine that was to govern the people of God (Acts 2:42). The apostles first used those keys (information) on Pentecost to open the door of the kingdom of Christ. On that day about 3000 Jews made use of those “keys” in order to become disciples of Jesus (Acts 2:36-41). Peter does not stand before the gates of pearl. In this vision we see angels as the gatekeepers.

540. **Describe the wall of New Jerusalem and its foundations.** The wall itself was said to be “one hundred and forty-four cubits (216 feet or 66 meters), according to the measure of a man, that is of an angel” (21:17) and “the construction of its walls was of jasper” (21:18). It is interesting to note how low the wall of this immense city is in comparison to its length and breadth (See question 542 on 21:16). Yet such would convey the idea that there is no need for a high wall about the eternal city, but is for aesthetic value (beauty). “The wall of the city had twelve foundations and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (21:14). They “were adorned with all kinds of precious stones” (21:19-20). This is physical terminology to impress on the minds of saints the greatness of the spiritual foundation that underlies his soul’s well being even for all eternity. The statement “the measure of a man, that is an angel” (Greek, *aggelos*, messenger or angel, Vine, p. 47) may be in reference to the messengers (1:20) symbolized by the seven stars, who were to deliver copies of the revelation to the churches

- Jesus is the only foundation on which the lives of His people are built (I Corinthians 3:11). Under a different figure He is pictured as the Master stone (cornerstone) for the true alignment of the house (the church) or temple of God with the apostles and prophets built into the foundation. For by the Spirit Paul affirmed to the Gentile Christians in Ephesus, “you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but are fellow citizens with the saints and the household of God, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:19-21). The apostles and prophets in this figure are described as being of the foundation, because they were the collective conduit to give us the word (cf., II Peter 1:20-21, Acts 2:42).
541. **What did the angel have with which to measure the city?** He “had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates and its walls” (21:15). The angel’s measuring rod was to be used to help Christians through visions of physical things get some sense of the enormity of the resplendent glory of their everlasting home. Keep in mind that all the things of heaven are spiritual in substance and nature for “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (I Corinthians 15:50).
542. **Of what is the city made and how large is it?** John said, (1) “The city was pure gold, like clear glass” (21:18). (2) It was laid out four square – for its “length, breadth, and height are equal” – “twelve thousand furlongs” (21:16). That figure equals 1,380 miles or 2,208 kilometers. The angel showed John a city of colossal size in physical terms to help him and all believers to begin, to commence, to start, to attempt to understand the spiritual greatness of our eternal abode.
543. **Describe the street of the heavenly city.** “The street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass” (21:21). On the earth gold bullion is highly prized by men everywhere, but in heaven it is used as pavement for the road.
544. **Why did John say he saw no temple in the city of God?** “For,” said John, “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple” (21:22).
545. **Why did New Jerusalem have no need of the sun or moon?** It is because, “the glory of God illuminates it, and the Lamb is its light” (21:23). See the comment on this light in question 556.
546. **Discuss "the nations of those who are saved."** The Greek word for nations is *ethnos*; from which we get the word ethnic. Jesus just prior to His ascension said to the disciples, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:19). Isaiah had prophesied of a great house of God and said all nations would flow into it (Isaiah 2:2). In Revelation 7:9 John was shown a vision of “nations, tribes, peoples and tongues,” who were to come into that house of God from the time of Pentecost. Thus the expression “the nations of those who are saved” means those individuals from all ethnic groups, who are saved by the blood of Christ.
547. **Who are "the kings of the earth" who bring their glory and honor into New Jerusalem?** As we noted (See questions 18 and 157) from the time of Pentecost Christ’s servants were designated as “kings and priests” who were to reign on earth (5:10). These kings of the earth are faithful dedicated Christians. They are those who have overcome the world (21:24).

548. **What did John say about the days and nights of New Jerusalem?** “The gates shall not be shut at all by day (and) there shall be no night there” (21:25).
549. **What does the glory and honor of the nations being brought into the heavenly city mean (21:26)?** The wise man said, “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34). Thus “the glory and honor of the nations” brought into the holy city means the godliness practiced by the saints from the various and sundry nations (ethnic groups) who enter that heavenly realm.
550. **Contrast those who shall not enter the city with those who will?** (1) “There shall by no means enter into it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, (2) but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (21:27) shall enter.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

551. **What is the first scene in Revelation chapter 22?** John saw “a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb” (22:1). The apostle Paul affirmed that God will grant “eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality” (Romans 2:7). This stream of pure water is a fitting symbol of that eternal life - immortality - that God grants freely (22:17) to His faithful saints who have (21:7), as His Son did (John 16:33), overcome the world.
552. **Describe the tree of life and its purpose.** (1) It is in the middle of heaven’s street (cf., 21:21). (2) It is described as being on either side of the river. (3) It bore twelve fruits, each portion yielding its fruit every month. (4) Its leaves were for the healing of the nations (22:2).
553. **Discuss the glorious proclamation made at the very beginning of Revelation 22:3.** “There shall be no more curse.” From Genesis 3:17 we know that we live on a sin cursed earth - cursed with disease, dying and death (cf., Romans 8:18-21) everywhere. In the new heaven and new earth there will be no more curse. “For the former things (will) have passed away” (21:4).
554. **According to Revelation 22:3 to whom does heaven's throne belong?** It belongs to God and the Lamb. In 3:21 the Savior informed the church at Laodicea that He had overcome and sat down with the Father in His throne. This took place at the time of His return to heaven (Daniel 7:13-14; Psalm 24:7-10; Acts 1:9) as was proclaimed on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:33-36; cf., Ephesians 1:18-23), at which time He was seated at the right hand of power (Matthew 26:64; cf., 28:18). Psalm 110: 1-3, which Peter quoted on Pentecost (Acts 2:34-35) to prove Jesus’

exaltation to the throne of God says in verse 3, that Christ was to rule from that throne “in the midst of His enemies.” The apostle Paul informed the saints at Corinth that, “He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death” (I Corinthians. 15:25-26). This will take place at the last day when He returns and raises all the dead – the good and the evil. There will not be 365,000 days between the raising of the righteous and the wicked for they are both to be raised at the same hour (John 5:28-29). The saints are to be raised on the last day (John 6:39-40; 11:24), not a thousand years prior to the raising of the wicked (cf., Matthew 25:31-36; Revelation 20:11-14) as pre-millennialists teach.

Prior to the Savior’s birth Gabriel informed Mary, “Jesus ... will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David” (Luke 1:32). When Christ was seated on the right hand of God’s throne He was seated on the throne of His father David. This is the reason Peter in Acts 2:30-35 quoted both Psalm 132:11, about Christ being raised to David’s throne and Psalm 110:1-2 about David’s Lord – the Christ - being seated at God’s right hand.

Those who contend for two thrones – that of God and of David - do greatly err not knowing the scriptures for there has always been only one throne over the people of God. David knew this for prior to his death he “assembled at Jerusalem all the leaders of Israel” and informed them the Lord “has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel” (I Chronicles 28:1,5). The first to sit on the throne of God over Israel was God Himself (1 Samuel 8:7; 12:12), then Saul. And when he was rejected God exalted David to that throne and called it the latter’s (Psalm 132:11). But it was always the throne of the Lord as the inspired historian informs us at the beginning of Solomon’s reign: “then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of his father David and prospered” (I Chronicles 29:23). Jesus the Lamb, as Son of God and Son of David, now sits on that throne with the heavenly Father as our text indicates (22:3).

555. **Revelation 22:3-4 tells us what three things about the servants of God in the heavenly city?** (1) They shall serve God. (2) They shall see His face and (3) His name shall be on their foreheads. The last point is symbolic of God’s will being in their hearts or minds.
556. **Why will there be no need for a lamp or light of the sun in the heavenly Jerusalem?** One of the most frustrating things is to be in a room or other place where there is no light and the sunlight does not enter. Those who are privileged to dwell in the glorious home of the soul will find such things are useless for “there shall be no night there” (22:5). This is due to the fact that “the Lord God gives them light.” We must recognize that the light spoken of does not mean physical light, but the eternal light of God, which enlightens the soul.
557. **Discuss “And they shall reign forever” (22:5).** We have noted (questions 18 and 157) that Christians reign in this present life (Romans 5:17; Revelation 1:6; 5:10). This we do as we sit with Christ in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:5-6) and dispense His gospel, which is the standard of judgment for all humanity (Isaiah 2:3; John 12:48; Mark 16:15-16). Our rule is like that of Jeremiah – it comes with persecution (Jeremiah 1:10; 38:6), but in the heavenly land the former things will have passed away and we shall forever be with the Lord (I Thessalonians. 4:17) and reign with Him.

558. **What title does the angel give the living God in Revelation 22:6?** He called Him “the Lord God of the holy prophets.” What joy it is to know that those great servants of God are our brothers (22:9) and what a privilege it is to be able to deliver their words and those of the apostles (Ephesians 3:5) to our world. Surely by quoting the words of the Spirit from their mouths (II Peter 1:20-21; cf., II Timothy 3:16-17) we may impact the nations in our time as they did in theirs.
559. **Of what are readers reminded that God sent His angel to do in giving the Revelation?** It was “to show His servants the things which (were to) shortly take place” (22:6). Here again the Lord makes it clear that the purpose of the book was to reveal to the generation under the beast-like government what was to come very quickly. The popes, Islam, Genghis Khan and the protestant reformation hardly fit the case.
560. **What promise and what blessing is found in Revelation 22:7?** The Lord promised, “behold I come quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.” Here the Lord is speaking of His coming in a spiritual sense as He did so many times in the book (e.g., 2:5, 16, 25; 3:11). This is the case because He proclaims a blessing on those who in this life keep the words of the book.
561. **When John fell at the feet of the angel to worship him what did the angel say?** “See that you do not do that, for I am your fellow servant and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God” (22:9). Some of our greatest lessons are learned because of our mistakes or by seeing the mistakes of others. Exodus 20:1-5 makes it very clear as to what idolatry is, and fleshly Israel was to zealously avoid it. Under the law of Christ (Galatians 6:1) we are to do the same, even as John himself warned, “my little children keep yourselves from idols” (I John 5:21). Yet, the incident before us helps us realize that God’s people are not to worship any created thing. This means we are not to pray to angels, living individuals, spirits of dead people - even though called a “saint”- or to bow down before images or paintings (icons) of such.
562. **What did the angel command John about the words of the Revelation?** John wrote, the angel “said to me, do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is a hand” (22:10). This is the fourth time (1:1, 3; 22:6, 10) that the Lord or His angel stated in this great book that the things being revealed were to “shortly take place.” Again we note the inconsistency of commentators who apply the things that were freshly revealed in the book to events a thousand or two thousand years later. I used the term “freshly revealed,” because as noted earlier John spoke of the resurrection, judgment and other events, which were and are in the future, but those were not new revelations by him. See questions 1 and 37.
563. **What is meant by, “he who is unjust let him be unjust still” and “he who is holy let him be holy still”?** This means that as death finds a person just so he will appear before Jesus in judgment. As it is written, “for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (II Corinthians 5:10).
564. **Jesus declared he would come quickly to do what?** He declared, “My reward is with me, to give to every one according to his work” (22:12). (See Matthew 25:31-46).
565. **What three terms does Jesus use to declare His eternal nature?** He affirmed (1) I am the Alpha and Omega. (2) The Beginning and the End. (3) The First and the Last

(22:13). In light of this affirmation by the Master Himself it is utterly absurd that some deny He is of the one eternal nature as the Father.

566. **Why does the Revelator declare, "blessed are those who do His commandments"?** This is stated that all may know that those who do His commandments, "may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" (22:14).
567. **Who are said to be outside the city of God in Revelation 22:15?** Those outside the eternal city "are dogs (that is, men who act like dogs – Philippians 3:2) and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie."
568. **What two titles does Jesus declare for Himself at the close of the Revelation?** He affirms that He is "the root and offspring of David – the bright and morning star" (22:16). The prophets foretold that the Messiah would be the offspring of David (Psalm 132:11). Isaiah 11:10, tells us the Christ, would be "a Root of Jesse," who was David's father. God put a prophetic utterance in the mouth of the Gentile prophet Balaam (about 1405 BC) and he declared, "I shall see Him (that is the Messiah), but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a star shall come out of Jacob" (Numbers 24:17). Again the apostle Peter spoke of Him as "the Morning Star" (II Peter 1:19).
569. **Who are the two that say, "come"?** "The Spirit and the bride say come" (22:17). Matthew recorded these words from the Lord, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:28-29). Here in the end of the last book of the New Testament the Holy Spirit and the church (the bride, Ephesians 5:31-32) do as Christ did. They say, "Come" unto Him and find eternal rest.
570. **Who is told to say, "come"?** Even sinners who hear the word (cf., John 6:44-45; Romans 10:17) are urged to say to others "come" to the fountain free. The prophet Isaiah stated that this very thing would happen after the house of God was established. He wrote, "Many people shall come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths" (Isaiah 2:3). That began to take place on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection (See Acts 2:36-41).
571. **Who is invited?** Those who "thirst for righteousness"(Matthew. 5:6) "and whoever desires, let him take of the water of life freely" (22:17).
572. **How does this invitation deal a deathblow to the predestination theories of John Calvin?** The protestant reformer, John Calvin (1509 - 1564) of Geneva, Switzerland, taught that Christ died only for a group of sinners, whom he called "the elect" (World Book, John Calvin, p. 58). Such a doctrine is a lie, for Jesus tasted "death for everyone" (Hebrews 2:9). Calvin also taught that only those "elect" ones could respond to Christ's invitation and only then after the Holy Spirit had operated *directly* upon their hearts. But the statement, "and whosoever desires (wills – KJV)" shows how evil the philosophy of Calvin was and is. As noted earlier (See question 532), those who are elected of God are in Christ; no one outside of Christ is a part of the "elect." God predetermined that all in His Son would be "elect ones" (Ephesians 1:4; I Peter 1:2). *Any* individual who "desires" or "wills" may be among "the elect" in Him by accepting His invitation. They may accept it in a very simple manner by obeying the plain and uncomplicated gospel plan of salvation (Matthew 7:21; Hebrews 5:8-9; II Thessalonians 1:6-9; Mark 16:15-16;

Acts 22:16).

573. **What is the reference in the Revelation that declares men must not add or take away from the book?** It is Revelation 22:18-19. This warning not to add to or take away from this book of prophecy is like a number of warnings given to men through the centuries not to tamper with the word of God. For example Moses speaking for God to Israel said, “whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take from it” (Deuteronomy 12:32). Again we read in the book of Proverbs “Do not add to His words, lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar” (Proverbs 30:6; cf., Deuteronomy 4:2; Joshua 1:7; Galatians 1:6-9; I Peter 4:11).
574. **Discuss "God shall take away his part from the book of life, from the holy city and from the things which are written in this book" (22:19).** This statement makes it obvious that some who have a place reserved in heaven (I Peter 1:4) can lose that place by taking away from the word of God. It is ironic that those who are so enamored with John Calvin’s doctrine of *the impossibility of apostasy* will take away from God’s word on this very point. For example Paul told the Christians in Galatia who were seeking to be justified by the law “you have fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:4). Yet the calcified clergymen of Christendom boldly proclaim, “You cannot fall from grace” and “once saved always saved.” Their followers are like the people in Isaiah’s time who said, “to the prophets, do not prophesy to us right things; Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits” (Isaiah 30:10). Well did Jesus speak of such clerics in His time, “Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a ditch” (Matthew 15:14).
575. **When the Lord declared, "surely I am coming quickly" at the close of the book what did John say?** He said, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (22:20). If one reads this great book of prophecy without regard to the fact that its primary purpose was to reassure the saints suffering under the beast at the end of the first century, then they might conclude the Savior meant His second coming was imminent. We know John penned this statement before the plagues began to rain on the beast, the false prophet and their supporters. He was coming quickly to afflict those who were afflicting His people.
576. **What is the complimentary close of the book?** “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (22:21).

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All scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the New King James Version of the Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN 1982.

Jim E. Waldron ***Biographical Sketch***

Waldron was born in Nashville, TN November 4, 1935. He graduated from Bellevue High School in Davidson County in 1955. He attended David Lipscomb University and graduated from Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, TN with a degree in History in 1961. He attained his Master's degree from the University of Tennessee in Agricultural Extension Education in 1971. In 1995 he was trained and certified as an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician).

February 22, 1958, he and Laura Gary of Oak Ridge, TN were married. The Waldrons have three sons and one daughter – the latter having been adopted in Pakistan in 1970. They have nine grandchildren.

Jim preached his first regular sermon for the Old Charlotte Road church in Davidson County in June 1955. He began preaching regularly every Lord's day at Five Points in Hickman county in 1956. His time of preaching in the states has been one and one half years in North Carolina, five years in middle Tennessee, eleven years in East Tennessee and three years in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he also served as an elder. For ten years the Waldrons lived and worked abroad in Pakistan (1967-70), Australia (1971-75) and Hong Kong (1979-82). He has taught for extended times in schools of preaching in Pakistan, Australia (MacQuarie in Sydney), East Tennessee (ETSOP&M) at Knoxville, India, Nepal, and Ukraine.

Jim has engaged in ten public debates. Two of these are in print; one on the thousand year reign and one on marriage and divorce.

In 1986, he began traveling abroad to Asia for six to eight months a year to hold schools for faithful Christians in various countries to train them to reach their own with the gospel of Jesus and His kingdom. The rest of the time he spends in the states reporting to congregations who assist in the work. Waldron along with the help of many other brethren has been instrumental in setting up regular Bible training schools in several countries. These include one school of preaching in Kiev, Ukraine, which began in 1992. A school of preaching in Nepal known as the Himalaya Bible Institute in 1999, and twelve schools of preaching in India along with two special schools known as the Coimbatore Bible Institute for Women and the Pudukottai Home and Bible Institute for the Blind and the Deaf.

From 1986-97, the Waldrons lived in Tucker, GA near Atlanta, and worked under the oversight of the elders of the Avondale congregation. In April 1997, they moved back to Tennessee where they now make their home at Dunlap. Since that time the work has been under the elders of the Dunlap church. The Waldrons publish monthly a Newsletter, which as of this writing, is in its 37th year. Jim also serves as editor of the Bulletin Briefs, which is published monthly by the Dunlap congregation. Their mailing address is P.O. Box 123, Dunlap, TN 37327.

**This study of the
Book of Revelation
is dedicated to Don and Cathy Iverson
of Banner Elk, NC for
they are dear friends and fellow laborers
in “the kingdom of Christ and God.”
Like “the house of Stephanas...they have
addicted themselves to
the ministry of the saints”
I Corinthians 16:15**

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Revelation 5:5, 6

“But one of the elders said to me, Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.

And I looked, and behold in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”

February 16, 2003

Dear brother Jim,

We just finished proof reading your commentary and both are very impressed with your work. The method, we believe, will generate much interest due to the different approach. People can use the questions and the answers given to study whereas tackling the book by just reading the scriptures will lessen some of the fright many have regarding the Revelation. Misunderstanding presents a stumbling block and creates fright and all sorts of ideas regarding this book. You make it simple to read and understand. We know you have worked long and hard on this project and you deserve the thanks of the brotherhood for such a fine job. May the Lord continue to bless you and your entire family for the great work you are doing. God bless you, brother.

In His holy name,
Milo & Jackie Ward
Clinton, TN USA