

Helping Our Children Learn to Explain the Future Part II

**Growing Godly Family Series
Manual 36**

By

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Growing Godly Families Series

This series of manuals is the result of a series of weekly e-mail topics that have been prepared and e-mailed over a period of years. They originally started out as a one page topic that gradually grew to the point where most topics are about three pages in length.

This series is especially designed for those who are already Christian leaders to give them Biblical principles for the development of godly physical and spiritual families. Because they give Biblical principles for developing godly families, they are also helpful for new Christians that want to grow and become godly families.

Mark 10:43-45 says, "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." In these verses Christ taught that godly spiritual leaders do not have the attitudes of leaders in the world. Worldly leadership is based on power and authority and is designed to benefit the leader and place him above others. In contrast, godly spiritual leadership is designed to help every Christian reach their full potential in Christ. The following three statements give a summary of three styles of leadership. The purpose of this series is to help every family develop their full potential as godly families.

If we drive people, we will drive them until they can get out of our way.

If we lead people, we will be able to lead them as far as we have gone ourselves.

If we serve people, we will help each person develop their full God given potential and equip each person for the ministry that Christ has prepared for every Christian.

In the world people often measure success by the amount of things that they accumulate in this world before they die. However, they are unable to take any of those things with them when they die. Mark 8:36-37 says, "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" Success produces rewards until we die but it produces nothing for eternity.

In contrast, God measures effectiveness by our faithfulness and obedience. Matthew 6:19-21 says, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Effectiveness produces eternal rewards. Mark 10:29-30 says, "So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time--houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions--and in the age to come, eternal life." I Corinthians 10:31 says, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." The Growing Godly Families Series is designed to help your family life count for eternity by bringing glory to God.

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The Ministry of the Two Witnesses

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand and explain that God continues and will continue to offer mercy to all who will repent and come to Christ in faith. In this topic we will see that God sends two witnesses to preach the message of judgment and salvation during the last half of the tribulation known as the Great Tribulation.

In Revelation 11:1-3 we read, “Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot *for* forty-two months. And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” Reeds similar to bamboo were plants that grew along parts of the Jordan River during the time that the Bible was written. They were used as measuring sticks to measure distance. Ezekiel 40:5 says, “Now there was a wall all around the outside of the temple. In the man’s hand was a measuring rod six cubits *long, each being a cubit and a handbreadth*; and he measured the width of the wall structure, one rod; and the height, one rod.” A cubit was the distance from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger and a handbreadth was the length from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger (this rod was about 10 to 10½ feet in length).

Here we see that the angel said to measure three things: the temple of God, the altar in the temple; and the people who worshipped in the temple (the Jews). However, the courtyard around the temple was not to be measured because John was told that the courtyard would be under the control of the Gentiles for forty-two months (1,260 days). The Jewish calendar had twelve months of thirty days. Then they would add an extra month about every six years to make the number of days match (that is why the date for Easter varies from year to year). God said that the Gentiles would tread Jerusalem (the holy city) under foot for forty-two months. Christ said in Matthew 24:15, “Therefore when you see the ‘*abomination of desolation*,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand).”

Daniel 9:27 says, “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.” The Antichrist will set up his own image in the temple and it is called the ‘abomination of desolation’. In Daniel 11 we read about the willful king. Historically that was Antiochus Epiphanes. The Antichrist will do things similar to what Antiochus did but in the time of the Antichrist it will affect the Jews and the entire world. Daniel 11:36 says, “Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done.” Then Daniel 12:1 adds, “At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people;

and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, *even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book.” That time of trouble for the people of Israel will happen during the tribulation.

It is during this forty-two month period that God will send His two witnesses to prophesy for 1260 days. They will be clothed in sackcloth. We go on to read in Revelation 11:4-6, “These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.” Here we see that God describes these two witnesses as two olive trees and two lampstands. Olive oil was usually used in lamps and lampstands are used to give light. The ministry of these two witnesses will be like the ministry that Matthew 5:16 says that all Christians should have. That verse says, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Many will listen to their message but many will also try to destroy the two witnesses.

We see that God will give these two witnesses special powers to protect the two from those who want to destroy them. We see that if anyone tries to harm them that fire will come out of their mouth and destroy their enemies. In II Kings 1:10 and 12 we see that Elijah called down fire from heaven to destroy those who were sent by the king to get him. II Kings 1:10 says, “So Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, ‘If I *am* a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men.’” And fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.” Here we see that Elijah was given power in the Old Testament to destroy with fire. This is one of the reasons why many Bible teachers think that Elijah will be one of the two witnesses.

In addition, Malachi 4:5-6 says, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.” Here we have a specific statement that the Lord will send Elijah before the second coming of Christ to rule on the earth. In Matthew 17:1-13 we see that Moses and Elijah both appeared with Christ when He was transfigured on the mountain. Matthew 17:3 says, “And He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.” For these reasons many think that Moses and Elijah are the two witnesses who will prophesy for forty-two months.

We also see that the two witnesses will shut heaven so that no rain falls for the 1260 days that they are witnesses on the earth. God gave Moses power to do miracles as signs to Pharaoh in Egypt. Then James 5:17 says, “Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.” In addition to the reasons listed above the fact that both of these men performed miracles in the Old Testament would be another reason why they might be the two witnesses. We also see that when God used Elijah to stop the rain in the Old Testament that it was for the same length of time.

We go on to read in Revelation 11:7-10, “When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Then *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.” Once the two witnesses have finished the work that the Lord has for them on this earth, we see that He will allow the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit to kill them.

We see that this beast comes from the bottomless pit. This means that he is a demon that is only released for a short time during the tribulation to do the evil that he desires to do. We see that he will make war again the two witnesses. God will allow this beast to overcome the two witnesses and kill them. However, the people will not allow their bodies to be buried. Instead their dead bodies will be left in the street so that everyone can see their dead bodies. Then we have the city described where their bodies will be left in the street. We see that this city is a great city. God compares the spiritual life of that city to Sodom and Egypt. Sodom was so evil that Genesis 19:24 says, “Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens.” Then Exodus 14:30-31 describe the way the Lord destroyed Egypt when those verses say, “So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.” The last thing that we learn about this city is that it was the city where the Lord was crucified. This means the two witnesses will be killed in Jerusalem.

We see that their dead bodies will lie in the street for three-and-a-half days so that the people throughout the earth can see them. We also see how the people of the earth will react to the death of the two witnesses. The people will do three things to celebrate their death. First, the people will rejoice that they are dead. By the way, this is the only time that we see the people on the earth rejoicing during the entire tribulation. Second, they will make merry. The word translated “make merry” means to be delighted with something. Here we see that the people who are in rebellion against God will celebrate the death of His two witnesses. Third, they will send gifts to one another. Here we see that their celebration will include the sending of gifts to each other to show their happiness that these two will no longer speak for God. These actions certainly show the condition of their hearts. Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” That is the reason they will be judged.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why this is the only time that the people of the world will rejoice throughout the entire tribulation. This clearly shows the rebelliousness of their hearts. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Return of the Two Witnesses to Heaven

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why the people in rebellion against God will only rejoice one time during the tribulation. We saw that will happen when the beast out of the bottomless pit kills the two witnesses. In this topic we will see what God did after these two witnesses have lain in the street of Jerusalem for three-and-a-half days.

In Revelation 11:11-14 we read, “Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’ And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.” Here we see that the Lord is the One who has the final word about the ministry of the two witnesses.

After three-and-a-half days of lying in the street, these two bodies will certainly have the smell of death on them. Martha said to Jesus in John 11:39, “Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, ‘Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been *dead* four days.’” However, God will now give the whole earth the opportunity to see the power of God displayed. We see that the breath of life from God entered into them. Genesis 2:7 says, “And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” In the same way that the breath of life gave life to Adam, that breath of life will here give life to the dead bodies of the two witnesses. Then these two witnesses will stand on their feet. This will cause all those who see them to be filled with a great fear. Suddenly the entire earth will have visual proof that God is able to raise the dead.

However, what happens next will only increase the fear of the people of the earth. There will suddenly be a loud voice from heaven saying to the two witnesses, “Come up here.” We see that they will immediately ascend into heaven in a cloud as their enemies watch them. Acts 1:9 says, “Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.” Here we see that the two witnesses will ascend into heaven in the same way that Christ ascended. This will be followed by a great earthquake. Seven thousand people in Jerusalem will be killed. Many of these deaths will probably be among their enemies who saw them.

However, this will have a very different effect on the Jews. We see that the rest of the people in Jerusalem will be afraid and give glory to the God of heaven. These Jews who give glory to God are the beginning of the fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10 which says, “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his*

only *son*, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.” Then I Corinthians 1:22-24 says, “For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” This opportunity to see the resurrection and ascension of the two witnesses into heaven will be a great sign to the Jews in the tribulation and we see that many in Jerusalem will give glory to the God of heaven.

We also see that this event means that the second woe is past and that the third woe is going to come quickly. We saw in Revelation 9:13-21 that one third of the population will be killed by demons as a part of the second woe. During this time we also see that the two witnesses will be carrying out their ministry. They will be killed and then rise from the dead and be taken to heaven followed by a great earthquake in the city of Jerusalem. Here the promise is given that the third woe will come quickly. Revelation 11:16 says, “Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!’” Here we see that the seventh angel now sounds his trumpet.

We see that the sounding of this trumpet will cause loud voices to be heard in heaven. This is due to the fact that all remaining judgments are a part of the seventh trumpet judgment. In Revelation 12:12 we read, “Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” Here we see that Satan will be confined to the earth during most of the period of this third woe. As a result, he will focus his attacks on the nation of Israel because Christ came from that nation. God will bring judgment on the earth with the seven bowl judgments which are a part of the seventh trumpet judgment. Then both religious and commercial Babylon will be destroyed. When the remaining judgments are completed, the third woe will also be completed and the reign of Christ on this earth for a thousand years will begin.

This is why these loud voices will be rejoicing in heaven because they can see that Christ will soon rule. That is why they say, “The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” Christ said in John 12:31, “Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.” Satan is the ruler of this world and Christ knew that Satan would soon be defeated. John 16:11 says, “Of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” The angels and all of the saints in heaven will begin to celebrate because of the fact that they realize that the reign of Christ for a thousand years is coming and Satan will then have his judgment completed so that the kingdom of Christ will then be eternal.

We see the rejoicing of the saints in heaven in Revelation 11:16-19 where we read, “And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth.’” Then the temple of God was opened in

heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.” In these verses we see that the saints will fall on their faces and worship God.

This rejoicing and thanks to God for judging those in rebellion first speaks of who God is. These words remind us that He is the Lord God Almighty. The word “Lord” speaks of the One to whom we belong. God Almighty speaks of the fact that He is the ruler of all. Those who are presently in rebellion against God will soon have their rebellion judged and that rebellion will come to an end. We also see that He is the, “One who is and who was and who is to come.” Revelation 1:7-8 says, “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End,’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’” Here we see that Christ is the One who is the Eternal One who will rule forever. He has no beginning and no end. He is the One who has taken His great power and is ready to begin His rule in the earthly kingdom very soon and then that kingdom will become the eternal kingdom.

Earlier in Revelation we saw that the nations were filled with great fear as they experienced some of the earlier judgments. However, this worship of Christ shows that this fear has turned to anger. We see that the reason for this anger is due to the fact that the time of Christ’s wrath against all rebellion has come. This is a reminder of the fact that those in rebellion against Christ will continue to show their anger and rebellion until they are destroyed. Revelation 19:19-21 says, “And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.” After that they will face the eternal judgment mentioned in Revelation 20:11-15.

In contrast, the saints can rejoice because Christ is going to reward the prophets and the saints and all those who fear His name. It will not matter whether the prophets and saints have been unknown or had a great influence on many. We will all be rewarded for our works. I Corinthians 3:14 says, “If anyone’s work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward.” However, all the rebellious on the earth will be destroyed. At this point we also see that the temple of God in heaven will be opened. We see that God will reveal the ark of His covenant. The earthly Holy of holies was opened when Christ finished His payment for sin on the cross. Here the heavenly Holy of holies containing the ark of His covenant will be opened revealing the eternal salvation of those who turned to Christ provided by His blood of the New Covenant. This is revealed at the same time that God is judging those on the earth. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others why it is so important to receive the blessings of the New Covenant while they have the opportunity. May the Lord richly bless you as you equip your children to explain these things to others.

The Defeat of the Dragon in Heaven

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others why it is so important to receive the blessings of the New Covenant while they have the opportunity. In this topic we will learn about the defeat of Satan in heaven so that he can no longer be the accuser of the brethren.

Revelation 12:1-2 says, “Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.” We will see in the book of Revelation that this is the first of seven times that signs are mentioned in Revelation. The word “sign” is used to introduce various things that happen in the last half of the book. We can go back to the book of Genesis to interpret this sign. Genesis 37:9-10 says, “Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, ‘Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.’ So he told *it* to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, ‘What *is* this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?’” Here we see that this dream speaks of Jacob (Israel) and his family.

Jacob clearly understood that the sun, moon and stars spoke of his family. This dream of Joseph had a near fulfillment when the brothers of Joseph bowed down to him in Egypt. However, we see that this event was used to introduce this sign as a picture of the nation of Israel. In Ezekiel 16:32 we see that Israel is pictured as the adulterous wife of God who is not faithful to God. That verse says, “*You are an adulterous wife, who takes strangers instead of her husband.* Then in Hosea 2:16-17 we see that God says to Israel, “‘And it shall be, in that day,’ says the LORD, ‘*That you will call Me ‘My Husband,’ And no longer call Me ‘My Master,’ For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered by their name no more.*” We see here in Revelation that this woman (Israel) would be in labor pain to give birth to a child.

However, then we see that another sign appeared. Revelation 12:3-6 says, “And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.” We see that this sign is a fiery red dragon. These verses also describe Israel and the Child that would be born from the nation of Israel whom we will see is Christ.

The name of this dragon is given in Revelation 12:9 where we read, “So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” We see that this fiery red dragon is

Satan. Satan is described as a red dragon having seven heads and ten horns with seven crowns on his heads. Daniel was given a number of visions which are recorded in the book of Daniel. We will see that some of the things in these verses are interpreted in Daniel 7.

However, first we see that this dragon drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. We see the original rebellion of Satan against God in Isaiah 14:12-15 where we read, “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *How* you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit.” The sin of Satan at that time was pride. Here the third of the stars that followed Satan in his rebellion were the angels that followed him and became the demons. Satan threw most of these demons to the earth to destroy the nation and the male Child which would come from that nation to defeat Satan.

When Christ was born Satan tried to destroy Him. Matthew 2:16 says, “Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.” When Christ began His public ministry in Nazareth, He said that He was fulfilling the words of Isaiah in Isaiah 61:1-2a. Luke 4:18-21 says, “‘The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.’ Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.’” This caused great anger in the synagogue and Satan used the opportunity to again try to destroy Christ. Luke 4:28-29 says, “So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.” Here we see Satan tried to get the people of Nazareth to kill Christ.

Christ had stopped at the end of Isaiah 61:2a. However, the entire verse of Isaiah 61:2 says, “To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.” Here we see that the second phrase speaks of the fact that one day Christ will come as the Judge “to rule all nations with a rod of iron.” When Christ finished the payment for sin that also meant the judgment of Satan we see that He was caught up to God and His throne. The last part of these verses speaks about the fact that Satan will also make a final effort to destroy the nation of Israel from which Christ came when Revelation 12:6 says, “Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.” Here we see that God is going to protect Israel from the final effort of Satan to completely destroy the nation of Israel.

Revelation 12:7-10 goes on to say, “And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was

a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down." Here we see that Satan will be cast out of heaven and cast to the earth.

Satan is the prince of the power of the air. Ephesians 2:2 says, "In which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience." In this description of our life before we trusted in Christ, we also see that Satan is called the "prince of the power of the air". In these verses we see that Satan uses this position to serve as the accuser of our brethren. However, we see that God is going to give Michael and the other angels the responsibility to fight against Satan and his demons and cast them to the earth so that Satan will be confined to the earth and can no longer accuse the saints. Satan is the one who has deceived the whole world from the time of Adam and Eve. He will continue to deceive until he is sent to his eternal judgment. Revelation 20:7-8a says, "Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth." Then Revelation 20:10 adds, "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever." Satan will seek to destroy as many people as possible in the time he has left.

Meanwhile we see that there will be rejoicing in heaven because of the fact that the accuser of our brethren has been cast down. We see that a loud voice will speak in heaven. This means that no longer will any saints be accused to God. As a result, all in heaven can rejoice because the salvation of God has come. All believers will experience the full security described in Romans 8:38-39 where we read, "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." We will see the full power of God as He judges all those who rejected Christ and chose to receive His judgment.

We see that the kingdom of our God has come. In just a short time Christ will come to rule the earth. Revelation 19:16 says, "And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." In just three and a half years the power of Satan will be defeated except for the final short rebellion when Satan is loosed for a little season in Revelation 20:7-10. Then Satan and all who have followed him will be judged for eternity. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to warn all those who reject Christ and follow Satan that they will share in his judgment for all eternity. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain that Christ will have show His power as He judges Satan and his followers.

The Desperation of the Dragon on the Earth

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that Satan will have the day come when he can no longer be the accuser of the saints. Instead he will be cast to the earth so that he will only have a short time to deceive any more people. Through the next several chapters we will see that God will judge Satan and his followers. First this judgment will be on the earth and then it will be followed by the eternal judgment of Satan and all who reject the life Christ offers.

Revelation 12:11-12 says, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” Here we see that the tribulation saints will have victory over Satan in the same way that we have victory. First, we read that they will overcome him by the blood of the Lamb. In I Corinthians 1:23-24 Paul wrote, “But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Then he went on to add in I Corinthians 2:2, “For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” The preaching of the message of the death and resurrection of Christ is the key to overcoming Satan by the blood of the Lamb. That will be the message of the tribulation saints just as it should be our message today.

Second, they will overcome him by the word of their testimony. The word translated “testimony” speaks of giving formal testimony in a court. I John 5:9-11 says, “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” The word translated “testimony” is used six times in these verses – four times it is translated witness and two times testimony. Here we see that the Father is the One who has given the testimony about Christ. As a result, the saints in the tribulation will be quoting the Word of God and not just giving their own words. That is the same way that Christ defeated Satan when Satan tempted Him in the wilderness.

Third, they will overcome him by the fact that they do not love their lives to the death. Here we see that the tribulation saints will be willing to die for their faith. Heaven will rejoice because Satan is about to be defeated on earth. However, this will be a difficult time for the people on the earth. That is why we read that it will be a time of woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea. Satan will come down to the earth with great wrath because he knows his time is short. Most of the tribulation saints will be killed. However, they are not the people that will experience woe because II Corinthians 5:8 says, “We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.” The tribulation saints can rejoice even in death. In contrast, it is a time of woe for the people of the earth that continue to follow

Satan. The fact that he has only a short time means that those who follow him will soon face eternal judgment.

We see that Satan will focus his wrath on two groups when he is confined to the earth. The first group is described in Revelation 12:13-14 where we read, “Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *Child*. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.” When Satan is cast to the earth we see that the first group that will experience his wrath is the nation that gave birth to the male Child – Christ. That is the nation of Israel. That is why the second half of the tribulation is called the time of Jacob’s trouble. Jeremiah 30:7 says, “Alas! For that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it; and it *is* the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.”

Matthew 24:21-22 speaks about this time of Jacob’s trouble when those verses say, “For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.” Our verses here in Revelation tell us how Israel is going to be saved out of this time. God said that the, “Woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place.” Here we see that those Jews who escape from the land of Israel will be taken to a place where the Lord will protect them during this second half of the tribulation. That is why the earlier verses in Matthew 24:15-20 warn Israel to flee immediately when the abomination of desolation (antichrist) sets up his image in the temple in Jerusalem. Only those who flee immediately will escape so that the Lord can take them to a place of safety for the last half of the tribulation.

We see that the Lord promises to nourish Israel in this place of safety, “for a time and times and half a time.” This phrase is used in one other place in the Bible. Daniel 7:24-25 says, “The ten horns *are* ten kings *who* shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first *ones*, and shall subdue three kings. He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. Here we see that the tribulation saints will be given into the hands of the antichrist (also called the abomination of desolation or the beast) that shall come out of these ten kingdoms and gain power. The goal of antichrist will be to speak bold words against the Most High (God) and to persecute the saints of the Most High. As a result of God taking the people of Israel who escape to a place where they will be protected we see that Satan and the antichrist will turn their great anger against the tribulation saints.

This second group upon which Satan will focus his wrath once Israel is protected is described in Revelation 12:15-17 where we read, “So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Before we come to the tribulation saints, we see how God will protect Israel.

We see here that Satan will try one more time to completely destroy Israel but will fail. This attempt is described like a flood of water that the dragon (Satan) will spew out of his mouth. Isaiah 59:19-20 says, “So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun; when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him. ‘The Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,’ says the LORD.” In these verses in Isaiah we see that Isaiah describes this flood that will come from Satan as an enemy that will come to destroy Israel. It is at that time that God will preserve those who in Israel who have become true followers of Him. The destruction of this enemy by the earth may be the result of the judgment on the earth that is mentioned in Revelation 11:19 where we read, “Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.” This army sent by Satan will be stopped by God.

Satan will be very angry and filled with rage when he cannot completely destroy Israel, especially the people of Israel who have recognized Christ as their Redeemer. In his rage Satan will turn his anger against the tribulation saints. The tribulation saints are called the offspring of Israel because when any person becomes a follower of Christ we see that they are called sons of Abraham by faith. Galatians 3:6-9 says, “Just as Abraham ‘believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ Therefore know that *only* those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, ‘In you all the nations shall be blessed.’ So then those who *are* of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.” By the salvation that Christ provided through His death and resurrection people of all nations can come to Christ in repentance and faith and share in the blessings given by God including all the tribulation saints.

We see two characteristics of those who become tribulation saints. First, we see that they keep the commandments of God. Second, we see the reason why they keep the commandments of God. They keep those commandments because they have the testimony of Jesus Christ. This is a key to understanding both the present and the future. Until we come to God by repentance from the sin of unbelief and place our faith in Christ, we have no desire or power to keep the commandments of God. When a person receives Christ by faith he or she is given a new nature that desires to please God. As we yield to the Holy Spirit we are given the power to do those things that are pleasing to God. Philippians 4:13 says, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” This same thing will be true of the tribulation saints. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why Christ gives us the desire to please God when we become Christians. We also want to help them explain why Christ gave us the Holy Spirit to give us power to carry out those desires as we yield to Him. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Activity of the Beast on the Earth

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why Christ gives all who follow Him both the desire to obey God and then the power to obey God as they yield to Him. In this topic we will learn about the beast that rises up out of the earth.

In Revelation 13:1-4 we read, “Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I 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. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of a bear*, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. And *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?” This refers to the dragon (Satan) who is mentioned in the previous verse.

We see that Satan will stand on the sand of the sea. In Revelation 20:8 we see that the people of the earth will be like the sand of the sea. That verse speaks of Satan and says, “And will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea.” In this verse we see that the sand speaks of the people of the nations. Satan will be among the people of the nations with a very short time to destroy them when a beast rises up out of the sea. This beast has seven heads and ten horns. We saw a similar description of Satan when he was cast out of heaven in Revelation 12:3 where we read, “And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.” However, this beast rises out of the sea.

In this chapter and chapter 17 we will see four ways that Satan tries to imitate the true and living God. Here instead of the Lamb of God we see the beast of Satan. We will see that this beast is the antichrist and his world system. This beast is described as coming up out of the sea and has seven heads and ten horns with crowns on them. Daniel 7:24-25 says, “The ten horns *are* ten kings *who* shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; he shall be different from the first *ones*, and shall subdue three kings. He shall speak *pompous* words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then *the saints* shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.” In talking about this same event Daniel says that the antichrist will arise from within the former fourth world empire. He will speak against God with pompous words. He will persecute the saints for “a time and times and half a time” which we saw in an earlier topic is 3 ½ years or 42 months.

He is described as having a blasphemous name. In Daniel 7 the leopard represented the Greek Empire because it moved with such swiftness, the bear represented the Medo-Persian Empire

because of its fierceness and the bear represented the Babylonian Empire with its great power. The fourth beast is described in Daniel 7:7 where we read, "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It *was* different from all the beasts that *were* before it, and it had ten horns." The Roman Empire was the fourth world empire and it is from a revived Roman empire that the antichrist will come. Satan will give the antichrist his power, his throne and great authority.

We see here in Revelation 13:3 that the antichrist will imitate the death and resurrection of Christ as the first part of verse 3 says, "And *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed." This is the description of his imitation of the death and resurrection of Christ. This imitation will cause the entire world to be amazed and follow the antichrist. This is an indication that he will become the ruler of the entire world because the people will be so amazed at this imitation. The rulers of each of the four world empires claimed to be a god. This antichrist will follow that same pattern. The people will worship Satan because he gave power to the antichrist. They will also worship the beast and say that there has never been a ruler like him. The people will also feel that he is so powerful that no one can fight against him. Those who are not tribulation saints will be totally deceived by him. II Thessalonians 2:11-12 says, "And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Here we see that they will believe the lie of the antichrist.

In the previous topic we saw that Satan would try to destroy Israel in his rage but that God will protect part of the Jews. In this chapter we see that Satan will work through the antichrist and they will then turn their anger against the tribulation saints. Revelation 13:5-8 says, "And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

We see the power that Satan will give to the antichrist. Satan will give him great speaking ability so that he can speak great things. This power will be limited by God to only forty-two months (the 3 ½ years or 1260 days of the Great Tribulation). He will open his mouth and speak blasphemy against God. The word "blasphemy" means to speak slander or to speak evil. Here we see that the antichrist will speak evil against God. In addition, he will speak evil against everything that relates to God. This includes the name of God, the tabernacle of God and all those who dwell in heaven which would include all of the godly angels and all those taken to heaven in the Rapture.

Satan will give the antichrist authority to make war against the tribulation saints. We see that he will overcome the remaining tribulation saints. This will be in addition to any saints who have already been killed. Revelation 6:9-10 says, "When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which

they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’” Here we see that God will allow the antichrist to kill any of the tribulation saints except the 144,000 that have been sealed.

We also see that the antichrist will have authority over every tribe, tongue and nation. The antichrist will have the same attitude as Nebuchadnezzar had in the time of Daniel and his friends. Daniel 3:4-6 says, “Then a herald cried aloud: ‘To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, *that* at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.’” The king basically told all of his rulers and leaders, “Worship my image or die.” The difference in the time of the tribulation is that the antichrist will demand this kind of worship from all of the people remaining on the earth.

Everyone “whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” will choose to worship the antichrist to preserve their lives. The Book of Life is mentioned eight times in the New Testament, seven in the book of Revelation. The eighth use is in Philippians 4:3 where we read, “And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life.” In this verse we see that all followers of Christ are written in the book of Life. Revelation 20:15 says, “And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” All those not in the Book of Life will experience eternal judgment. Then Revelation 21:27 says, “But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” Only those written in the Book of Life will be in heaven.

Revelation 13:9-10 goes on to say, “If anyone has an ear, let him hear. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.” The statement “If anyone has an ear, let him hear,” is similar to the phrase that was repeated at the end of message to each of the seven churches in chapters 2 and 3. However, this phrase here does not include the phrase “what the Spirit says to the churches”. This is due to the fact that this is a message to the tribulation saints instead of the churches. The purpose of this message is to prepare the tribulation saints for the fact that they can expect to experience various kinds of suffering as Satan and the antichrist know that their time is short.

God explains in these verses the various ways that the tribulation saints will bring glory to God even as they suffer for the Lord. Tribulation saints will be led into captivity and most will later be killed. Whatever forms of suffering that they suffer God says that they can bring glory to God by showing their patience and faith. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to show their patience and faith by enduring whatever the Lord allows in their lives. In this way they also bring glory to God. May the Lord richly bless you as you equip your children to explain to others how to bring glory to God.

The Activity of the False Prophet on the Earth

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why the antichrist will demand worship from all people living on the earth. In this topic we will see that Satan tries to imitate the Trinity and their work to deceive the people of the earth with an unholy trinity.

Revelation 13:11-12 says, “Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” We have already been introduced to Satan and the antichrist. With these verses we are being introduced to Satan’s attempt to imitate the Holy Spirit. This beast is later called the false prophet. In Revelation 19:20 we read, “Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.” Together these three, Satan the antichrist and the false prophet, are Satan’s attempt to imitate the Trinity and we could call them the unholy trinity. We see that this beast will arise and will work together with Satan and the antichrist to deceive the people of the world.

We see that this beast has two horns like a lamb but speaks like a dragon. A lamb is known as a kind and gentle animal. As a result, we see that Satan will use this beast to deceive the world by his gentleness. However, he will speak with the authority of a dragon. We saw in chapter twelve that the dragon was Satan who tried to destroy Christ. This makes it clear that he will actually be speaking for Satan. II Corinthians 11:14-15 says, “And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” Throughout history Satan has tried to deceive people by having his messengers come as angels of light. In these verses we see that the false prophet will come in this same way.

However, this false prophet will not point to himself as an object of worship. He will exercise the same authority as the first beast, the antichrist. This means that he will do great miracles to deceive the people of the world. He will not use these miracles to try to get the people to worship him. Instead he will cause all those living on the earth at that time to worship the antichrist. The antichrist is the one whose deadly wound will be healed. Revelation 13:3 says, “And *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast.” This is the antichrist that the false prophet will cause the people to worship.

We go on to read about some of the signs that the false prophet will do to deceive the people. Revelation 13:13-15 says, “He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the

earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.” These verses show us that Satan will make it possible for both the antichrist and the beast to perform great signs.

Caesar was the Roman title meaning God. The Roman emperor took that title and made emperor worship the religion of the Roman Empire. The Caesars were all military and political leaders. The antichrist will be a military and political leader. In contrast, the beast will be a religious leader. However, his message will be to worship the antichrist. Here we see some of the signs that the false prophet will perform to back up his message. We see that he will make fire come down from heaven to the earth as the people watch. This will be his way of imitating the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:2-3 where we read, “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them.” Satan will do whatever he can to imitate the Trinity in his efforts to deceive the people during the tribulation.

We see that the beast will deceive the people of the earth by these signs. II Thessalonians 2:11-12 says, “And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” Those who reject Christ will experience this strong delusion and believe the signs of the beast. This beast will tell the people of the earth to make an image to the beast (antichrist) that was wounded by the sword and lived. Revelation 13:3-4 says, “And *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?’”

The people will obey the beast and make an image of the antichrist. Nebuchadnezzar gave us an example of a powerful ruler who commanded the people to worship his image in Daniel 3:4-6 where we read, “Then a herald cried aloud: ‘To you it is commanded, O peoples, nations, and languages, *that* at the time you hear the sound of the horn, flute, harp, lyre, *and* psaltery, in symphony with all kinds of music, you shall fall down and worship the gold image that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up; and whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.’” Here we see that all of the people of the earth will be commanded to worship the image of the beast. Daniel 9:27 says, “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.” Then Matthew 24:15-16 says, “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”

We also see that the beast will perform another sign with this image. We see that the beast will give breath to the image of the antichrist. Suddenly all false religion that is present in the world will be changed. We see that the beast will give this image the power to talk. Then he will

announce that any who will not worship this image of the antichrist will be killed. Those who are followers of any false religion will immediately begin to worship this image just as the Babylonian leaders did at the time when Nebuchadnezzar set up his image. Nebuchadnezzar warned that all who did not worship his image would be thrown into the fiery furnace so that they would be killed. Here we see that the beast will say that all who do not worship this image will be killed.

We go on to read about the mark that will be required by the false prophet. Revelation 13:16-18 says, "He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666." This number is often referred to as "The Mark of the Beast".

Here we see that the false prophet will require all to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads. Suddenly this false prophet will no longer act like a gentle lamb. Instead he will show his true character as he becomes the one who orders the death of any who will not take this mark. Here we see that the goal of the false prophet will be to immediately destroy everyone who will not take this mark. This will include the small and the great. This will include the rich and the poor. This will include those who are free and those who are slaves. The false prophet will enforce this command by saying that no one can buy or sell unless their either have the mark that has the name of the antichrist or the number of his name.

Most of the tribulation saints who are still alive will be killed at this point in time. These are the ones that are described in Revelation 7:9 and 14 where we read, "After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands... And I said to him, 'Sir, you know.' So he said to me, 'These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'" These are the ones who will also ask how long it will be till those who killed them will be judged.

The Lord wants all true believers to understand the number that will be the number of the mark of the beast. We see that his number will be the number of a man which is the number 666. The number of God is 7 as Genesis 2:3 says, "Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." The antichrist, as powerful as he will be, is still a man. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." His number will come short of God's number of perfection. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why this number is called the number of man. This number is a reminder that all are sinners and have come short of the glory of God. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain the number of man.

The Announcement of the Fall of Babylon

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the number of man. We saw that the number of man shows that regardless of how powerful a person can become that he will still come short of the glory of God. In this topic we will see that God announces that political and religious Babylon will soon fall which will be a main part of the preparation for the return of Christ to rule.

Revelation 13 told us that the people of the world will be required to have the number of the antichrist on their forehead or their right hand in order to buy or sell. In chapter 7 we saw that God placed His seal on 144,000 Jews so that Satan could not hurt them because they will be the witnesses of God to the world during the period of the tribulation. That group of witnesses is mentioned again as we come to Revelation 14. Revelation 14:1-2 says, "Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps." In these verses we see that the 144,000 will be standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion.

Mount Zion is the highest hill in the city of Jerusalem. It was on this hill that the early city of Jerusalem was built. Later Mount Zion was used to talk about the entire city of Jerusalem. Psalm 48:1-2 says, "Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, *in* His holy mountain. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, *is* Mount Zion *on* the sides of the north, the city of the great King." These verses explain that Mount Zion is the city of the great King which is the city of Jerusalem. We also see that this is the city where the Lord will reign over the earth and punish the fallen angels and unbelievers until the final judgment. Isaiah 24:21-23 says, "It shall come to pass in that day *that* the LORD will punish on high the host of exalted ones, and on the earth the kings of the earth. They will be gathered together, *as* prisoners are gathered in the pit, and will be shut up in the prison; after many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously."

The people of the nations will be forced to take the mark or seal of the antichrist but this group of 144,000 will have the seal of God on their foreheads so that the antichrist cannot touch them. We know that Christ is our Lamb who paid the sacrifice for our sins so that we could receive forgiveness of sins. The fact that John saw Christ standing with the 144,000 is a reminder that these are followers of Christ and will be witnesses for Him during the tribulation. John also heard a voice from heaven that spoke with a loud voice. This voice was like the sound of many waters or like loud thunder. A large waterfall is so loud that you cannot even hear the shout of a person and the same thing happens when the thunder is very loud. John also heard a group of harpists playing a song on their harps. This song is a new song.

Revelation 14:3-5 says, "They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four

living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, *being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.” Here we see that as the harps play that the 144,000 will be singing a new song that no one else can learn. The only ones who can learn this song are the 144,000 that God has redeemed from the earth and placed His seal on them so that Satan cannot touch them.

We also see that the 144,000 who have been sealed by God have not defiled themselves with women. I Corinthians 6:18-20 says, “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” Here we see that the 144,000 understand the fact that their bodies are the temple of God. They will keep themselves pure from all sexual sin

We see that the 144,000 will follow Christ wherever He goes. This statement makes it clear that they will follow Christ even when they are hated by all those who refuse to repent and turn to Christ. Christ told his disciples the night before He was crucified in John 15:18-19, “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.” That statement was certainly true for the early disciples. It will also be true for the 144,000 during the tribulation. However, they are sealed by God so that the devil cannot touch them.

These verses show that the 144,000 are the firstfruits to be redeemed to God and the Lamb during the period of the tribulation. The fact that they are called the firstfruits is due to the fact that they will turn to Christ early in the tribulation while the rest of Israel will turn to God later in the tribulation. Romans 11:25-27 says, “For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.’”

We see the way that the 144,000 will speak as they speak for God during the tribulation. They will follow the example of Christ which is given for us in I Peter 2:21-22 where we read, “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ‘Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth’” Christ gave us an example to follow and see that the 144,000 will also follow His example. In fact we read that they are without fault before the throne of God. That is due to the fact that II Corinthians 5:21 says, “For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” They will be without fault because they will stand in the righteousness of Christ.

Revelation 14:6-8 goes on to say, “Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven,

having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.’ And another angel followed, saying, ‘Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.’” In addition to the witness of the 144,000 to the people on the earth, we see here that an angel will be flying in the heavens preaching the Gospel to all of the people on the earth. This is a miracle of God as He makes it possible for all of the people on the earth of every nation, tribe, tongue and people to hear the message of the everlasting Gospel. This will make it possible for every person on earth to hear the Gospel and have one final opportunity to repent during the tribulation.

The angel will speak in a loud voice so that every person on earth can hear. This angel will invite all of the people of the earth to fear God and give glory to Him. Jude 1:22-23 says, “And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.” Throughout history the Lord has used both His mercy and the fear of God to draw people to Himself. However, at this point in time the angel is coming to announce that the hour of the judgment of God has come. In His mercy, God still gives the people one final opportunity to repent before His judgment comes.

This will be the last opportunity to turn and worship the One who created the heaven and the earth. We are also reminded that He is the Creator of the sea and the springs of water. Paul began with this same message when He spoke to the men of Athens. Acts 17:24-25 says, “God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.” Instead of fearing the Creator of heaven and earth, the people will fear Satan and the antichrist. As a result, God gives this final opportunity to repent and fear God.

For all those who do not repent, we see that another angel will quickly follow who will say, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” We will see in the following chapters that this destruction of Babylon will be the complete destruction of religious and commercial Babylon and the unbelieving people throughout the earth. Every person who rejects this final offer of salvation will be judged and taken off the earth along with the destruction of the religious, political and commercial systems of the world. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to understand and explain that God will continue to offer mercy right up to the moment when judgment comes. However, those who wait too long will experience the judgment of God because they have rejected the mercy of God. That is the same message that people need to hear today so that they can come to God through Christ in repentance and faith. May the Lord richly bless you as you equip your children to share this message of hope and warning of judgment.

The Announcement of the Coming Defeat of the Beast

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that God will offer mercy during the tribulation to those who have never heard. However, for those who reject that mercy and the message of life God will send an angel to warn that the time of judgment has come. In this topic we will see that God will send another angel to speak of the coming defeat of the antichrist and his followers.

The second angel will warn that judgment is coming quickly. Then we see that a third angel comes who warns who will be judged. Revelation 14:9-13 says, "Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, 'If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.' Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, 'Write: 'Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.'" Here we see the consequence of taking the mark of the beast (antichrist).

This warning is to everyone who worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on their forehead or hand. We see that all who worship the beast and receive his mark will drink the wine of the wrath of God. In addition, we see that this judgment will be poured out at full strength. All the people on the earth who worship the beast and take his mark will have heard the message of the everlasting Gospel from the angel and will have chosen to reject that message. Christ took the full strength of the judgment of every person when he bore our sins on the cross. As a result, they make the choice to receive the full judgment that Christ received on their behalf since they will have rejected His payment for their sins and chosen to worship the beast and take his mark.

We see that all who take that mark will be tormented with fire and brimstone and that their judgment will be eternal. Revelation 20:14-15 says, "Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." Then Revelation 21:8 says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." There will be no escape from this eternal judgment. In contrast, we see the reward of all those who become saints by repenting of their sin and placing their faith in Christ.

We read about the blessing that is promised to the saints. The saints are those who keep the commandments of God because of the fact that they have placed their faith in Jesus Christ. John was told to write that all those who die from that point on are blessed by the Lord. Those

who die from this point on during the tribulation will die for their faith in Christ. We see that the Spirit gives them two promises in addition to being blessed. First they will experience rest from their labors. This particular word translated “labors” means the beating of the breast with sorrow or to cause one trouble. This means that the tribulation saints will experience rest from all of the troubles that will come on them prior to their deaths. Second, we see that their works will follow them. This means that they can look forward to rewards for the suffering that they will experience during the tribulation before the time that they are killed.

Revelation 14:14-16 says, “Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat *One* like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, ‘Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.’ So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.” We see a picture of Christ because He will soon be returning to this earth. He will be coming in the clouds. Daniel 7:13-14 says, “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, 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. His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom *the one* which shall not be destroyed.” These verses in Revelation speak of the fact that Christ will soon come to rule on the earth and that after the rule on earth His kingdom will become an everlasting kingdom.

A crown was given to those who won a sports competition or who won the victory over another nation. The golden crown speaks of the fact that Christ will be recognized as the One who has won the victory over the kingdom of evil. He also will have a sharp sickle in His hand. In that day the farmers used a sharp sickle to harvest the grain in their fields. Another angel will come from the temple to announce what Christ will do with the sickle. This angel will tell Christ to thrust in His sickle and reap. The angel will then explain that the harvest of the earth is ripe. Here we see that Christ will not be reaping a grain harvest. Instead he will use His sharp sickle to judge Satan and the antichrist along with the people on the earth who have taken his mark. The fact that it says that the harvest is ripe means that the time for this judgment has come and there will be no further delay. We also see that this judgment of the people of the earth will begin soon and the details of this judgment of the people of the earth will be given in the next several chapters.

Revelation 14:17-20 says, “Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also will have a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, ‘Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.’ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs.” Here we see that another angel will come out of the temple in heaven. He will also have a sharp sickle with him. We see that the sickle of this angel will be used to judge one particular group of the people that are on the earth.

However, we have it mentioned that there will be another angel who will have power over fire. The angel with the power over fire is the one who tells the angel with the sharp sickle to gather the clusters of the vine of the earth because of the fact that her grapes are fully ripe. We see that the Lord uses a winepress to describe the final destruction that will come on all of the enemies that are still alive at the end of the tribulation in the Valley of Armageddon. This will be the fulfillment of the prophecy given by Isaiah in Isaiah 63:2-4 where we read, “Why *is* Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? ‘I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one *was* with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. For the day of vengeance *is* in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come.”

In the time of the New Testament people would make a winepress by creating a hole in the ground in a place where the grape juice that was squeezed could run to the one end and be gathered when it came out of that end. Then they would place a large amount of grapes in the hole and people would walk on the grapes to squeeze the juice out of them. The Lord said that the people of the earth would be gathered for this judgment at the time which God will choose for this judgment. God describes it as the time when the grapes are fully ripe.

We also see where this judgment by God will happen. The verse says that the winepress will be trampled outside the city. Zechariah 14:1-5 says, “Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, *making* a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, *and* all the saints with You.” This is talking about the city of Jerusalem. In fact half of the city will be destroyed before the Lord comes to judge the people of the nations gathered against Jerusalem in the Valley of Armageddon (160 miles in length from Megiddo to Edom).

We see that this winepress will be trampled outside the city. This battle will be described in more detail when we get to Revelation 19:11-21. These armies are described in Revelation 19:19 and their judgment in Revelation 19:21. Those verses say, “And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army...And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.” We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain this judgment that will come on the rebellious in the Valley of Armageddon. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these verses.

The Announcement of the Coming Bowl Judgments

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the judgment that will come upon those in rebellion against God. We saw that this judgment will happen in the Valley of Armageddon. In this topic we will learn about the bowl judgments that will come preparing for the Battle of Armageddon.

We see that the Lord will bring seven final judgments to prepare for his coming. These are announced in Revelation 15:1-2 where we read, “Then 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. And I saw *something* like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark *and* over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God.” Here we see that this sign is first announced in heaven. We will see in the next group of verses that this will bring great joy in heaven. We see that this sign is described as great and marvelous. These plagues will come rapidly and complete all of the judgments that are in the seventh seal. That is why we read that in them the wrath of God will be complete.

John helps us to see that this series of seven final judgments is announced in front of the throne of God. Revelation 4:6 says, “Before the throne *there was* a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, *were* four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.” In this verse we see that the sea of glass is in front of the throne of God. In Revelation 4:9-10 we see that the twenty-four elders are the saints who are taken to heaven at the rapture and worship Christ. On this sea of glass a large group of people are gathered. Then in Revelation 5:8 we read, “Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” The harps in that chapter provided music as the saints sang about the One who was worthy to open the scroll while the bowls of incense are the prayers of the saints.

The saints are the group who celebrate the coming victory over the beast, over his image, over his mark and over the number of his name. We saw in Revelation 13 that the beast is the antichrist. Here we see that the saints gathered in front of the throne will celebrate the announcement of the coming victory over the antichrist and his entire system. Revelation 15:3-4 says, “They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: “Great and marvelous *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true *are* Your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For *You* alone *are* holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You, for Your judgments have been manifested.” The first song that the saints will sing is the song of Moses. The song of Moses is found in Exodus 15:1-21 and in Deuteronomy 32:1-43. At that time Israel had been delivered from Egypt. That song spoke of the judgment of the enemies of God and their followers. The saints will rejoice because the antichrist and his followers will experience a similar judgment.

The second song that the saints will sing is the song of the Lamb. Christ is the One who is the Lamb of God. John 1:29 says, “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” He is the One who has delivered all saints from the penalty of sin through His payment in full on the cross. This song speaks of the greatness of Christ. We see that the works of Christ are great and marvelous. John 1:1-3 tells us that He is the Creator of all things when those verses say, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” He is also the One who made each one of us personally as Psalm 139:14 says, “I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and *that* my soul knows very well.”

Second, this song says that Christ is the Lord God Almighty! Isaiah spoke of this fact when he said in Isaiah 9:6-7, “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *His* government and peace *there will be* no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

Third, this song says that just and true are the ways of Christ. For the saints I John 1:9 says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” In this verse we see that the ways of Christ in the forgiveness and cleansing of the saints are faithful and just. For those who continue to reject Christ and rebel against Him, Revelation 16:7 says, “And I heard another from the altar saying, “Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* Your judgments.” Then Revelation 19:1-2 adds, “After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord our God! For true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her.’” This statement is made just before heaven is opened and Christ returns to judge all who have rejected Him.

Fourth, this song says that Christ is the King of the saints! In the verses quoted above from Isaiah we see that Christ will be the Eternal King who will rule. Revelation 20:4-6 says that He will rule on the earth for a thousand years and then He will rule throughout eternity. Then this song asks a question, “Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?” Then we are reminded that the Lord is the only One who is holy. That is why all nations will come and worship before Him. The saints will rejoice as they come and worship before Christ. Even those who are judged will have to admit that Jesus is righteous to judge them and will bow their knees before Him. Philippians 2:9-11 says, “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

We go on to read in Revelation 15:5-8, “After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. And out of the temple came the seven

angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. 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.” In these verses we see that when the saints have sung the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb that the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven will be opened. At that time seven angels will come out of the temple.

These are the seven angels that will bring the seven last plagues to the earth. These seven plagues will bring about the complete destruction of religious and commercial Babylon and prepare the way for Christ to come to judge all of the people of the nations that are still in rebellion against Him. We see that these seven angels are clothed in pure white linen. We see in Revelation 19:14 that all of the angels in the armies following Christ as He comes to judge the people will be dressed in this same way when that verse says, “And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.” This white linen speaks of purity and holiness. The seven angels will also have their chests girded with golden bands. These golden bands or belts will be worn over the white linen robes and will reach from the shoulders to the waist of the seven angels. These bands will speak of the perfect glory of the judgments of God.

One of the four living creatures will give a golden bowl to each of these angels. Each bowl will be filled with the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. These will be the final seven judgments that will come on the earth to judge the earth. The wrath of God speaks of the anger of God against sin. Romans 12:19 quotes Deuteronomy 32:35 when Romans says, “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’” The Lord tells us to love our enemies and to leave all judgment to Him because He is the only One who can judge in righteousness.

We see that once the seven angels have been given the seven bowls of judgment that will complete the judgment of the earth that the temple in heaven will be filled with smoke. However, this is not smoke from a fire. Instead this is smoke from the glory and power of God. This same glory filled the earthly tabernacle in Exodus 40:34-35 where we read, “Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.” Once this glory fills the heavenly temple, no one will be able to enter the temple until the seven plagues are completed. In the time of Noah mercy was available throughout the time Noah was building the ark. However, once Noah and his family went into the ark Genesis 7:16 says that God shut them in. In the same way, once this final judgment begins it will be too late for people on the earth to repent. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain this fact as they explain what Revelation teaches about the future. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Description of the First Four Bowl Judgments

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the fact that once the glory of the Lord fills the temple in heaven that the time has passed when others then alive on the earth can repent so that they can enter into heaven. Instead the time of judgment will be completed without delay. In this topic we are going to see the seven final judgments (the bowl judgments) that will judge the earth.

In Revelation 16:1-3 we read, “Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.” So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead *man*; and every living creature in the sea died.” We see that the seven angels were told to pour out their seven bowls of the wrath of God on the earth. These judgments will come very quickly after one another.

We see what will happen when the first angel pours out his bowl of judgment on the earth. The people who have taken the mark of the beast and have worshiped his image will have foul and loathsome sores develop on their bodies. The word translated “foul” means sores that are troublesome or destructive. The word translated “loathsome” means diseased. The only other place this word is used in the New Testament other than in this chapter is in Luke 16:21 where it talks about Lazarus, the beggar, and said he was, “desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.” Here we see that these were open sores that were licked by the dogs. In addition, the Greek translation of the Old Testament uses this word in Exodus 9:9-11 to talk about the sores on the people in Egypt and in Job 2:7 to talk about the boils of Job. Together these verses all indicate that these sores will be very painful.

The second angel poured out his bowl on the oceans and seas of the world. We see that all of the oceans and seas had their water become like the blood of a dead man. Again this was similar to one of the plagues of Egypt but much worse because that plague only affected the river. Exodus 7:20-21 says, “And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD commanded. So he lifted up the rod and struck the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. And all the waters that *were* in the river were turned to blood. The fish that *were* in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.” The second trumpet was much more destructive. Revelation 8:8-9 says, “Then the second angel sounded: And *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.” However, this plague will be even more destructive. Here we see that every living creature in the sea will die. Nothing in any ocean or sea will survive this judgment.

In Revelation 16:4-6 we go on to read, “Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers

and springs of water, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters saying: “You are righteous, O Lord, the One who is and who was and who is to be, because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due.” Here we see that this angel will pour out his bowl of judgment on the fresh water sources on the earth. This will have a great affect on the people of the earth because this will affect the water that they drink.

This angel will also speak about the judgment that he is pouring out on the earth. However, first this angel speaks several things about Christ. He will say that the Lord is righteous to judge the world in this way. The word translated “righteous” means to be innocent, faultless or guiltless. When it is used in the announcement of judgment as it is in these verses it means that a person is right in bringing judgment both by his words and by his actions. Since this angel is speaking of Christ, it means that it is right for Christ to judge the people of the earth for their sin and rebellion against God. Psalm 19:9 says, “The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.” That is the reason that we are to leave all judgment to Christ.

Then we see that Christ is the One who is and who was and who is to be. This is a reminder of the fact that Christ is the One who is eternal. In Revelation 1:8 we read, “‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End,’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’” Then Revelation 4:8 says, “*The* four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!’” We see that the whole church will also speak of the fact that Christ is eternal as Revelation 11:6-17 says, “And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: ‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned.’” Christ is the Eternal One who is righteous to judge.

We also see that the way that Christ will judge is also right. The people of the world are the ones who have shed the blood of the saints and the prophets. Now the angel says that the Lord is righteous because he has given those who have shed the blood of the saints blood to drink. Here we see that the judgment fits the actions of those who have shed the blood of the saints. The angel said that this will be their just due. Revelation 6:9 says, “When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.” Here we see that many tribulation saints will be killed for the Word of God and for the testimony that they have given. We see this same thought when we come to Revelation 17:6 where we read, “I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.” We will see when we reach that chapter that this woman is religious Babylon that has killed the saints and so this judgment certainly fits their actions.

Revelation 16:7-9 goes on to say, “And I heard another from the altar saying, “Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous *are* Your judgments.” Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and

they did not repent and give Him glory.” Here we see that the fourth angel will pour out his bowl of wrath on the people of the earth. However, before this angel pours out his judgments another angel speaks of the fact that the Lord God Almighty is true and righteous in His judgments.

We see that the fourth angel will pour out his bowl on the sun. Amos was given a vision of the judgment of the Lord which may describe what happens when this bowl is poured out. Amos 9:5-6 says, “The Lord GOD of hosts, He who touches the earth and it melts, and all who dwell there mourn; all of it shall swell like the River, and subside like the River of Egypt. He who builds His layers in the sky, and has founded His strata in the earth; who calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out on the face of the earth—the LORD *is* His name.” When the sun touches the earth with a scorching heat, this will cause the polar icecaps at the North and South Poles to melt. Like all other rivers that receive part of their water from the mountains when the snow melts, the River of Egypt (the Nile River) floods and then recedes. This could cause the oceans to temporarily rise more than 200 feet before receding. This would cause many cities near an ocean to be destroyed just as if they were struck by a tidal or tsunami wave.

However, we also see that this angel is given power to scorch men with fire. This will be at a time when the water has been turned to blood and cause the people of the world to be affected by great thirst. At that time it will be too late to respond to the invitation given in Isaiah 55:1-3 says, “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread, and your wages for *what* does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what is* good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you—the sure mercies of David.” The heavenly temple is filled with the smoke of the glory of the Lord and no one will be able to repent because they will wait too long and the time of the judgment of the earth is present.

We see what the response of the people will be when they experience the judgment of the Lord. The people will blaspheme the name of God but they will not repent and give Him glory. This reminds us again what that the day of judgment will be like the time of the judgment in the time of Noah. Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.” Then Luke 17:26-27 adds, “And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.”

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others the danger of waiting until it is too late to turn to Christ in repentance and faith. Once either death or the day of judgment mentioned here comes, it will be too late for all who do not believe. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Description of the Last Three Bowl Judgments

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others the danger of waiting too long before turning to the Lord. A person will no longer have the opportunity to repent once either physical death or the final judgments in Revelation come. In our topic today we are going to see what will happen during the time of the last three bowl judgments.

Revelation 16:10-11 says, “Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.” This is another of the judgments that remind us of the judgment of Egypt in Exodus. Exodus 10:21-23 says, “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, darkness *which* may even be felt.’” So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days. They did not see one another; nor did anyone rise from his place for three days. But all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.” We see that the darkness in Egypt could be felt.

Here in Revelation we see that the kingdom of the antichrist will become full of darkness. Since his kingdom will be worldwide, this means that the entire earth will become filled with darkness. In the Bible darkness is seen when God is bringing judgment. Matthew 27:45-46 says, “Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’” God had placed our sins on Christ as He hung on the cross. Since God cannot look at sin with favor it was necessary while Christ was bearing our sin to cover the land with darkness. In fact Luke 23:44 says that this darkness extended beyond the land of Judea. This darkness in Revelation speaks of the fact that this is the judgment of God.

During this darkness we see that the people on the earth will gnaw their tongues with pain. This will be the pain that is continuing from the previous bowl judgment. Revelation 16:9 says, “And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. Notice how similar their response is described in Revelation 16:11 where we read, “They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.” In both verses it says that the name of God will be blasphemed. In both verses we see that they will not repent. Here we see that during this part of the tribulation that the people throughout the whole earth will be speaking evil of God but at the same time will refuse to repent of their sins.

We go on to read about the sixth bowl judgment in Revelation 16:12-16 where we read, “Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like

frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 'Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.' And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon." Here we see that this judgment will cause the Euphrates River to dry up and become a dry riverbed so that it will be easy for the armies of the east to move quickly to come and fight against the nation of Israel.

Those Jews who remain during the last half of the tribulation will come to the Lord. Before His coming to rule on the earth, the Lord promised to save those Jews who come to Him in repentance and faith. Zechariah 13:9 says, "I will bring the *one*-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'This *is* My people'; and each one will say, 'The LORD *is* my God.'" Here we see that three demons (unclean spirits) will come out of the mouths of Satan, the antichrist and the false prophet (Satan's unholy trinity). These demons will be given power to perform signs by Satan. These demons will go out to deceive the kings of the whole earth. The purpose of the demons is to gather the kings of the earth and their armies to come to completely destroy the land and the people of Israel.

The Lord will allow these demons to gather the kings and their people for a very different reason. He will even dry up the Euphrates River to make it easier for those from the east to come. In fact the Lord will allow the demons to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Then at that very time that the nations will think that they will finally destroy Israel the Lord says that He is coming as a thief. For those who have received Christ, they will welcome His coming. However, most of the people will be in total rebellion against God and are gathered to try and totally destroy the Jews since Christ was born through the Jewish nation.

We see that these demons will gather the kings and armies of the world to the place that is called in Hebrew, Armageddon. In the Old Testament Megiddo was a city in the northern part of Israel. The Jordan River Valley together with the Dead Sea and the area south of the Dead Sea is also known as the Valley of Megiddo. Revelation 19:11-14 says, "Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations." This will be the final battle of Armageddon and Christ will destroy the armies with the word of His mouth.

Revelation 16:17-21 says, "Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, 'It is done!' And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. Then every island

fled away, and the mountains were not found. And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great.” Here we see that said that this judgment will complete the judgments of the tribulation. The only judgment remaining will be the judgment at the end of the millennium and the eternal judgment both in Revelation 20.

This final bowl judgment will have a very dramatic effect on the entire earth. It will include thunderings, lightnings and a great earthquake. This earthquake will be much greater than any earthquake that has ever happened since the creation. This earthquake will affect Jerusalem in one way and the rest of the earth in a very different way. We see that Jerusalem will be divided into three parts. This will make it possible for the city to become much larger. Zechariah 14:4-5 says, “And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, *making* a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee *through* My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah.” This will allow the Jews to escape as Satan and the people of the world make their final effort to destroy the Jews. However it will also make Jerusalem much larger for the millennium. In addition, there will also be an expansion in a third direction (possibly toward the west).

This earthquake will be worldwide in its effects. Great Babylon will be remembered by God and He will bring total destruction on Babylon as it experiences the fierceness of the wrath of God against both the city and the whole system of evil for which Babylon stands. We will see this destruction of Babylon in more detail in Revelation 17 and 18. Meanwhile the total appearance of the entire earth will be changed. Every island in the oceans will be removed. The mountains of the earth as we know them today will cease to exist. There will be great hail from heaven that will strike many people of the earth. Hailstones are actually pieces of ice. Here we see that each of these pieces of ice will be a talent in weight (about 100 pounds). God had warned the Egyptians in Exodus 9:19, “Therefore send now *and* gather your livestock and all that you have in the field, for the hail shall come down on every man and every animal which is found in the field and is not brought home; and they shall die.” Any person that is hit by one of these hailstones will probably be killed instantly since they are much larger than hailstones of Egypt.

This will not cause any of the rebellious people on the earth to repent. Instead we see that the people of the earth will blaspheme God because of the plague of hail. This plague of hail will be different and worse than any hailstorm that has ever struck the earth in the past because it will be worldwide and have huge hailstones. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how completely these last three bowl judgments will affect both the earth and all of the people that are on the earth. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these plagues.

The Description of the Fall of Religious Babylon

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the last three bowl judgments that will come upon the earth. We saw that these judgments will have a tremendous impact on the entire earth. In this topic we will see that the fall of religious Babylon is described.

We see that John was promised by an angel that he would be shown the destruction of religious Babylon. Revelation 17:1-2 says, “Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, ‘Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.’” Here we see that it was one of the angels that had one of the seven bowls of judgment that spoke to John about the judgment that would come to religious Babylon. This judgment is called the judgment of the great harlot.

Many times in the Old Testament fornication and prostitution were used to describe unfaithfulness to God. Jeremiah 3:6-9 illustrates this when those verses say, “The LORD said also to me in the days of Josiah the king: ‘Have you seen what backsliding Israel has done? She has gone up on every high mountain and under every green tree, and there played the harlot. And I said, after she had done all these *things*, ‘Return to Me.’ But she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it. Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also. So it came to pass, through her casual harlotry, that she defiled the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.” In these verses we see that both Israel and Judah committed adultery with rocks and trees. This spoke of the altars that they made to worship their idols on the mountains and under the trees.

In the same way, the great harlot here in Revelation speaks of false religion. Revelation 14:8 says, “And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Here we see that the harlot makes all nations participate in her false religion. Revelation 13:16-18 says, “He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number *is* 666.” These verses show that every person will be required to take the mark of the antichrist in order to buy or sell. False religion which worships the antichrist is here described as the great harlot who sits on many waters. Revelation 17:15 says, “Then he said to me, ‘The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.’” Here we see that the antichrist and his false worship will rule over the nations with the result that the nations are unfaithful to God. This is spiritual fornication just like Israel practiced in the Old Testament.

Revelation 17:3-5 says, “So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 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. And on her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” The woman is false religion. False religion by many people of the earth was introduced in the Bible in Genesis 11:4 where we read, “And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *is* in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’” This was in direct disobedience to the statement of God to Noah in Genesis 9:1 where we read, “So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.’” God had to change the languages to stop the building of this tower. This mystery Babylon is not the city (it still existed at the time John wrote). Instead it is the false religion that began at the tower of Babel.

We see that false religion will be sitting on a bright red beast that is full of names of blasphemy. This red beast is the evil governments of the world. The antichrist will work with the governments as he gains power during the first half of the tribulation. We see that evil governments will be dressed in expensive clothes of bright red and purple. Evil governments will also have great riches of gold, precious stones and pearls. I Timothy 6:10 tells us, “For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” Then II Timothy 3:1-5 adds, “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” Here we see that this love of money causes evil governments and false religions to be religious but to deny the power of God.

At the middle of the tribulation the antichrist will set up his image. Matthew 24:15 says, “Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand).” The construction of this image is described in Revelation 13:14-15 which says, “And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.” Here we see that the false prophet who says worship the beast will tell people to make an image to the beast and then will kill all who will not worship that image.

Once the antichrist sets up his image, worship of the antichrist will replace all other false religions and this worship will become the false religion. We see what the antichrist and his false religion will do in Revelation 17:6-7 where we read, “I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled

with great amazement. But the angel said to me, ‘Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.’” Here we see that the antichrist and his false religion will be drunk with the blood of the saints. Throughout history false religions have persecuted the true followers of God. Once Christ died and rose again this persecution has been particularly focused on the destruction of the saints who follow Christ. This persecution has often been carried out by both false religions and evil governments that deny God.

This same thing will be true in the tribulation. We see that it says that the woman will be drunk with the blood of the saints. This refers to the tribulation saints. Revelation 7:9-10 says, “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’” Then Revelation 7:14 adds, “And I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ So he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’” During the tribulation religious Babylon will be filled with the blood of the tribulation saints as false religion makes every effort to destroy anything that represents Christ.

We see that these saints are called the martyrs of Jesus. The word translated “martyr” is used 34 times in the New Testament. The word is usually translated witness. For example, Acts 1:8 says, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” However, twice this word is translated martyr in Revelation and once in Acts 22:20 where we read, “And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.” Stephen was the one who was stoned to death for his faith in Acts 7:57-60. Here we see that these are the faithful witnesses who will be put to death for their faith in Christ during the time of the tribulation.

When John heard that the harlot and the beast would work together he was filled with amazement. This amazement was due to the fact that the antichrist will gain world power by pretending to be a friend of religion. Then he will suddenly set up his image and the people will be required to worship his image. The mystery that John did not understand is how the antichrist and false religion will work so well together to control the whole world when the antichrist will require everyone to worship his image. That ability for false religion and evil government to work together to destroy Christ and His followers was illustrated in John 19:15 where we read, “But they cried out, ‘Away with *Him*, away with *Him*! Crucify Him!’ Pilate said to them, ‘Shall I crucify your King?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but Caesar!’” We want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that false religion and evil government can work together when they are united together against Christ and His followers. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Explanation of the Fall of Religious Babylon

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how the antichrist and false religion will work together to kill all those who follow Christ. We saw that it is possible because they are united against Christ and His followers. In this topic we will learn more about the fall of religious Babylon.

Revelation 17:8 says, “The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.” Here we see that the beast was and is not. Revelation 13:3-4 says, “And *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, ‘Who *is* like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?’” These verses say that the one of the heads of the beast is mortally wounded. We saw in the topic on these verses the fact that the antichrist will imitate the death and resurrection of Christ. We saw in that topic that this imitation will cause the entire world to follow the antichrist.

Here we will see more details about how this will happen. Revelation 16:13 says, “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.” In this verse we see that three demons come out of the mouths of the unholy trinity. We saw that the unholy trinity is Satan, the antichrist and the false prophet. A demon comes out of the mouth of the beast (antichrist). Here in Revelation 17:8 we see how the antichrist will imitate the resurrection. This demon actually comes out of the bottomless pit and enters the antichrist and will return to perdition (eternal destruction). In fact the antichrist and the false prophet along with the demons that possess them will be sent to eternal judgment when Christ captures them in the battle of Armageddon. Revelation 19:20 says, “Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

We saw that this imitation of the resurrection will cause all who are not tribulation saints to be deceived and believe the lie of the antichrist. Here we see that their names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world. II Thessalonians 2:11-12 says, “And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” We see that they will believe the lie of the antichrist because they want to believe that lie because of their own unrighteousness.

Revelation 17:9-14 says, “Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and

the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful.” Here we see that the seven heads are the seven mountains on which the woman sits.

The seven mountains (hills) may represent the fact that the antichrist will come out of the former Roman Empire. However, we see that there are also seven kings or kingdoms and that five of these have fallen. Daniel had a vision of four kingdoms or empires (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. However, the Old Testament also talks about two powerful empires before these empires. The Egyptian Empire enslaved the Israelites and their power was broken when God destroyed Pharaoh and the Egyptian army in the Red Sea. The Assyrian Empire conquered the nation of Israel and took Israel captive in 722 B.C. They were later conquered by the Babylonian Empire which also conquered Judah in 586 B.C. The first five (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and Greece) had ceased to exist as empires by the time John wrote the book of Revelation. The sixth was Rome and that empire still existed. In fact it was the empire that had placed John on the island of Patmos. However, John said that the final world empire is yet to come.

That final world empire will only last for a short time. We have seen that the ruler of that world empire will be from the seven and is going to perdition (eternal judgment). As we mentioned above, Revelation 19:20 says that the antichrist will go directly to perdition when he is defeated by Christ. The beast is described as both the seventh and the eighth king but is of the seven. The fact that the antichrist will appear to receive a deadly wound and then imitate the resurrection means that he can be both the seventh and the eighth king since he will claim that he has been raised from the dead.

We see that the ten horns are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom. Daniel 7:24 says, “The ten horns *are* ten kings *who* shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; he shall be different from the first *ones*, and shall subdue three kings.” Here we see that these kings will arise from within this kingdom. This means that they will serve under the antichrist as administrators of ten sections of this world empire. The fact that it says that they will rule for only one hour points out the fact that the length of this empire will be very short. It will take the antichrist the first 3 ½ years to gain total control of the world so this empire will only be the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation. All ten will have one mind to serve the antichrist. They will have no power of their own but will give their power and authority to the antichrist.

They will lead the armies under their administration to come and make war with the Lamb (Christ). However, the Lamb will overcome them. Christ is the Lord of Lords and has all authority. Matthew 28:18 says, “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’” Here we see that Christ is the One who has true authority. Revelation 22:5 says, “There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.” He is also

the King of kings. He is the One who will rule forever. Those who will rule with Him are the called, chosen and faithful. John wrote this letter to the saints in the churches and said in Revelation 1:6, “And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

Revelation 17:15-18 says, “Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.” In verse one we see that the angel called the woman “the great harlot who sits on many waters.” We saw that this great harlot is organized religion. Here we see that the waters are the peoples of the nations.

The antichrist and the ten kings under him will work with the harlot (organized religion) until the antichrist has complete control. However, the antichrist and his ten kings have no desire to share power with organized religion. In fact we see that they hate organized religion. The antichrist wants all power. Once he has set up his image in the temple he will demand that all worship him just as Nebuchadnezzar did. Nebuchadnezzar had his herald announce in Daniel 3:6, “And whoever does not fall down and worship shall be cast immediately into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.” The hatred of the antichrist and his ten kings for organized religion is so great that they will make the harlot “desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.”

God is in control even though the antichrist and his kings are in complete rebellion against God. Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.” Because their hearts are also totally controlled by evil, the antichrist and his kings actually all have the same purpose. Their purpose is to destroy all organized religion because Satan and the antichrist do not want any competition. The ten kings will all be in complete agreement and they will destroy all religion so that they can give their kingdom to the beast. However, they will actually fulfill the words of God because God will allow their evil hearts to carry out their plan. However, the antichrist and the ten kings will be judged when Christ comes to rule.

We see that the harlot (woman) is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. We saw in the previous topic that this woman had a name written on her forehead. That name is “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” The true church was a mystery that was not revealed until Ephesians 2 and 3. The false church and all organized religion is a mystery that was not revealed until Revelation. Here we see that this religion is the mother of all false religions. Christ will allow the antichrist to completely destroy organized religion because of his own desire for power. This is the destruction of religious Babylon. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why God will allow the antichrist to destroy organized religion before he is destroyed. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Description of the Fall of Commercial Babylon

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how Christ will allow the antichrist to completely destroy organized religion before he is judged. In this topic we will see that godless materialism (commercial Babylon) is the other god of the people and so we will see the judgment of commercial and political Babylon.

We saw that false religion by a large group of people began at Babel. We also see that Babel became the first city to seek to make a name for itself. Genesis 11:3-4 says, “Then they said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and bake *them* thoroughly.’ They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *is* in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’” Here we see the attitude of pride as they determined to build a city that would make a name for itself. That is the attitude that throughout history has produced commercial Babylon.

Revelation 18:1-3 says, “After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.” Here we see that a sudden change comes to the earth. In Revelation 16:10 we read, “Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain.” This darkness is suddenly turned to light as this angel causes the earth to be illuminated with his glory.

We see that this angel has been given great authority. The angel is then given an announcement about the event that will happen soon. We see the first words of the message of the angel as he cries out with a very loud voice, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.” This is an announcement of what will soon happen as God tells His people to come out of the city before this destruction comes in verse 8. We read what Babylon will become once this destruction happens. This destruction will mean that no people will remain because of the complete destruction. Instead the only things left to live there will be the demons, the foul spirits, the unclean birds and the hated birds.

We see that the destruction of Babylon will affect all of the nations of the world. We saw in the previous two topics that Babylon has committed religious fornication with its false religion. A big part of many false religions is sinful living. This sinful living is often a part of a drunken stupor. This is illustrated by the drunken celebration of Belshazzar the king of Babylon when it was conquered by Medo-Persia. Daniel 5:3-4 says, “Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which *had been* in Jerusalem; and the king

and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone.” Here we see that in their drunken state that they mocked God by using the gold vessels taken from the temple as their praised their gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood and stone. We see that commercial Babylon will invite the nations, the kings of the earth and the merchants of the earth to join them in their godless lifestyle. Then we see the merchants from throughout the earth have become rich through their business.

God also gives a warning for the saints to separate themselves from commercial Babylon before the judgment of Babylon comes. Revelation 18:4-5 says, “And I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.” Here we see that God gives His saints two reasons to separate themselves from commercial Babylon. First, God says to come out of Babylon so that the saints do not share in their sins. We see how the sins of Sodom affected Lot in II Peter 2:7-8 where we read, “And delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds). We see that Lot was oppressed and tormented daily as he saw and hear about their lawless deeds.

Second, God tells his people to come out of Babylon and its godless commercial system so that they will not receive her plagues. In Genesis 19:22-26 we read, “‘Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there.’ Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar. The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.” God gave Lot time to escape but there will be no time to escape when the judgment of Babylon comes. We also see that Lot lost his wife even though he escaped.

God goes on to say that the sins of commercial Babylon have reached to heaven. He also says that He has remembered her iniquities. Hebrews 10:17 quotes Jeremiah 31:34 when it says, “Then He adds, ‘Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’” God does not remember the sins of His saints but here we see that He does remember the sins or those who are in rebellion against Him. In fact all who do not come to the Lord in repentance and faith with one day be judged by their works. Revelation 20:13 says, “The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.” We go on to read what God will do to commercial Babylon because of her sin.

Revelation 18:6-8 says, “Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her double according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix double for her. In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit *as* queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’ Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong *is* the Lord God who judges her.” Then Revelation 16:19

adds, “Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.” Here we see that God is going to complete the judgment of Babylon in one day.

God said that Babylon will reap what she has sown. Galatians 6:7-8 says, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” We saw the description of Babylon in Revelation 17:4-5 where we read, “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. And on her forehead a name *was* written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” Here we see that Babylon is a city with great riches and great evil and the time has come for her judgment.

The evil works of Babylon will be repaid with evil. In fact we see that this repayment of evil to Babylon will be double. First, she will be repaid for her pride. We read that Babylon has glorified herself. The pride of Babylon is compared to the pride of Satan in Isaiah 14:4, 12-15 where we read, “That you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: ‘How the oppressor has ceased, the golden city ceased!’...How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *How* you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit.” This shows the tremendous danger of pride.

Second, Babylon will be judged for her luxurious living because she gained that wealth by destroying others. God said that he will give Babylon torment and sorrow. We also see the heart attitude of Babylon when that city said, “I sit *as* queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.” Babylon and those who follow the pattern of Babylon have lived in luxury throughout history. Now we see that God says that the time has come for judgment for Babylon and all those who have the attitude of Babylon. Just as the original city of Babylon fell in one day, we see that the judgment of commercial Babylon will happen in one day. It will be a day of death and mourning. We see that it will also be a day of total and complete destruction. Babylon will be so completely burned with fire that there will be nothing left. Babylon will experience the fact that the Lord God who judges her is strong. In the next topic we will see how the rest of the world will respond to the complete destruction of commercial Babylon.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that in the tribulation that both spiritual and commercial Babylon that got their start at the tower of Babel will be so completely destroyed that they will never recover. This judgment of Babylon will affect the people throughout the world as the city of Babylon and all that it stands for will be completely destroyed and will never rise again. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain how complete this judgment will be.

The Sorrow at the Fall of Commercial Babylon

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that Babylon and the worldwide commerce that is related to it will be completely destroyed very suddenly. In this topic we are going to see how the fall of Babylon will bring worldwide sorrow to those who have benefitted by the riches and commerce of that city. That sorrow will be the focus of this topic.

We see that there will be great sorrow when Babylon is destroyed. This will be sorrow by all who will be a part of the commercial Babylon and benefit from the business and commerce of Babylon. Revelation 18:9-10 says, “The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’” We see that most of the kings and rulers of the world experience great personal benefits from the wealth and business that is carried on around the world. Throughout history many kings and rulers have been involved with false religion and many more have become wealthy through the business that is carried on worldwide. This will certainly continue to be true in the tribulation.

These kings and rulers in the tribulation will have great sorrow when they see that Babylon and its whole related system have been completely destroyed. In fact we read that they will weep and lament. The word translated “weep” means to mourn as those who mourn for the dead with great pain and grief. We see that they will observe from a distance because of their own fear. We see that they will describe Babylon as a great city and a mighty city. The word translated “great” speaks both of size and influence. The word translated “strong” means mighty or strong. At the same time they will also speak of the suddenness of the judgment of this city. In fact all three groups mentioned in these and the following verses will mention the fact that this judgment has come in one hour.

We go on to read about the sorrow of the businessmen. Revelation 18:11-17a says, “And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore: merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls! For in one hour such great riches came to nothing.’”

We see why the businessmen will weep and mourn because of the destruction of Babylon.

Their sorrow will be due to the fact that this has affected their own businesses. No one is buying their products any more. Here we see that their sorrow is based on their own greed. This will involve businessmen throughout the world who sell a wide variety of products. Those who have merchandise of gold and silver will be those involved in the types of businesses that handle precious metals like banks and dealers who buy and sell precious metals. Others will be businessmen who sell jewelry, expensive clothing, expensive perfumes, various forms of wine and other related products. Furniture makers and sellers will also be affected. This will also include those who raise and sell various types of food and transportation.

Then we see that even the businessmen who buy and sell the bodies and souls of men are included. Slave trade was banned in many countries but in recent years this has become more and more common again as people are bought and sold in the sex trade and other similar businesses that place no value on human life. Paul wrote in I Corinthians 6:18-19, "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?" Followers of the Lord are to flee sexual immorality because their body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. In contrast, the temple of Aphrodite in Corinth the priestesses in that temple were temple prostitutes. Those who controlled these women placed no value on their lives. We see that in the tribulation there are also businessmen who place no value on the lives of people but buy and sell them for their own profit.

These businessmen have longed for the riches that come from buying and selling. Now those who have made a profit by buying and selling with Babylon will mourn when Babylon is destroyed because the things that made them rich are gone from them. There is no longer anyone to buy from them. These businessmen who became rich by selling their products to Babylon will also stand and watch from a distance because of their fear. They will be weeping and mourning just as the kings of the earth will be mourning because they can no longer make a profit by selling their goods to Babylon. This is a reminder that their sorrow is due to their own greed and not their sorrow for the people whose lives have been destroyed by the destruction of Babylon.

They will be filled with sorrow because of the riches of that great city. They will see that in one hour the riches of Babylon will be gone. We see that the businessmen of the tribulation will be like the rich fool that Christ described. Luke 12:18-21 says, "So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, *and* be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So *is* he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." God shows that the attitudes of the people of the tribulation who gain riches but leave God out of their thinking are fools. The same is also true today.

Revelation 17b-19 says, "Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What *is* like this great city?' They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and

wailing, and saying, ‘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.’” These verses show us how the destruction of Babylon will affect those who have ships that will carry the goods of the businessmen to Babylon. This attitude will also be the attitude of the sailors and all others who are involved in any way with the movement of goods to Babylon including those who travel by ship.

We see that all those involved in any way will also watch from a distance as they see the smoke of Babylon as a result of this destruction. The shipping business makes its profits by moving goods and people from one part of the earth to another. The larger the city, the more business those in the shipping business receive from that city. As a result, we see here that all ship owners, all who travel by ships, all who work on those ships as well as everyone who has any kind of trade that involves trade on the seas and oceans will cry out in great sorrow as they see the sudden destruction of Babylon. God created the oceans to show His works as well as provide a way to move products and people from place to place. Psalm 107 23-24 says, “Those who go down to the sea in ships, who do business on great waters, they see the works of the LORD, and His wonders in the deep.” Instead of seeing the works and wonders of the Lord, at this time those whose work is related to shipping will only see the loss of their business and income.

These people will even throw dust on their heads as they cry out in their weeping and wailing. People in Bible times would place dust on their heads to show their sorrow and grief. Joshua 7:6 says, “Then Joshua tore his clothes, and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the LORD until evening, he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads.” The elders showed their sorrow for the loss in battle. Then in Job 2:12 we read, “And when they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him, they lifted their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven.” In this verse the friends of Job showed their sorrow as they saw his physical condition so affected Job that they did not even recognize him. However, the sorrow of those in the shipping trade will be their grief because the destruction of Babylon means the loss of business and their profits.

Those in the shipping trade will be filled with sorrow. However, their sorrow is not for the people of the city. Instead their sorrow will be because they have become rich by the wealth that they receive by trading with Babylon. This same attitude will be shown by all of the groups that mourn the destruction of Babylon. Sinful people will have no concern for the spiritual life and the eternal judgment that will come upon the inhabitants of Babylon as they are all destroyed by this destruction. Genesis 6:5 says, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.” The people will show their wicked hearts during the tribulation because of their concern over their own wealth and have no concern for their own spiritual needs or the needs of others. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that hearts that are controlled by evil are totally lacking in concern for their own spiritual needs and the spiritual needs of others. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Rejoicing at the Fall of Commercial Babylon

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why those whose hearts are controlled by evil have no concern for their own spiritual needs or for the spiritual needs of others. This attitude results in rebellion against God. In this topic we will see that the saints will rejoice because the judgment of God against this rebellion will be just.

We see the rejoicing that will be in heaven in Revelation 18:20 where we read, “Rejoice over her, O heaven, and *you* holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!” We see that there will be rejoicing in heaven over the destruction of Babylon. All in heaven will realize that God has waited a long time to judge and that His judgment is just. Romans 12:19 says, “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but *rather* give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.” God will judge all who reject the free gift of eternal life that Christ paid for with His blood and for which the Father showed that He was satisfied by raising Christ from the dead. However, we see that God has been very patient and longsuffering as He has waited a long time to carry out that judgment.

God has demonstrated that patience many times throughout history but He did finally bring judgment. In the time of Noah, Noah preached for one hundred years while he built the ark. II Peter 2:5 says, “And did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly.” Then in the time of Abraham Genesis 15:16 says, “But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet complete.” It was more than six hundred years later that God brought Israel into the land of Canaan and they carried out this judgment. The only cities that He judged earlier were the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah as II Peter 2:6 says, “And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.” In both cases we see that God waited a long time.

However, God has waited much longer to judge the rebellion and unbelief of the world. That judgment is still future and will be carried out after Christ takes the church to heaven. Here we see the rejoicing that will happen in heaven as part of that judgment is carried out during the tribulation. This rejoicing will be due to the fact that God is avenging the treatment of the holy apostles and prophets. Throughout the Old Testament we see that the prophets were persecuted by those in rebellion against God. Hebrews 11:36-37 describes some of that persecution. Those verses say, “Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.” Similar things happened to the apostles in the New Testament. That is the reason there will be rejoicing in heaven when God avenges that persecution.

We see that Babylon will be completely destroyed so that nothing remains. Revelation 18:21-

22 says, “Then a mighty angel 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 not be found anymore. The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore.’” A millstone was a large stone wheel. Here we see that God compares the judgment of Babylon to the sea being struck with a huge stone that will be similar to a millstone. This could be similar to a large meteor falling from the sky. This will cause the immediate and complete destruction of Babylon.

This destruction will be so complete that the city, the people and everything in the city will be so completely destroyed that nothing will be found. In Genesis 19:24 we read, “Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens.” In this verse we see the complete destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Many people believe that the remains of these cities are at the bottom of the Dead Sea but the remains of those cities have not been located. In the same way when Babylon is destroyed by the Lord no one will be able to find anything that remains. There will be nothing remaining to be found.

We see that the various groups of people that will live in Babylon will not be found. First, we see that those who provide music will not be found. Four groups of musicians that will be in Babylon are mentioned that will be completely destroyed. The harpists are people who play the harp and sing with the accompaniment of the harp. In Revelation 14:2-3 we see that harpists can develop beautiful music. Those verses say, “And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.” However, no one will ever play a harp again in Babylon after this destruction. Musicians include those who play other kinds of musical instruments. Flutists and trumpeters are musicians who play particular kinds of musical instruments.

Second, we see that no workers who worked in Babylon will be found. This will include all craftsmen of any craft (trade). The word translated “craftsmen” means those who work at any trade. Twice this word is used in Acts 19 to talk about those who were silversmiths. Acts 19:24-25 says, “For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: ‘Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade.’” Revelation shows that all who work in any trade or industry in Babylon will be destroyed. Millstones were used to grind grain for food. We see that no more food will be prepared in Babylon because none of the workers in that business will be found. The judgment of all people in Babylon will be complete.

Revelation 18:23-24 says, “The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth.” Here we go on to read that there are other things that will never again happen in Babylon. These verses show that the

complete destruction of Babylon will mean that a lamp will never shine again in the city. That is the result of the fact that there will be no city left in which the light can shine. Everything in the city will be destroyed.

Weddings are a time of happiness. However, no bridegroom or bride will ever be heard in the city of Babylon again. In fact none of the things that bring happiness will happen again in Babylon because it will no longer exist. We also see another reason why the world will mourn because of the destruction of Babylon. We read that the merchants of Babylon will be the great men of the earth. In Mark 6:21 the word translated "great men" is translated nobles. That verse says, "Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief *men* of Galilee." Then Revelation 6:15 says, "And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains." From these other two verses we see that these are the men who have great influence. Here in this verse we see that these merchants are men who have great influence throughout the earth.

However, their great influence throughout the earth will be a result of their sorcery. The word translated "sorcery" is from the Greek word "pharmakeia" and means witchcraft or magical arts. It is often found in connection with idolatry which many times also included some form of drug. This word is used two other times in the New Testament. Galatians 5:20 includes it in a list of the works of the flesh and that verse says, "Idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies." Then Revelation 9:21 adds, "And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts." Together this word, its uses and its meaning show that the real influence of Babylon will be through idolatry, the use of drugs and witchcraft. These things are very common in our world today and will continue to grow in their influence.

One of the things that religious and commercial Babylon has done to spread her evil influence is to kill and destroy those who stand for righteousness. This evil influence has been the cause of the death of many of the prophets and saints who have been killed throughout the earth. Revelation 12:11 says, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Here we see that many saints have given their lives as they shared the message of the Gospel which will result in the judgment of Satan and his influence throughout the world." This is why there will be great rejoicing in heaven because of the fact that Satan and his followers with their evil influence have been defeated. We will see that this rejoicing continues in the next topic because of the fact that Christ can now come to rule on the earth for a thousand years. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain that God is righteous in His judgments because Satan and all of his followers have chosen to live in total rebellion against God and have made many efforts to destroy the righteous. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Announcement of the Second Coming of Christ

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why heaven will rejoice when God destroys religious and commercial Babylon because they have shed the blood of the prophets and the saints. In this topic we will see that this rejoicing will continue in heaven.

Revelation 19:1-5 says, “After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord our God! For true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her.’ Again they said, ‘Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, ‘Amen! Alleluia!’ Then a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!’” The word translated “Alleluia” is used four times in the New Testament and all four uses are in this chapter. The word means “Praise the Lord” or Hallelujah. This great multitude in heaven is probably the angels because the church and the four living creatures will fall down in worship in response to their message.

We see several reasons that this praise and glory belong to God. First, the judgments of God are true and righteous. Second, God has judged the antichrist and his entire religious and political system that corrupted the entire earth with his idolatrous and immoral worship. Third, God has avenged the blood of the saints that was shed by the antichrist and his followers. Fourth, God has judged the whole idolatrous system of the world and that judgment is eternal. Revelation 20:14-15 says, “Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. Then Revelation 21:8 adds, “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” This praise in heaven also looks forward to that eternal judgment.

We see that the twenty-four elders will fall down in worship to God. We saw in Revelation 4:4 and 4:7-8 that the elders are the church as it worships before God. The church will be joined by the four living creatures in that worship. We saw in Revelation 4:8 that these four living creatures are either cherubim or seraphim and that these are angels that are described in Ezekiel and Isaiah. Here we see that they will fall down with the church and worship God and express their praise to the Lord by saying “Amen! Alleluia!” When people say “amen” it means “Let it be so!” Then we already saw that Alleluia means “Praise the Lord!” As the saints and living creatures express their worship, a voice will come from the throne saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!” We are reminded that all who fear God have the privilege of giving praise to the Lord. It does not matter whether we are small or great because we will all have this privilege because we are His servants.

Revelation 19:6-8 says, “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” Here we see that the great multitude will again rejoice. The sound of this great rejoicing is compared to two things. First, it is compared to the sound of many waters. When you have a large waterfall in a river with much water coming over the falls the sound is so loud that you cannot even hear the shout of a person that is nearby. Second, the sound is compared to mighty thunderings. Again this is a sound that is so loud that you can hear nothing else.

This great multitude will be rejoicing for two reasons. First, they will be rejoicing because of the fact that the Lord reigns. Lord speaks of the fact that He is the One to whom all things belong. All things belong to the Lord because He is the Creator of all things. God speaks of the One who is the true and living God and is also used to speak of the Trinity. Genesis 1:26 says, “Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” Notice that God uses the plural to speak of Himself in the very first chapter of the Bible. “Let Us make man in Our image.” Omnipotent means that God is the One who has all power and is the ruler of all things. He is the Almighty One.

Second, the great multitude will be rejoicing because the marriage supper of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. A Jewish wedding had three parts during the time of Christ. The betrothal was often arranged by the parents when the future husband and wife were children. Ephesians 1:3-4 says, “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.” We see that these verses are particularly talking about the church because Ephesians 1:13-14 says, “In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” All in the church were chosen before the foundation of the world.

The second part of the wedding occurred when the future husband went to get his bride and she was presented to him. It also included several days of celebration following the wedding ceremony. In I Thessalonians 4:13-18 says, “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.” The church is taken to heaven at the Rapture.

The third part of the wedding ceremony was the wedding supper which completed the wedding ceremony. In II Corinthians 11:2 we read that the church is betrothed to Christ as a chaste virgin. In Ephesians 5:23-32 we see that the church is presented as the bride of Christ. Now here in Revelation 19:7-8 we see that “the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” We also see that the wife is clothed in fine linen which is the righteous acts of the saints. As a result, these verses complete the wedding ceremony and the church is now called the wife of Christ instead of the bride of Christ. We go on to read in Revelation 19:9-10, “Then he said to me, Write: ‘Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ And he said to me, ‘These are the true sayings of God.’ And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, ‘See *that you do not do that!* I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.’”

We see that all those who are called to this marriage supper of the Lamb receive a very special blessing even though they are not a part of the bride which is the church. All of the Old Testament saints are a part of those who are called to the marriage supper. The church was not revealed until Matthew 16:18 when Christ told Peter and the other disciples, “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” Here we see that the church was still future. It began on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1 so all Old Testament saints will be called to the wedding supper. We see that the church will be complete when it is taken to heaven at the Rapture as the church is not mentioned after Revelation 3. As a result, all tribulation saints will be included in those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The angel then told John, “These are the true sayings of God.” We see that John immediately fell at the feet of the angel to worship him. Immediately the angel told John not to worship him. Instead the angel said that he was just a fellow servant with John. Colossians 2:18-19 says, “Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false* humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase *that is* from God.” We are told not to worship angels but to focus on the one who is the Head, Christ. This is a reminder that all worship belongs to the Lord. In fact this is the message of both the Old and the New Testaments. In the Old Testament we see that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. In the New Testament we are all brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. In addition, we see that all angels have this same message whenever they speak in either the Old or New Testaments. In the same way we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to share the message that Jesus is Lord. We want to help them learn to “Worship God!” We also want to help them learn to teach others to “Worship God!” May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things to others.

The Defeat of the Beast and the False Prophet

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the purpose of the marriage supper of the Lamb. In this topic we will see the return of Christ to the earth and the actual judgment of the beast and the false prophet as well as those who follow him.

We read about the second coming of Christ as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS when Revelation 19:11-16 says, “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.” Here we see that at His second coming that Christ will come as conquering King to take His rightful rule.

The first time Christ presented Himself as King He rode on the colt of a donkey. In His second coming we see that He will come riding on a white horse which was the animal of a conquering king or general in the time the New Testament was written. In these verses we see that Christ is called Faithful and True. II Thessalonians 3:3 says, “But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard *you* from the evil one.” This verse tells us that Christ is faithful in guarding His followers from the evil one. I John 5:20 says, “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.” This verse says that the followers of Christ are in Him. Because Christ is both Faithful and True, He is the One that is able to judge and make war on all unbelievers in righteousness.

This judgment will be a righteous judgment. II Thessalonians 1:6-9 says, “Since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us 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.” Here we see that when Christ and His armies are revealed from heaven that they will bring judgment. This judgment will be the immediate judgment that will happen at the time that Christ comes. This judgment will also include the final judgment when all those who have rejected Christ throughout the history of the world will receive everlasting destruction where they will be separated from God for eternity.

Three times in Revelation we see that the eyes of Christ are like a flame of fire. The other two verses which tell us that are Revelation 1:14 and 2:18. We saw in those verses that Christ is

able to examine the thoughts of the hearts. Christ defeated Satan at the cross when He shed His blood so we see that His robe is dipped in blood. Christ is also called the Word of God several times by John. This shows the fact that Christ fully reveals the Father. Christ will be followed by the armies of heaven. However, the armies will not need to fight against the world. Instead we see that a sharp sword goes out of the mouth of Christ that will defeat the nations. Christ only has to speak the word to defeat the nations. His judgment will be swift and complete. Revelation 14:19-20 says, "So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs." Here we see that the Valley of Armageddon will be the winepress of the wrath of God where Christ will carry out this judgment of the nations. Then He will rule as KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Revelation 19:17- 18 says, "Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great." Since the blood will be up to the bridle of a horse in a valley that is 160 miles long, there will be many bodies lying everywhere in that valley. In these verses we see that the Lord will send an angel of heaven to gather the birds of prey (birds like hawks, eagles, vultures, buzzards and all of the other birds of heaven) to eat these bodies that are scattered throughout this valley.

These verses tell us that the angel will invite all of these birds to the supper of the great God. Matthew 24:27-28 tells us that the angel will gather these birds so that they are ready before Christ even returns. Those verses say, "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together." We are reminded that the coming of Christ will be very sudden so that is why the angel will gather these birds in advance. We see that these birds are gathered for the supper of the great God.

This will fulfill the prophecy of Ezekiel 39:17-20 which says, "And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Speak to every sort of bird and to every beast of the field: Assemble yourselves and come; gather together from all sides to My sacrificial meal which I am sacrificing for you, a great sacrificial meal on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood. You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams and lambs, of goats and bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan. You shall eat fat till you are full, and drink blood till you are drunk, at My sacrificial meal which I am sacrificing for you. You shall be filled at My table with horses and riders, with mighty men and with all the men of war," says the Lord GOD." The birds of prey will have a great meal as they devour "the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great."

Revelation 19:19-21 says, "And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by

which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.” In these verses we see that Christ will defeat the beast, the false prophet and all who follow them.

The armies of the world will gather to completely destroy all that remain of the people of Israel. Instead at that very moment Christ will return to judge the antichrist and his false prophet as well as the kings and people of the earth as we have seen in the previous topic. We see that the beast (antichrist) and the false prophet who worked signs in the presence of the beast will be captured rather than killed. It is through the signs that this false prophet will perform that the people of the earth will be deceived to take the mark of the beast and worship his image. Revelation 13:12-17 says, “And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted *power* to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

We see that the beast and the false prophet will be cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. During the thousand years that Christ rules, Revelation 20:2 says, “He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.” Then Revelation 20:7-8a says, “Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth...” Satan and all who follow him will be defeated and Revelation 20:10 says, “The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Meanwhile all of the rest of the people will be killed when Christ speaks the word. Then the birds that the angel has gathered will be filled with the flesh of the dead bodies. This judgment will be their physical judgment and their eternal judgment will come after the thousand year rule of Christ.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what will happen to the beast and the false prophet as well as their followers when Christ returns as the judge of all unbelievers before He begins His rule on earth for a thousand years. May the Lord richly bless you as you equip your children to explain these things.

The Thousand Year Rule of Christ

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children explain how Christ will judge the beast, the false prophet and all that follow them at the Second Coming of Christ to this earth. In this topic we will see that after Christ has destroyed all in rebellion by the word of His mouth that Christ will rule on the earth for one thousand years (the millennium). We will see that the thousand years will be a time of peace.

Revelation 20:1-3 says, “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.” In the first seven verses of this chapter we see that a thousand years is mentioned six times. In this way the Lord made it clear that this period will come after the close of the tribulation and before the final judgments and the creation of the new heavens and the new earth.

The angel will lay hold of the dragon and bind him for a thousand years. He will then be cast into the bottomless pit. All seven times the bottomless pit is mentioned in Revelation we see that it is the place where the demons (fallen angels) are kept captive and wait for their final judgment when they will be cast into the lake of fire. We see that the dragon is described in three ways in these verses. First, he is called the serpent of old. This refers to Genesis 3:1 where we read, “Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?” Here we see that he came and deceived Eve. Second, the dragon is called the Devil. This name speaks of the fact that he is a slanderer and a liar. In John 8:44 Christ told the religious leaders, “You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.” Third, the dragon is called Satan. He is the one who rebelled against God because of his pride and led one third of the angels to join him in rebellion against God.

We see that the Lord sent an angel from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit. In Luke 8:31 we read, “And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the abyss.” These were the demons that were in the man named Legion because he had many demons in him. Those demons begged not to be cast into the abyss (bottomless pit) because that is where the demons are sent to wait for their final judgment when they will be sent to the lake of fire. In Revelation 9:1-11 we see that many demons with the power of scorpions came up out of the bottomless pit. These demons were given five months to torment the people of the earth. In Revelation 11:7 and 17:8 we see that the beast came out of the bottomless pit. Here in these verses in Revelation we see that Satan will be bound and sent to the bottomless pit for a thousand years. The angel will shut Satan up in the bottomless pit and put a seal on him. This

means that Satan will be confined in the bottomless pit and cannot deceive the nations during this thousand year period. He will be released for a short time at the end.

Revelation 20:4-6 says, “And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and holy *is* he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” We see that during this time that the tribulation saints will be given thrones and judgment will be given to them. This means that the tribulation saints will rule with Christ during the thousand years that Christ rules on the earth.

The description of the tribulation saints is also given. We see that many of them will be beheaded for their witness to Jesus and their witness for the Word of God. The reason that they will be beheaded is due to their witness and to the fact that they will refuse to worship the beast or his image. We see that they will also refuse to receive his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. Revelation 13:16-18 says, “He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number *is* 666.” The tribulation saints will refuse to take this number and will be killed for their refusal.

Satan, the beast (antichrist) and the false prophet will all be judged for killing these tribulation saints. Revelation 19:2 says, “For true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her.” Then Revelation 19:20 adds, “Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.” Here we see that the antichrist and the false prophet were sent directly to the lake of fire. Satan will join them after he is loosed for a short time at the end of the thousand years. Revelation 20:10 says, “The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

The tribulation saints will rule with Christ for the thousand years. However, the rest of the dead will not be raised at this time. They will not be raised until the time of the final judgment. We will learn about that in our next topic. Meanwhile the dead who are raised at the end of the tribulation experience the first resurrection. They are blessed because the second death (eternal judgment) will have no power over them. Instead they will be priests of God and of Christ during the thousand years. They will also rule with Christ for the thousand years.

Revelation 20:7-10 says, “Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth,

Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” These verses tell us why Satan will not be sent to the lake of fire at the end of the tribulation. During the thousand years that Christ rules on the earth there will be children born to the tribulation saints. Each of these children will face the same choice that all others have faced ever since Adam. They must make the choice whether or not to repent of their sin of unbelief.

Those who do not turn from that sin and turn to Christ will not have a leader to encourage them in their rebellion against Christ. However, we see that Satan will be released from his prison (the bottomless pit) for a short time at the end of the thousand years. Suddenly those with inward rebellion will have a leader. We see that Satan will go out to deceive the nations throughout the earth. Genesis 10:1-2 says, “Now this *is* the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood. The sons of Japheth *were* Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.” These verses show us that Magog was the second son of Japheth and the grandson of Noah. Magog is mentioned five times in the Bible. The next reference is the genealogy given in I Chronicles 1:5 and it repeats what Genesis 10:2 says. Twice Magog is mentioned in Ezekiel 38 and 39 where we see that Gog and Magog will lead a great army against Israel. In those chapters we see that Gog is the prince of Magog.

We see that Satan will gather a great army to come against Christ. In fact the number is so large that it is compared to the sand of the sea. This great army will surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city. Jeremiah describes the beloved city where Christ will reign in Jeremiah 3:17 where we read, “At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts.” Then Zechariah 14:11-12 describes how the rebellious will be judged where those verses say, “*The people* shall dwell in it; and no longer shall there be utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths.” This will be the result of the fire that comes down from heaven. Satan will then be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where he will be tormented forever.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain the thousand year rule of Christ, the eternal judgment that will come on Satan and the physical judgment of all who join in the rebellion against Christ as the end of that thousand year period. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Great White Throne Judgment

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what will happen at the end of the time when Christ rules on the earth for a thousand years. We saw the eternal judgment of Satan and the physical judgment of those who rebelled. In this topic we will see the eternal judgment of all those who have rebelled and never repented throughout the history of the world.

We want to look in more detail at the time when Satan was judged and what this judgment of Satan will be like when the sentence against him is carried out. Revelation 20:10 says, “The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” This verse tells when Satan will receive his judgment. However, John 16:8-11 and John 19:30 tell us when Satan was judged. John 16:8-11 says, “And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” These verses tell us that Satan has been judged. John 19:30 says, “So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.” This verse tells us that both the payment for our sins and the judgment of Satan was finished at the cross. Satan is on death row waiting for his punishment to be carried out.

Revelation 20:10 tells us when Satan will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. Brimstone is rock that can burn and melt. It is yellow in color and gives off a gas that can make it difficult to breathe. It is similar to the melted rock that flows from a volcano which has an extremely high heat. We see that the city of Sodom was destroyed by brimstone. Luke 17:29 says, “But on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all.” Then Revelation 9:17-18 says, “And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulfur yellow; and the heads of the horses *were* like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. By these three *plagues* a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths.” Here one third of the population of the earth will be killed by fire and brimstone. We see here that Satan will experience eternal judgment in the lake of fire and brimstone. In the next verses we see that all unbelievers will soon join him.

Revelation 20:11-12 says, “Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.” The One who will carry out this judgment is Christ. Acts 17:30-31 says, “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now 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.” Here we see that the One who will judge is the One that was raised from the dead.

The great white throne judgment is where all unbelievers from throughout all of history will be judged. II Peter 2:9 says, “*Then* the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment.” Here we see that all the unjust are reserved for the day of judgment. In fact the earth and the heavens will also be judged because they have been under the influence of sin since sin began. The word translated “flee away” means to flee or to vanish. II Peter 3:7 says, “But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” We see in Revelation 21:1 that they will be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth.

We see that every single dead person will stand before God at this great white throne judgment. It does not matter whether a person has had little influence or great influence. Each person will stand before God to be judged. We see that the books are first mentioned in Daniel 7:9-10 where we read, “I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of His head *was* like pure wool. His throne *was* a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.” These books have recorded in them all of the sinful attitudes of the heart, the thoughts, the words and the actions that every unbeliever has committed.

The unbelievers will be judged for four different things. First, the sinful attitudes of the heart are mentioned in Genesis 6:5 where we read, “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.” Then Jeremiah 17:9 adds, “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked; Who can know it?” Second, the fact that their thoughts will be revealed is explained in Luke 8:17 where we read, “For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor *anything* hidden that will not be known and come to light.” Then Romans 2:16 adds, “In the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.” Third, they will also be judged for their words. Matthew 12:36-37 says, “But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” Fourth, they will be judged for their actions. Romans 3:19-20, 23 says, “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin...For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Since all believers will have been raised from the dead, the dead are all those throughout history who have not believed in God and repented of their sin of unbelief. For all believers everything written in these books was blotted out at the moment of salvation. Acts 3:19 says, “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.” That is why Romans 8:1 says, “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” As believers we will not stand at the great white throne judgment.

We also see that another book is opened. That book is the Book of Life. Philippians 4:3 says, “And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life.” Then Revelation 3:5 says, “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” All who have come to God in repentance and faith have their names written in the Book of Life. No unbelievers have their names in that book. Instead they will be judged by their sinful works that have been written in the other books because their sins have not been blotted out.

Revelation 20:13-15 says, “The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” In these verses we see that all of the dead are gathered together to the great white throne judgment. Those who have died in the sea will be delivered to this judgment. Death includes all those who have died in some other way. All who are dead go immediately to Hades at the time of death. The word translated Hades or hell is used eleven times in the New Testament. Luke 16:23 says, “And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.” Here we see that Hades is the place of torment where all unbelievers wait for this final judgment.

We see that each person will be judged according to his or her works. There may be some like the rich young ruler who have thought that they had obeyed all of the commandments. However, we saw earlier that these books have recorded in them all of the sinful attitudes of the heart, the thoughts, the words and the actions that every unbeliever has committed. As each person is judged, the things that are written in these books about that person will be the basis for the judgment of that person. Each person will be judged only for his or her own sins. As Romans 3:19 says, “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” After their personal sins are revealed no one will say that they have obeyed all of the commandments. Their mouths will all be stopped.

Once every dead person who is in Hades has been judged according to their personal works Death and Hades will be cast into the lake of fire. Physical death was when they originally died. This is called the second death because this death means eternal separation from God in the lake of fire. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain very clearly what will happen to all who fail to repent of their sin of unbelief so that they can warn others about this judgment that will come. Then help them learn to share clearly the need to repent and come to Christ in faith. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Joy in the New Heavens and the New Earth

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what will happen at the great white throne judgment. We also saw that we want to make sure that they can clearly explain the importance of repentance and faith to all those who have not yet believed in Christ. In this topic we are going to see what happens when the Lord creates a new heaven and a new earth.

In Revelation 20:11 we saw that the present earth and heaven fled away. We saw that fled away means to flee or to vanish. That destruction is described in II Peter 3:10-13 where we read, “But 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. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” The present earth and heavens have been corrupted by sin.

In Revelation 21:1-4 we read, “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.’” Here we see the new heaven and the new earth that will replace the present heaven and earth. It will have no sea.

Once the new earth is revealed, the New Jerusalem will descend out of heaven from God. This means that the New Jerusalem is already being prepared. Christ told the disciples in John 14:2-3 says, “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also.” In Matthew 25:10 we see that all saints will come into this new city. That verse says, “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.” The door was shut to all unbelievers and they were all judged in our last topic. Now we see that all believers will be in this New Jerusalem as it comes down out of heaven.

The word tabernacle in the Old Testament means the place where God lives. Here we see that God will live with us in the New Jerusalem and we will be His people. This makes it clear that God will live with us for all eternity. He will be with us and He will be our God. In addition, God will remove all tears of sorrow from our eyes because there will be nothing throughout

eternity that will cause sorrow. Then we are given a short summary of the things that cause tears. Throughout eternity there will be no more physical or spiritual death. I Corinthians 15:55-57 says, “O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory? The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Sin was the cause of death and sin and all of its consequences are judged in Revelation 20 so there will be no death in eternity in the new heavens and the new earth.

The word translated “sorrow” means mourning or sorrow. James 4:9 says, “Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom.” Here the word is translated mourning. Then Revelation 19:7-8 says, “In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, ‘I sit *as* queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.’ Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong *is* the Lord God who judges her.” In these verses the word is translated sorrow twice and mourning once. The things that bring mourning and sorrow will be gone for eternity so there will be no more sorrow.

The word translated “crying” is used of Christ in Hebrews 5:7-8 where we read, “Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.” Christ cried out in agony as He prepared for the cross knowing that while He was bearing our sins that He would be separated from the Father. Luke 22:42-44 says, “saying, ‘Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.’ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” Then while He was on the cross Matthew 27:46 says, “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’” There will be no need to cry in eternity because God will be dwelling with us. In addition, there will be no more pain because the former things have passed away.

Revelation 20:5 says, “Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful.’” The word translated “new” can mean recently made or it can mean new in kind or something that was never heard of before. It is used the first way in John 19:41 where we read, “Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.” It is used the second way in John 13:34 where we read, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” Here Christ told the disciples that it was both possible and also commanded that they love as He loves them. We are also to love as He loves us. That new kind of love happens when we are yielding our human spirit to the Holy Spirit. This word can be used both ways here. In addition to creating a new heaven and a new earth, everything in the creation will be new and different. In addition, there will also be many things which are new in kind and have never been heard of before. We can count on the fact that these things will be true in the new heaven and the new earth because the words of Christ are always faithful and true.

Revelation 21:6-8 says, “And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” Here we see how quickly Christ will make all things new. He had just said, “Behold I make all things new.” Then He said, “It is done.” In the first creation Christ spoke various things into existence over a six day period. Here we see that He will speak and it will be done.

Then we are reminded again that Christ is “The Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.” Revelation 1:8 says, “‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End,’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’” This phrase in Revelation 21:6 is a reminder of the fact that Christ is the Lord “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” Then Christ reminds us of the water of life which was first offered in the Old Testament. Isaiah 55:1-2 says, “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread, and your wages for *what* does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what is* good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance.”

This same offer is given in the New Testament. John 4:13-14 says, “Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall 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.” Then John 7:37-38 adds, “On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”

In addition, all who receive the water of life will inherit all things. John 3:35 says, “The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.” The Father has given all things in to the hand of Christ. Then Romans 8:16-17 says, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.” In these verses we see that we are joint heirs with Christ which means that He will share all things with us throughout eternity.

We also see that those who were judged in Revelation 20 will not be in the new heaven and the new earth. Instead they will have their eternal existence in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone and will be eternally separated from God. That is the second death. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what these verses teach about the new heaven, the new earth and the New Jerusalem. We also want to help them explain who will be there and who will not be there. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Description of the New Jerusalem – Part I

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what God says about the new heaven, the new earth and the New Jerusalem. We also saw who will enjoy these new things. In this topic and the next we are going to see that we are given a description of the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:9-11 says, “Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, ‘Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light *was* like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.” The angel that the Lord chose to tell John about the New Jerusalem was one of the angels that had earlier brought one of the seven bowls of judgment. However, this time the angel came to bring good news. Judgment of sin was necessary but now that it has been judged those who follow the Lord can rejoice in the future and not look back at the past.

Cities are known by the people who live in them. In our day some cities are known for their corruption. Others are known for the major businesses that are in those cities. In the same way, the New Jerusalem will be known by the people who live in it. The angel told John to come and said he would show John the bride, the Lamb’s wife. Revelation 19:7-8 says, “‘Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.’ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” These verses teach that the bride of Christ became the wife of Christ. In order to show John the New Jerusalem, the angel said that he would show John the Lamb’s wife. This means that this city will already reveal the character of the people who are in that city even though Christ had not yet come at the time John learned this. The verses show that the clothing of the bride is the righteous acts of the saints.

Earlier topics showed that the unbelievers will be judged by their unrighteous heart attitudes, their thoughts, their words and their actions. In contrast, believers will have their righteous works rewarded. I Corinthians 3:11-15 says, “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” Some works of believers are only for this world. They will be revealed by fire. However, any works that have eternal value are good works that will be rewarded. In fact these verses say that these works are the clothing of the saints. The clothing of the saints in the New Jerusalem will reveal their good works throughout eternity.

The angel carried John to a high mountain where he could see the holy Jerusalem. These verses

point out that the New Jerusalem is called the holy Jerusalem. This is due to the fact that the New Jerusalem has never been touched by sin or the effects of that sin. Instead it descends from the heaven of God. The heaven of God is also known as the third heaven. In II Corinthians 12:2-4 we read, "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." The first heaven talks about the sky and the atmosphere above us. The second heaven is the place of the sun, moon and stars. I Kings 8:30 makes it clear that the third heaven is where the throne of God is as that verse says, "And may You hear the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear in heaven Your dwelling place; and when You hear, forgive." These verses teach that Paradise is now in the third heaven. That is where Christ is presently preparing a place for us.

Revelation 21:11 says that the holy Jerusalem has the glory of God. Then Revelation 21:23 says, "The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light." In the New Jerusalem there will be no need for the sun, moon and stars because Christ and the glory of God will provide all of the light that is needed for eternity. That light is described as being like the light of a very precious stone. That stone is like or similar to a jasper stone. Jasper stones can be various colors like purple, blue, green, white or even the color of brass. Since this verse says it will be as clear as crystal it will be similar to a diamond and will reflect the glory of God to make the city even brighter.

Revelation 21:12-13 says, "Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west." These verses show that the wall will be very large and very high. There will be a total of twelve gates in the New Jerusalem with an angel in charge of each gate. Each of the twelve gates will have the name of one of the tribes of Israel written on it. In the wilderness three tribes were on each side of the tabernacle. Here the three of the gates will face each direction. It is possible that the names on the gates will be the same as the tribes that were on each side in the wilderness. Numbers 2 tells us that Judah, Issachar and Zebulun were on the east, Reuben, Simeon and Gad were on the south, Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin were on the south and Dan, Asher and Naphtali were on the north.

Revelation 21:14-18 goes on to tell us how the New Jerusalem will be set up when those verses say, "Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. Then he measured its wall: one hundred *and* forty-four cubits, *according* to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. The construction of its wall was *of* jasper; and the city *was* pure gold, like clear glass."

These verses teach that the twelve gates will have the twelve names of the tribes of Israel. In

these verses we see that the wall of the New Jerusalem will have twelve foundations or foundation stones. The names of the twelve apostles will be written on these twelve foundation stones. These are called the twelve apostles of the Lamb. When choosing a replacement for Judas we are given the specific ministry of the apostles in Acts 1:21-22 where we read, “Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.” The specific ministry of the twelve apostles was to be witnesses of the resurrection. Their names on the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem will be a reminder throughout eternity that it was the death and resurrection of Christ that makes it possible for all who are in the New Jerusalem to have that eternal life.

The angel who talked to John had a golden reed to measure the city, its gates and its wall. In Revelation 11:1-3 those verses explained that an angel was given a measuring rod to measure the temple of God, the altar and those who worship there. These things will be measured because they are the possession of God. The court around the temple was not measured because it was under the control of the Gentiles for forty-two months. The temple, altar and people who worship there are measured to show that they are the possession of God. In the same way this means that the measuring here of the city, its gates and its wall is an indication that the city and everything in it including all of the people in the city belong to God. I Peter 2:9 says, “But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” In the same way all of the people who are measured in the New Jerusalem will also be a holy people and God’s own special people for all eternity.

These verses show that the New Jerusalem is laid out as a square. That means the width, length and height will all be equal which makes the city in the shape of a cube instead of flat like the cities today. This means that it will be an amazing city which is almost impossible to even imagine. A furlong is about 600 feet. Twelve thousand furlongs is nearly 1400 miles. That means that the New Jerusalem will be nearly 1400 miles long, nearly 1400 miles wide and nearly 1400 miles high. The wall surrounding this city will be 144 cubits (216 feet) thick. The angel said that this wall surrounding the city will be of jasper which was described a few paragraphs ago. Then the angel told John that the city itself will be made of pure gold that will be like clear glass. A person can only image what the New Jerusalem will look like but it will certainly be much more beautiful than any person can ever image. The Lord reveals additional things about the New Jerusalem in our next topic as well. We want to help our physical and spiritual children be able to explain that Christ is preparing a very special place for us that we will be able to enjoy for all eternity. It is greater than we can even imagine until we get there. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain how special that place will be.

The Description of the New Jerusalem – Part II

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain how special the New Jerusalem will be. There is much more to learn about this city. In this topic we will continue to learn more about this wonderful city that Christ is presently preparing for us and who will be there in that city.

In Revelation 21:19-21 we read, “The foundations of the wall of the city *were* adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation *was* jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates *were* twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city *was* pure gold, like transparent glass.” These verses teach more about the foundations and the gates of the New Jerusalem.

The previous verses said that the foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem will have the names of the twelve apostles on them. These verses explain that the foundation stones will be made from very precious and beautiful stones. The twelve stones mentioned in these verses are all very beautiful stones of various bright colors. They are also very precious stones and have great value today. In the world the rareness of a stone is part of what helps to give it greater value. However, in the New Jerusalem there will be no worldly values. These stones will be precious because of their beauty and the fact that they will reflect the glory of God.

Most of these stones were originally used in the breastplate of the High Priest of Israel. In Exodus 28:2 we read, “And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.” Then Exodus 28:17-20 adds, “And you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones: *The first row shall be* a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; *this shall be* the first row; the second row *shall be* a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings.” God said that the purpose of these stones worn by the High Priest was for glory and for beauty. The New Jerusalem will certainly reflect the glory and the beauty of the Lord throughout eternity.

These verses also say that the twelve gates will be made of twelve pearls. We saw in the previous topic that the walls of the New Jerusalem will be nearly 1400 miles high. That means that each gate will be about the same height as the wall so these pearl gates will be close to 1400 miles in height. The first part of verse 25 says, “Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there).” This verse makes it clear that the gates will not be shut. Instead they will be for beauty and will reflect the glory of God. The street of the city will be of pure gold. However, this gold is not like the gold of this present world but will be transparent like glass. This means that even the street will reflect the glory of God. This description of the foundation, the walls, the gates and the street of the city make it clear that the New Jerusalem will be a very beautiful place that will reveal the glory of God for all eternity.

Revelation 21:22-24 says, “But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it.” Christ described the purpose of the earthly temple in the city of Jerusalem when He said in Mark 11:17, “Then He taught, saying to them, Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’” This statement by Christ combined two verses from the books of Isaiah and Jeremiah. Isaiah 56:7 says, “Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *will be* accepted on My altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.” Then Jeremiah 7:11 says, “‘Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen *it*,’ says the LORD.” That temple was a house of prayer.

However, we see that there will be no need for a temple building to be a house of prayer in the New Jerusalem. There will be a temple in the New Jerusalem but it will not be a building. Revelation 21:22 tell us that the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. Then verse 23 explains why they will be no temple when that verse says, “The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light.” The New Jerusalem will not need the sun, moon, stars or any other light because the glory of God will fill the New Jerusalem with Light. The verse then explains that this means that the Lamb is its light. I John 1:5 says, “This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.” The New Jerusalem will be filled with the light of the glory of God and the Lord will dwell with us so there will be no need for a temple building because the glory of the Lord fills the entire city. God will dwell among us.

The word translated “nations” is the word “ethnos” from which we get our word ethnic. The most common translation of this word in the New Testament is Gentiles and then nation or nations. Here we see that it speaks about the nations who are saved. This means that the New Jerusalem will include all of the saved from every nation or people. However, in eternity we will have a new identity so we will be called by our new name. In I Peter 2:9 we read, “But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” In eternity our new identity will be that we are the people of God and we will all have the privilege of walking in His light.

When Christ rules on earth prior to the final judgments and eternity, Psalm 72:1 says, “Give the king Your judgments, O God, and Your righteousness to the king’s Son.” Psalm 72:11 adds, “Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him.” Then Psalm 72:17-19 concludes the Psalm by saying, “His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And *men* shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed. Blessed *be* the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things! And blessed *be* His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled *with* His glory. Amen and Amen.” Verse 17 points out that when Christ rules for a thousand years all nations will be blessed in Him. This points out that fact that all kings and people who come to Christ in that time will continue

to walk in the light of Christ when there is no more sun. They will bring the glory and honor that they give to Christ into the eternal kingdom of Christ because He will rule forever and ever.

Revelation 21:25-27 says, “Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” In these verses we see that the gates of the New Jerusalem will not be shut. Throughout most of the history of the earth cities built walls with gates to protect them from their enemies. These gates were usually shut at night to provide protection when the people could not see their enemies. However, in I Corinthians 15:25-26 we read, “For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy *that* will be destroyed *is* death.” Then Revelation 21:1-4 says that in the New Jerusalem there will be no death because the former things have passed away. Since there are no enemies, there will be no need for the gates of the New Jerusalem to be closed. Instead the gates will be to reflect the glory of God because the kings and nations who have trusted in the Lord will all bring their glory into the city.

Then we go on to read what will not enter into the New Jerusalem. We see that nothing that defiles or causes an abomination or a lie will be brought into the New Jerusalem. Revelation 20:15 says, “And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” Then Revelation 21:8 adds, “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” All who followed Satan whether fallen angels or people will have been cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone from which there is no escape. As a result, nothing that defiles can enter the new heaven, the new earth or the New Jerusalem.

Then we are reminded who will be in the New Jerusalem. We see that all those and “only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life” will be there. Revelation 22:19 says, “and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, 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.” Here we see that those who deny part or all of the Word of God will not have their names written in the Book of Life. In contrast, Revelation 3:5 says, “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.” Then Matthew 10:32 adds, “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.”

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others that all who confess Jesus as Lord and believe in their hearts that He has risen from the dead can be assured that their names are written in the Book of Life. In addition, they are promised that Christ will not blot out their names from the Book of Life. Instead He will confess their names before the Father. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

Life in the New Jerusalem

In our last two topics we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain what the New Jerusalem will be like. We have seen that it is a wonderful city where the glory of God will be reflected by the beauty of the city. The focus of this topic is to give a tiny introduction to the life we will have in the New Jerusalem.

Revelation 22:1-5 says, “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, *was* the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each *tree* yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name *shall be* on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.”

John saw that the New Jerusalem will have a pure river. This river will come from the throne of God and of the Lamb. These verses mention several things about this pure river of water. First, the river is pure. This means that there is nothing in the water that would in any way be unclean. It is free from any pollution. Second, we see that it is the water of life. Christ mentioned the living water three times in the book of John. John 4:10-11 says, “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.’ The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?’” Then John 7:37-39 says, “On the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.” These verses show us that living water is the Holy Spirit that God has placed in our hearts so that living water can flow from us. However, that living water will continue to flow from the Father and Christ throughout eternity. Third, that water is clear as crystal.

Next these verses show that the tree of life will be in the New Jerusalem. That tree is first mentioned in Genesis 2:9 where we read, “And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Then Genesis 3:22 adds, “Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.” Adam could eat this fruit and live forever but if he would have eaten it after he sinned he would have lived forever in sin. In fact there are many trees of life on both sides of the river. These trees will bear twelve different kinds of fruit. There will be a different kind of fruit each month. The word “healing” can be translated by either household or healing and speaks of service rendered by one to another.

In the New Jerusalem there will be no more curse because all of the effects of sin will cease to exist. Instead the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there. We will have the privilege of enjoying perfect fellowship with God and the Lamb throughout eternity as we serve Him. We will be able to see His face. That has not been true on this earth. God told Moses in Exodus 33:20, “But He said, ‘You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.’” The name of God will be on the foreheads of all who are in heaven. In the Bible the name of God on the forehead meant that the person belonged to God and that the person would have the character of God. Revelation 3:12 says, “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And *I will write on him My new name.*” We will have the character of God on our heads and in our hearts.

In the New Jerusalem there will be no night. There will be no lamp. There will be no light of the sun. Instead the Lord God will give us His eternal light. Revelation 21:23 says, “The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light.” In addition we see that all saints will rule with the Lord forever. This changed status is explained in Revelation 3:21 where we read, “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” Christ says that we will sit on the throne with Him. Romans 8:16-17 says, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs— heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.” Jesus made it clear that we will be glorified together with Him as fellow heirs.

Revelation 22:6-7 goes on to say, “Then he said to me, “These words *are* faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. ‘Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.’” The angel told John that these words are faithful and true. Faithful means these words can be trusted and believed. The reason for that is due to the fact that they are true. I John 5:20 says, “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.” This verse uses the word “true” three times. These words are perfect because they are spoken by the Father and the Son. The Father and the Son sent the angel to tell John these words so that we as His servants can know the things that will soon come to pass.

The promise of Christ is, “Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.” The coming of Christ to fulfill all of the things that John was told to write in this book is going to happen quickly. That means that there will be no delay. That time has been clearly defined in this book. The events in this book can be summarized by the outline given in Revelation 1:19 which says, “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.” The things which John had seen in chapter one was to see Christ in all of His glory. The things which are include the period of the churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. That means that the next event to happen

will be the Rapture of the church as the Christians are taken to heaven. The things that are hereafter include chapters 4 through the end of the book. Chapters 4-18 have the seven year tribulation. Chapter 19 has the coming of Christ to defeat all of the forces of Satan and the antichrist. Chapter 20 has the 1000 year rule of Christ, the final defeat of Satan and the final judgments. Chapters 21 and 22 give us an introduction to eternity. Christ also promises that those who obey the words of the prophecy of this book will be blessed.

Revelation 22:8-10 says, “Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, “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.” And he said to me, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.” John spoke about himself in Revelation chapter one. Throughout the rest of the book John has been writing the various things that the angel told him to write. In Revelation 21 John gave testimony of the fact that he saw the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. Now John begins his conclusion by giving his personal testimony about the things that he has seen and heard throughout the book.

Then John said that he fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who had shown him all of the things that he had written in the book. The angel immediately told John not to worship him. This is a reminder that we are not to worship any person or angel. The angel said that he is a fellow servant with John. This is a reminder that all who follow Christ are His servants even though He has chosen to call us His friends and His brethren. As followers of the Lord we are all fellow brethren. This includes the prophets who wrote part of the books of the Bible as well as all who have followed the Lord and are obedient to the Word of God. Then the angel told John, Worship God. I Corinthians 10:31 says, “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” Everything that we do including our worship is to bring glory to God.

Then the angel told John, “Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.” In contrast, Daniel was told in Daniel 12:4 and Daniel 12:9, ““But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase’... And he said, ‘Go *your way*, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end.”” Daniel was told that the words were to be shut up during his time. He was also told that at the time of the end that “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.” John was told not to seal this book because the time is at hand. In this day and age we are seeing many run to and fro throughout the earth. We also see a very rapid increase in knowledge. This is an indication that we are near the time when the judgments described in Daniel and in Revelation are getting very close.

We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain to others the importance of being prepared so that they will be prepared for the future. Those who are prepared will rejoice with Christ while those who fail to prepare will be judged. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things.

The Lord is Coming Quickly

In our last topic we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children become equipped to explain to others the importance of being prepared for the future. In this topic we will see that the book of Revelation concludes with Christ saying, “Surely, I am coming quickly.” We also see the response that we each should have to that promise.

The concluding thoughts in the final verses of Revelation are very important. Christ begins with a warning that every person must make a choice. Revelation 22:11 says, “He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.” There will be no time for anyone to get ready when Christ comes either at the Rapture of the church or at the time when Christ comes to rule. Those who are unjust will remain unjust. Those who are filthy will remain filthy. The word translated “unjust” means unrighteous or sinful. Ephesians 2:1-3 says, “And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.” An unjust person is one who is still dead in his or her trespasses and sins. The word translated “filthy” means to be defiled or made filthy by one’s sin.

In contrast the second half of the verse speaks of those who have been made alive by Christ. Revelation 22:11b says, “He who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.” Then Ephesians 2:4-7 says, “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, 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 Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” The word translated “righteous” means to be innocent or faultless and approved of or acceptable to God. All who come to God in repentance and faith have received the righteousness of Christ as a free gift and so stand in His righteousness and not their own righteousness. II Corinthians 5:21 says, “For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” When God saved us, He called us with a holy calling and made us His holy temple. I Corinthians 3:16-17 says, “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.” We will continue to be holy throughout eternity.

Christ went on to say that He is coming quickly. Revelation 22:12-17 says, “‘And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last.’ Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. ‘I, Jesus, have sent My angel to

testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.’ And the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.” In these verses we see that Christ is bringing His reward with Him and will reward every believer for all of his or her works that have eternal value.

Then Christ says that he is the first and the last in three different ways. First, Alpha and Omega are the first and the last letters in the Greek alphabet and the book of Revelation was originally written in the Greek language. Second, Christ says that He is the Beginning and the End. When Colossians speaks about the fact that Christ is the creator of all things in Colossians 1:15-19 verse 17 says, “And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.” Then Hebrews 13:8 adds, “Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever.” Third, Christ says that He is the First and the Last. These three statements all point to the eternal existence of Christ.

Then we see who will enter into the New Jerusalem and who will not be in that city. Those who are blessed and will enter that city are those who have come to God in repentance. This repentance has given them the desire to love God with their whole heart, soul and mind, to love their neighbor as they love self and to love one another as Christ has loved us (the three commandments that summarize the whole Old and New Testaments – Matthew 22:37-40 and John 13:34-35). All who have come to God will also have the right to the tree of life. They will be able to enter through the gates into the city. Christ said in John 10:7-9, “Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who *ever* came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.” Those who come to the Father through Christ will be in the New Jerusalem. Those who do not will be judged and not enter.

Then Jesus says that He sent the angel who testifies that Jesus is the Root and Offspring of David. As the Creator, Christ is the Root because He is the Creator of all things. As a descendent of David, Jesus is the Word who became flesh and dwelt among men. In II Timothy 2:8 we read, “Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel.” He is totally God as the Creator and totally man as the descendent of David. As the God-man Christ died for our sins and the Father showed that He was satisfied with that payment by raising Christ from the dead. Christ is also the Bright and Morning Star. II Peter 1:19 says, “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.” Christ is the Morning Star who has already dawned in our hearts and with whom we will be in eternity forever. That is why the Holy Spirit and Christ both invite all who will hear them to Come and all those who seek the living water to Come. Christ offers that eternal life as a free gift as He promised in John 4:14, “But whoever drinks of the water that I shall 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.” That eternal life is a free gift.

In Revelation 22:18-19 Christ warns about adding to or taking away from His Word. Those verses say, “For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if

anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, 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.” First we see that we are to hear the words of the prophecy of this book. To hear means to hear with understanding. John 5:24 says, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. John 1:12 adds, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.” Those who hear, believe and receive Christ are assured that they have eternal life.

In contrast, these verses tell us that some will add their own words or the words of some other person to the things that are written in this book. The scribes and Pharisees are examples. Christ told the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 15:6b-8, “Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: ‘These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.’” Many have followed their example by adding their words or the words or books of others to the Word of God. Christ warns that all who add to His words will experience the plagues that are written in this book. They have not believed in Christ and received Him so they will be judged.

The Sadducees give us an example of those who take away from the words of the book of this prophecy. Acts 23:8 says, “For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.” The Sadducees denied the resurrection and many other things that are written in the Word of God. Instead of adding to the Word of God, those who follow their example take away from the Word of God by denying various parts of the Bible. Christ warns that those who deny the resurrection and other parts of the Word of God will not have their name in the Book of Life, they will not have a part in the holy city and they will not enjoy the blessings promised in this book.

Then Christ gives a final promise and our response in the final two verses of the Bible. Revelation 22:20-21 says, “He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.” Christ says that He is coming quickly. We show that we believe He is coming quickly by our response both in words and in actions. Christ said in Mark 13:31-33, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.” We can rejoice if we are prepared for the coming of Christ at all times. Christ also promises that we will experience His grace. We want to equip our physical and spiritual children to learn to explain to others the importance of being ready at all times for the coming of the Lord because He is coming quickly. May the Lord richly bless you as you equip your children to explain to others why they also need to be ready.