

REVELATION CHAPTER TWELVE

BOOK OF THE REVELATION

What follows represents the unedited lecture notes of Pastor Merritt's teaching of the book of the Revelation. Please feel free to reproduce all or part for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. The teachings of the Revelation represent a compilation of things learned from such men as Col. R. B. Thieme, Lewis Sperry Chafer, Charles Ryrie, Arno C. Gabelein, John Walvoord, Hal Lindsay, Dwight Pentecost, along with an exegesis of the Greek and Hebrew texts.

Revelation

Lesson 90

10-17-2001

1. Tonight we will continue our study of the book of the Revelation. We are in lesson ninety.

1.1 Before we do though let's remember the application of 1Jo 1:9 as might be necessary.

2. Last week I finished teaching the eleventh chapter and when time ran out I was about to begin a study of chapter twelve.

3. Recall our outline and what is about to unfold.

3.1 The first book of the Revelation is closed.

3.2 We had a description of the Tribulation and the Second Coming in chapters 6-11.

3.3 We had a warning that the seven vials to come (sounded by the angel with the seventh trumpet) will be more disastrous than even the seals and trumpets.

3.4 The second book of the Revelation is about to unfold with chapter twelve and in chapter 19 the Second Coming will be described with great detail.

4. Let's again look at an outline of Revelation 12 through chapter 20.

I. An Introduction and The Fall of Satan and The Armageddon Motivation - Chapter twelve.

II. The False Prophet and The Antichrist are Introduced and Described - Chapter thirteen.

III. The Principle of Grace before Judgment - Chapter fourteen.

A. The 144,000 are seen again with our Lord; the fruit of their labor is seen in heaven.

B. The Big Bird (a carnivorous bird who witnesses) takes a victory lap.

C. Babylon's (The Revived Roman Empire) fall is foretold.

D. A vision of Armageddon is provided.

IV. Heaven Anticipates with Joy the Coming Seven Vial Judgments - Chapter fifteen.

V. The Seven Bowls or Vials are Poured Out - Chapter sixteen.

VI. The Doom of The Whore Church - Chapter seventeen

A. The false or Laodicean church at Rome will no longer prosper and serve the Antichrist because he and the false prophet turn against the head of the world church.

B. The world church meets its doom.

VII. The World Political System at Rome is Destroyed - Chapter eighteen

VIII. The Second Advent of Christ is detailed with emphasis on Him - Chapter nineteen

IX. The Final Judgment - Chapter twenty

5. Let me quote again from John Walvoord:

"Before the details of the judgment to follow are unfolded in the seven vials in chapter 16, the divine revelation turns to other important aspects which relate to this period and which chronologically precede the consummation. Apart from the outpourings of the vials, which occur in rapid succession, there is little chronological movement from this point until chapter 19 and the second coming of Christ. Events and situations are now introduced which are concurrent with the seals and the trumpets. These serve to emphasize the dramatic climax of this period in the Second Coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

6. Rev 11:15-19 by way of expanded translation might read:

Expanded Translation:

Rev 11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a crescendo of voices coming from heaven; they clearly said: "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Father and His anointed One, the Lord Jesus Christ" and now The Messiah King will reign forever and ever."

Rev 11:16 The church age saints in heaven, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying

Rev 11:17 "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, as the One Who was, who is and Who will soon come again; and now as an exercise of your great power and sovereignty you are ready to now reign on planet earth.

Rev 11:18 The nations were angry for they could see and anticipate that the wrath of God was about to descend from heaven. The time had come for God to judge the devil's world and those of the Tribulation who had rejected His salvation plan. It was also a time for rewarding His Tribulation and Old Testament saints. Both the small and the great of planet earth were about to be brought to task because they followed the Antichrist in his destructive plan for the planet."

Rev 11:19 Then I looked up where I could clearly see God's temple in heaven open up, and within His great Temple was the ark of the covenant. And from out of the Temple came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm. Planet earth was under attack for the King was indeed about to come.

Now we are ready for chapter twelve:

Introduction:

1. Chapter twelve deals with the important characters of the period, chapter thirteen with the wicked rulers of the period, and chapter fourteen through nineteen with the ultimate triumph of Christ.
2. This material covered in chapters twelve through nineteen will not necessarily be chronological.
3. In chapters 12 through 14 of the book of the Revelation, the great actors of that time are introduced.
4. There are seven such characters
 - 4.1 the woman, representing Israel,
 - 4.2 the dragon, representing Satan,
 - 4.3 the man child, referring to Christ,
 - 4.4 Michael, representing himself and his angelic army,
 - 4.5 Israel, the remnant of the seed of the woman,
 - 4.6 the beast out of the sea, the world dictator, and
 - 4.7 the beast out of the earth, the false prophet and religious leader of the world.
5. About these main characters swirls the moving scene of the Tribulation.

6. First to be introduced and of prime importance as a key to the whole situation is the woman representing Israel.

7. Before moving forward let's take a quick look at Revelation chapter twelve:

Rev 12:1 A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman [Israel] clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars [twelve tribes] on her head.

Rev 12:2 She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth [a reference to the birth of Christ].

Rev 12:3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon [Satan] with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his head [a description of his eschatological form].

Rev 12:4 His tail swept a third of the stars [angels - original fall] out of heaven and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born [Herod the Great's action].

Rev 12:5 She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter [at the 2nd Advent]. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne [ascension].

Rev 12:6 The woman fled into the desert [dual application: Egypt and protection by certain nations of the Tribulation] to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days [the Great Tribulation].

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

Rev 12:8 But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven.

Rev 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him [middle of the Tribulation].

Rev 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.

Rev 12:11 They [believers] overcame him [Satan in AC] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

Rev 12:12 Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short [the last 42 months of Tribulation]."

Rev 12:13 When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman [Israel of the Tribulation] who had given birth to the male child.

Rev 12:14 The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time [last 3 & 1/2 years], out of the serpent's reach.

Rev 12:15 Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river [total devastation], to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent.

Rev 12:16 But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river [the many places in and around the Holy Land where Jews can find refuge; additionally a reference to the gentile nations who help Israel] that the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

Rev 12:17 Then the dragon was enraged at the woman [believing Israel of the Tribulation] and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring--those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Now let's get specific as we begin with verses one and two of chapter twelve:

KJV

Rev 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

Rev 12:2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

NIV

Rev 12:1 A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head.

Rev 12:2 She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth.

Principles:

1. The first of the seven personages to be introduced in this section is described as a great wonder in heaven, or, better translated, a great "Sign" in heaven from the Greek noun **semeion**.
2. Though what John beholds excites his wonder, he does not use the Greek word for wonder (**teras**), a word which does not occur in the book of the Revelation.
3. The main point is that it is a sign or symbol of importance rather than merely a wonder. Subsequently, six other signs or miracles are mentioned.

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

Rev 13:13 And he (the False Prophet) doeth great "wonders", so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

Rev 13:14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those "miracles" which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

Rev 15:1 And I saw another "sign" in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

Rev 16:14 For they [sixth vial] are the spirits of devils, working "miracles", which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Rev 19:20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought "miracles" before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

4. This sign in verse one is distinguished by being called "great." Though the sign is seen in heaven, it apparently portrays a reality on the earth, for subsequently the woman pictured is persecuted by Satan in the great tribulation.

5. The woman is described as clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.

6. Further, she is with child and waiting the imminent birth of her son.

7. There are many explanations for the identity of the woman.

7.1 No doubt the best and the one to which I subscribe is that she represents Israel as the matrix or national "womb" from which Christ came.

8. By contrast, other representative women are mentioned in the Apocalypse such as Jezebel (Rev 2:20), who represents false religion as a system;

Rev 2:20 Nevertheless, I have this against you: You [Thyatira 800-1517] tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess ... she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.

8.1 the harlot (see Rev 17:1-7, 15-18), the apostate church of the future;

Rev 17:1 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters.

Rev 17:2 With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries."

Rev 17:3 Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns.

Rev 17:4 The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries.

Rev 17:5 This title was written on her forehead: MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Rev 17:6 I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.

Rev 17:7 Then the angel said to me: "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast she rides, which has the seven heads and ten horns...

Rev 17:15 Then the angel said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.

Rev 17:16 The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

Rev 17:17 For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until God's words are fulfilled.

8.2 and the bride, the Lamb's wife (Rev 19:7) and the church joined to Christ in glory.

Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

9. In the Old Testament, Israel frequently is presented as the wife of Jehovah, often in her character as being unfaithful to her husband. Here in Rev 12:1-2 is the godly remnant of Israel standing true to God in the time of the great tribulation.

10. The description of the woman as clothed with the sun and the moon is apparently an allusion to Genesis 37:9-11, where these heavenly bodies represent Israel's rulership and the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant.

Gen 37:9 Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

Gen 37:10 When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?"

11. John Walvoord has concluded "The symbolism may extend beyond this to represent in some sense the glory of Israel and her ultimate triumph over her enemies."

12. This identification of the woman as Israel seems to be supported by the evidence from this chapter. Israel is obviously the source from which have come many of the blessings of God including the Bible, Christ, and the Apostles.

13. The twelve stars would certainly seem to refer to the twelve tribes.

13.1 The persecution of the woman coincides with the persecution of Israel.

14. The woman as the nation of Israel is seen travailing in birth and awaiting delivery of her child. Frequently in Scripture the nation Israel is pictured in the tribulation time as going through great trial and affliction.

15. Though, historically, the nation gave birth to Christ through the Virgin Mary, the implication of verse 2 is that the references are to the sufferings of Israel as a nation rather than to the historic birth of Christ.

16. It may also refer to the sufferings of the nation in general over its entire troublesome history.

16.1 Strictly interpreted, this difficult birth may signify the travail of Israel at the time of the first coming of Christ as borne out by verses three and four.

Before moving forward in our study, let me give you an expanded translation of Rev 12:1 and 2:

Rev 12:1 I then saw an exciting and wondrous scene in heaven; it was obviously a sign: there I could see a woman representing Israel; she was clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head; these things representing the twelve tribes who will ultimately rule.

Rev 12:2 The woman Israel was pregnant; she cried out in pain as she was about to give birth to the Lord Jesus Christ.

17. Now let's proceed with an analysis of verses three and four.

KJV

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

Rev 12:4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

NIV

Rev 12:3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads.

Rev 12:4 His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.

1. The second great sign appearing in heaven is described as a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads.

2. From the similar description given in Rev 13:1 and the parallel references in Daniel Chapters two and seven, it is clear that the revived Roman Empire is in view as the last of some five listed Gentile world empires in prophecy.

Rev 13:1 And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.

Dan 2:31 Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

Dan 2:32 This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,

Dan 2:33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

Dan 2:34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

Dan 2:35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

Dan 2:36 This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof ...

Dan 2:37 Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.

Dan 2:38 And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

Dan 2:39 And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

Dan 2:40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

Dan 2:41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.

Dan 2:42 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.

Dan 2:43 And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

Dan 2:44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Dan 2:45 ... thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands ... it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold m...

Dan 7:2 Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.

Dan 7:3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

Dan 7:4 The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

Dan 7:5 And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.

Dan 7:6 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.

Dan 7:7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

Dan 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

Dan 7:14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Dan 7:15 I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me.

Dan 7:16 I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things.

Dan 7:17 These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.

Dan 7:18 But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever...

Dan 7:23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces.

Dan 7:24 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.

Dan 7:25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

Dan 7:26 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.

Dan 7:27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

End Lesson Taught 10-17-2001

Revelation

Lesson 91

10-24-2001

1. Tonight we will continue our study of the book of the Revelation. We are in lesson ninety-one.
2. Last week I gave you an introduction to Revelation chapter twelve and then exegeted verses one and two. When time ran out I was teaching Rev 12:3 and 4.

3. Before we return to this study I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 12:1-2:

Rev 12:1 I then saw an exciting and wondrous scene in heaven; it was obviously a sign: there I could see a woman representing Israel; she was clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head; these things representing the twelve tribes who will ultimately rule.

Rev 12:2 The woman Israel was pregnant; she cried out in pain as she was about to give birth to the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Recall our outline and what is about to unfold.

4.1 The first book of the Revelation is closed.

4.2 We have had a description of the Tribulation and the Second Coming in chapters 6-11.

4.3 The second book of the Revelation is about to unfold with chapter twelve and in chapter 19 the Second Coming will be described in greater detail.

5. Let's again look at an outline of Revelation 12 through chapter 20:

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III. The principle of grace before judgment - Chapter fourteen.

A. The 144,000 are seen again with our Lord; the fruit of their labor is seen in heaven.

B. The Big Bird (a carnivorous bird who witnesses) takes a victory lap.

C. Babylon's (The Revived Roman Empire) fall is foretold.

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IV. Heaven anticipates with joy the coming seven vial judgments - Chapter fifteen.

V. The Seven Bowls or Vials are poured out - Chapter sixteen.

VI. The doom of the whore church - Chapter seventeen

A. The false or Laodicean church at Rome will no longer prosper and serve the Antichrist because he and the False Prophet turn against the Great Pope.

B. The world church meets its doom.

VII. The World Political System at Rome is destroyed - Chapter eighteen

VIII. The Second Advent of Christ is detailed with emphasis on Him - Chapter nineteen

IX. The Final Judgment - Chapter twenty

6. Chapter twelve deals with the important characters of the period. There are seven such characters

6.1 the woman, representing Israel,

6.2 the dragon, representing Satan,

6.3 the man child, referring to Christ,

6.4 Michael, representing himself and his angelic army,

6.5 Israel, the remnant of the seed of the woman,

6.6 the beast out of the sea, the world dictator, and

6.7 the beast out of the earth, the false prophet and religious leader of the world.

7. About these main characters swirls the moving scene of the Great Tribulation.

8. First to be introduced and of prime importance as a key to the whole situation is the woman representing Israel.

9. Now let's return to our analysis of verses three and four.

KJV

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

Rev 12:4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

NIV

Rev 12:3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads.

Rev 12:4 His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.

1. The second great sign appearing in heaven is described as a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads.

2. From the similar description given in Rev 13:1 and the parallel references in Daniel Chapters two and seven, it is clear that the revived Roman Empire is in view as the last of some five listed Gentile world empires in prophecy.

Rev 13:1 And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.

2.1 The phrase "ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns" in Rev 12:3 is a reference to the description of the Antichrist's rise to power as ruler of the Revived Roman Empire and the phrase "seven heads" refers to the seven hills of Rome.

Rev 12:3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads.

2.2 The "red dragon" is clearly a reference to Satan.

3. Satan is also called the dragon later in Rev 12:9.

Rev 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

3.1 It is clear in Rev 12:3 that the dragon represents both the empire and the representation of satanic power behind the empire; certainly to include its leader.

4. The color red may indicate his murderous characteristics.

4.1 As noted the seven heads and ten horns refer to the original ten kingdoms of which three were subdued by the little horn of Daniel 7:8, who is to be identified with the world ruler of the great tribulation who reigns over the revived Roman Empire.

Dan 7:8 "While I was thinking about the horns, there before me was another horn, a little one, which came up among them; and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.

5. The tail of the dragon is declared to draw a third part of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. This seems to refer to the original fall of Satan as described in Isaiah chapter fourteen.

6. The dragon is seen awaiting the birth of the child with the intent to destroy Him as soon as He is born.

7. The allusion here is unmistakably to the circumstances surrounding the birth of Christ in Bethlehem and the attempts of Herod to destroy the Baby Jesus.

8. It is significant that Herod as an Edomite was a descendant of Esau, an unbeliever.

9. Whatever the motivation of the King, Herod fulfilled historically this reference to "devour her child as soon as He was born."

Mat 2:16 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

Mat 2:17 Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

Mat 2:18 "A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."

10. Before moving forward let me provide an expanded translation of verses three and four:

Rev 12:3 Suddenly there appeared in heaven an enormous red dragon who was obviously Satan; he had seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads; the picture depicts the mechanics of his rise to power as the leader of the Revived Roman Empire's headquarters in the city of Rome.

Rev 12:4 Then there was a flash back to an earlier time in eternity past when Satan and a third of all the angels rebelled against God; in this rebellion both Satan and those angels falling with him decided they could run things better than God. Then I saw the dragon standing in front of Mary the mother of Jesus' humanity who was about to give birth; Satan had indwelt the old fox Herod the Great planting in his sick mind a plan to devour her child. The pronouncement came in the year of BC 4 when the order to slay all males infants born in Judah who were two years of age and under was given; all of this was done in order to avert God's plan of redemption.

12. Now let's see what we can learn from verses five and six.

KJV

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

Rev 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

NIV

Rev 12:5 She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.

Rev 12:6 The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.

1. The woman identified as Israel in verses 1 and 2 is said in verse 5 to bring forth a man child Who is destined to rule all nations, but 40 days after His resurrection He was translated to God's throne room.

2. Though expositors have in the main agreed that the woman is Israel, there has been considerable difference of opinion on the identity of the man child.

3. Some have contended that this is the New Testament church destined to reign with Christ and that the act of being caught up to God is a reference to the rapture.

3.1 The woman with child is a reference to the Virgin Mary, the child is no doubt a reference to Christ Himself; this is without a doubt the preferred representation.

4. The Greek words for "man child" emphasize His gender. The most favored identification therefore is Christ rather than the church which would be feminine.

5. As Alford points out: "The man child is the Lord Jesus Christ, and none other."

5.1 He is described as destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron. This is a reference to Ps 2:9 where it is declared, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

6. A similar expression is found in Rev 19:15, where it is stated of Christ, "He shall rule them with a rod of iron." His rule over all nations with a rod of iron is to be distinguished from His rule over Israel which was to be one of benevolent character (Luke 1:32 and 33).

Luk 1:32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

Luk 1:33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

7. The catching up of the man child to God and to His throne seems to be a portrayal of the ascension of Christ.

7.1 Alford interprets this as meaning that "after a conflict with the Prince of this world, who came and tried Him, but found nothing in Him, the Son of the woman was taken up to heaven and sat on the right hand of God. Words can hardly be plainer than these."

7.2 An alternative view is that the "catching up" refers only to the flight to Egypt.

8. Shortly after the birth of Christ, Joseph was instructed to flee to Egypt in order to escape the wrath of Herod.

9. Later Joseph and his family were directed to return to Nazareth.

9.1 Some accordingly have objected to the idea that the child caught up to God pictures the ascension on the ground that "was caught up" connotes being delivered from danger, which was not the case at the ascension of Christ, but which was true in the flight to Egypt.

10. The Greek word here (Arpuzo) sometimes is used to mean "to seize" or "to catch up" as a wild beast would its prey, as in John 10:12 where the wolf "catcheth" them and scattereth the sheep.

Joh 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Joh 10:12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf "catcheth" them, and scattereth the sheep.

Joh 10:13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

Joh 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

10.1 However, the same word is used for the rapture of the children in 1Th 4:17 where the church is caught up to heaven.

1Th 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be "caught up" together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

11. This same word is likewise used of Paul being caught up to paradise as described in 2Co 12:2-4 as compared with Acts 14:19.

2Co 12:2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one "caught up to the third heaven.

2Co 12:3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;)

2Co 12:4 How that he was "caught up" into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

Acts 14:19 And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

11.1 H. A. Ironsides in relating this 'catching up' to Paul's being stoned at Lystra writes :

"I believe ... the real Paul ... was in the third heaven. God said, as it were, "I want to show you what I have in store for you." Up there Paul did not know whether he was in the body or not. If in his body, he did not know it; if out of his body, he did not miss it. He was in paradise and heard unspeakable things which it is not lawful for a man to utter. How long he was there we do not know.

11.2 Also we find Arpuzo used of Philip being caught up in Acts 8:39.

Acts 8:39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord "caught away" Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

12. If the identification of the twenty-four elders is properly to be regarded as the church in heaven, it would seem strange to mix metaphors by having the church described as a male child, especially when the church is regarded in Revelation chapter 19 as the wife and bride.

Rev 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his "wife" hath made herself ready.

Rev 19:8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

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

13. There is no good reason for not identifying the man child as Christ and interpreting the drama of verse 5 as the panorama of His birth, life and ascension.

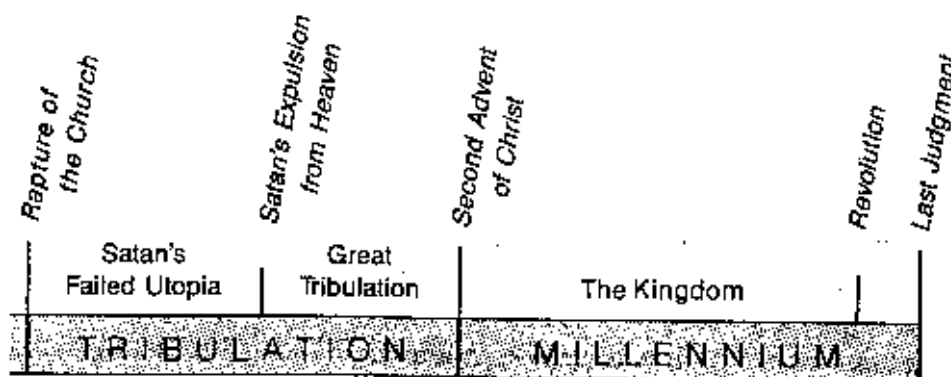
14. The fact that He is caught up not only to God but to "his throne" is another indication that Christ is intended.

15. Attention is then directed to the mother of the child represented once more as Israel.

15.1 Here she is seen in the time of great tribulation fleeing into the wilderness to a place prepared of God where she is protected for 1,260 days (again the exact length of three and one-half years).

16. There is obviously a tremendous time lapse between verses 5 and 6, but this is not an uncommon occurrence in prophecy; the first and second comings of Christ are frequently spoken of in the same sentence.

17. Inasmuch as Israel is in comparative tranquility and safety in the first three and one-half years of Daniel's seventieth week (Dan 9:27), the reference must be to the preservation of a portion of Israel during The Great Tribulation.



Dan 9:27 The Antichrist will establish a seven year covenant with Israel. In the middle of the the seven years he will break the treaty and no longer permit the bringing of sacrifices and offerings into the rebuilt Temple. And in a wing of the Temple he will set up a statue of himself, it will remain there until the end of the Tribulation ...

Let's take a look at an expanded translation of verses five and six:

Rev 12:5 Mary gave birth to the Godman and named Him Jesus; this is the same Godman who at the Second Advent will rule all the nations of the world with an iron fist. Because of Israel's rejection of our Lord however the Christ was snatched up to God and in His ascension He was caused to sit at the right side of the Father in the place of honor in the Third Heaven.

Rev 12:6 The woman Israel later in the Great Tribulation will flee (in the same manner as Mary and Joseph did when they fled to Egypt) into the waiting arms of various Gentile nations where she will be protected for 1260 days.

Now let's see what we can glean from Rev 12:7-9

KJV

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

Rev 12:8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

NIV

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

Rev 12:8 But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven.

Rev 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

1. During the Great Tribulation there clearly is great conflict on earth but rather abruptly we have our attention now directed to a war waged in heaven.

2. Michael and his angels (that is, the holy angels) fight against the dragon (identified in verse nine as Satan) and his fallen angels; as a result the forces of Satan and his army of demons are cast out of heaven.

3. The description of Satan in verse 9 is quite significant as all of his important titles are given. He is described as "the great dragon," a term which also applies to the empire which he dominates during the Tribulation.

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

4. He is referred to as "that old serpent," a reference to the Garden of Eden and the temptation of Eve.

5. The title "Devil" is from the Greek diabolos, from the verb diaballo, which has the meaning of "defaming" or "slandering."

6. He is the master accuser of the brethren. The name Satan, from the Hebrew, has the meaning of "adversary."

7. This name is mentioned fourteen times in the book of Job, and occasionally elsewhere (1Ch 21:1; Psa 109:6; and Zec 3:1-2). Coates observes that Satan is seen in three characterizations in opposition to Christ.

1Ch 21:1 Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel.

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Zec 3:2 The LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?"

Zec 3:3 Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel.

Zec 3:4 The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you."

Zec 3:5 Then I said, "Put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood by.

8. As the accuser of the brethren, he is also in open opposition to Christ.

9. The concept that there is a spiritual warfare in the very presence of God in heaven has been resisted by several expositors, preferring to regard this war as being fought in the atmospheric or starry heaven rather than in the very presence of God.

10. The event here prophesied was predicted by Daniel the prophet in Dan 12:1, where it is recorded that Michael shall "stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people."

11. This event marks the beginning of the Great Tribulation defined in Dan 12:1. It is undoubtedly the same event as in Revelation 12.

Dan 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

12. Of course it seems strange that Satan should have access to the very throne of God, yet this is precisely the picture of Job chapter one and two, where Satan along with other angels presents himself before God and accuses Job of loving God because of God's goodness to him.

Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

Job 1:7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

Job 1:8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

Job 1:9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

Job 1:10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

Job 1:11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

Job 1:12 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Job 2:1 Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

Job 2:2 And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

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Job 2:4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

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End Lesson Taught 10-4-2001

Revelation

Lesson 92

10-31-2001

1. Tonight we will continue our study of the book of the Revelation. We are in lesson ninety-two.

2. Last week I taught Rev 12:3-6 and when time ran out I was teaching Rev 12:7-9.

3. Before we return to this study I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 12:1-6.

Rev 12:1 I then saw an exciting and wondrous scene in heaven; it was obviously a sign: there I could see a woman representing Israel; she was clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head; these things representing the twelve tribes who will ultimately rule.

Rev 12:2 The woman Israel was pregnant; she cried out in pain as she was about to give birth to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev 12:3 Suddenly there appeared in heaven an enormous red dragon who was clearly Satan; he had seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads; the picture depicts the mechanics of the rise to power of a Satanically indwelt Antichrist who would be the leader of the Revived Roman Empire headquartered in the city of Rome.

Rev 12:4 Then there was a flash back to an earlier time in eternity past when Satan and a third of all the angels rebelled against God; in this rebellion both Satan and those angels falling with him decided they could run things better than God. Then I saw the dragon standing in front of Mary the mother of Jesus' humanity who was about to give birth; Satan had indwelt the old fox Herod the Great planting in his sick mind a plan to devour her child. The pronouncement came in the year of B.C. 4 when the order to slay all male infants born in Judah who were two years of age and under was given; all of this was done in order to avert God's plan of redemption.

Rev 12:5 Mary gave birth to the Godman and named Him Jesus; this is the same Godman who at the Second Advent will rule all the nations of the world with an iron fist. Because of Israel's rejection of our Lord however the Christ was snatched up to God and was caused to sit at the right side of the Father in the place of honor in the Third Heaven.

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NIV

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Job 2:4 And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

Job 2:5 But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

Job 2:6 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.

13. Thus early in Biblical revelation Satan is seen in the role of the accuser of the brethren, the title given him in Revelation 12:10.

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

14. Beginning at this point in The Book of The Revelation, Satan and his hosts are excluded from the third heaven, though their temporary dominion over the earth and the first and second heaven continues.

14.1 Satan's defeat in heaven, however, is the occasion for him to be cast into the earth and explains the particular virulence of the Great Tribulation.

15. Note that even as Satan accuses the brethren before God day and night prior to his being cast out of heaven, the four living creatures of Rev 4:8 cease not day or night to ascribe holiness to the Lord.

16. The prophetic events here described must therefore be taken at their face value. Satan in the middle of the Tribulation is limited in the sphere of his operation.

17. A major step is taken in his ultimate defeat. The saint of this present dispensation, who is now the object of Satanic attack and misrepresentation, can rest assured of the ultimate downfall of Satan and the cessation of his ability to accuse the Saints of God.

18. It is now time for an expanded translation of verse seven, eight and nine of Revelation chapter twelve:

Rev 12:7 I then saw a horrific war break out in heaven. Michael and all of the elect angels fought a vicious all out battle against the dragon and his demons.

Rev 12:8 Satan and his forces battled relentlessly but Michael and his great army were just too strong for the forces of evil; Satan and all of his demon minions were driven back until they reached what looked like the far end of heaven; they were forced perilously close to heaven's precipice.

Rev 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down to earth--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who had for years led the whole world astray. This was the great sign so long predicted when Satan with his gang of outlaws would be thrown out of heaven and confined to planet earth.

Now let's see what we can glean from verses ten, eleven and twelve:

KJV

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

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Rev 12:12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

NIV

Rev 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power (Dunamis) and the kingdom of our God, and the authority (Exousia) of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.

Rev 12:11 They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.

Rev 12:12 Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short."

1. As John beholds Satan and his angels being cast from heaven, he hears a loud voice described as saying in heaven, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ." The loud voice is not identified and probably cannot be with certainty.

2. Some have ascribed this voice to God Himself, some to angels, some to the twenty-four elders, and some to the martyred Saints in heaven mentioned in Rev 6:10, because they also cry with a loud voice.

KJV

Rev 6:10 And those who had been slain in the tribulation cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

NIV

Rev 6:10 The ones who had been slain during the tribulation called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?"

3. There is certainly support for the latter view (i.e. martyred Saints of the Tribulation) in that in Rev 12:10 the loud voice mentions "the accuser of our brethren."

4. This would seem to eliminate angels and indicate the Saints in heaven. The "loud voice" may very well be the shout of triumph of the tribulation Saints longing for and anticipating their ultimate victory and triumph.

5. The salvation mentioned as now imminent refers not to salvation from the guilt of sin but to salvation in the sense of deliverance and completion of the divine program.

6. The reference to strength (Greek Dunamis) implies that now God is going to strengthen His own and manifest His own strength.

7. The declaration that the kingdom of our God is now proximate seems to refer to the millennial kingdom when Christ will reign on the earth.

8. Coupled with this is the power or authority (Greek Exousia) of Christ.

8.1 The expression "his Christ," also mentioned in Rev 11:15, parallels "his anointed" in

Psa 2:2, against whom the kings of the earth rebel but under whose sway they are certain to come.

Rev 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Psa 2:2 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One.

9. The victory of the Saints in that hour is revealed in verse 11, where it is declared that they overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony, and by the fact that they loved not their lives unto death.

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

10. The accusations of Satan are nullified by the blood of the Lamb which renders the believer pure and makes possible his spiritual victory.

11. The word of the Saints' testimony opposes the deceiving work of Satan in that the preaching of the gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

12. The Saints' dedication to their task in which many of them die as martyrs is recognized by the statement "They loved not their lives unto the death." The word for "loved" is the word for profound love (Greek Agapao).

13. Though they do not foolishly seek a martyr's death, they do not regard their own lives (literally "souls"; Greek Psuche) as precious.

14. They follow the instruction given to the church in Smyrna [universal church of 100-300] (Rev 2:10) of being faithful unto death. The universal church represented here by Smyrna suffered great persecutions.

Rev 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

14.1 Historians give us a hint of the persecutions of Christians during the 2nd and 3rd centuries; many such persecutions occurring at Smyrna. From Foxes Book of Martyrs, I have provided certain descriptions:

Under Domitian persecutions abounded:

"Nicodemus, a benevolent Christian of some distinction, suffered at Rome during the rage of Domitian's persecution. Protasius and Gervasius were martyred at Milan. Timothy was the celebrated disciple of St. Paul, and bishop of Ephesus, where he zealously governed the Church until A.D. 97. At this period, as the pagans were about to celebrate a feast called Catagogion, Timothy, meeting the procession, severely reproved them for their ridiculous idolatry, which so exasperated the people that they fell upon him with their clubs, and beat him in so dreadful a manner that he expired of the bruises two days after.

Under Trajan, A.D. 108 there were significant persecutions:

Pliny the Second, a man learned and famous, seeing the lamentable slaughter of Christians, and moved therewith to pity, wrote to Trajan, certifying him that there were many thousands of them daily put to death ... In this persecution suffered the blessed martyr, Ignatius, who is held in famous reverence among very many... Ignatius ... was given to the wild beasts to be devoured.

Under Marcus Aurelius, A.D. 170 persecutions became even more severe:

The cruelties used in this persecution were such that many of the spectators shuddered with horror at the sight, and were astonished at the intrepidity of the sufferers. Some of the martyrs were obliged to pass, with their already wounded feet, over thorns, nails, sharp shells, etc... others were scourged until their sinews and veins lay bare ...

Germanicus, a young man, but a true Christian, being delivered to the wild beasts on account of his faith, behaved with such astonishing courage that several pagans became converts to a faith which inspired such fortitude.

Polycarp, the venerable bishop of Smyrna ... After feasting the guards who apprehended him, he desired an hour in prayer, which being allowed, he prayed with such fervency, that his guards repented that they had been instrumental in taking him. He was, however, carried before the proconsul, condemned, and burnt in the market place.

The proconsul then urged him, saying, "Swear, and I will release thee; reproach Christ." Polycarp answered, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never once wronged me; how then shall I blaspheme my King, Who hath saved me?" At the stake, to which he was only tied, but not nailed as usual, as he assured them he should stand immovable in the flames..."

14.2 In the Tribulation such persecutions will of course intensify but victory and relief is on the way.

15. The voice from heaven continues, exhorting the listeners, especially those in the heavens, to rejoice because of the impending victory. At the same time the voice pronounces a solemn woe upon the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea.

16. The awfulness of the hour ahead is attributed to the fact that the devil has been cast down to the earth and has great wrath because he knows his hour of confinement is near.

17. The word for "wrath" (Greek is not Orge, but Thumos) means 'a strong passion or emotion and carries less weight than Orge.'

18. It is an emotional rather than a rational state of mind and stems from Satan's own awareness that his days are numbered.

19. The short time or season (Greek Kairos) refers to the time of the great tribulation after which Satan will be bound for the duration of the millennial kingdom.

20. Though many of the judgments of God inflicted on the earth during the great tribulation originate in divine power rather than Satanic influence, there will be afflictions of the inhabitants of the earth which will spring largely from the activities of Satan, resulting in the martyrdom of countless Saints and in widespread human suffering of every kind.

21. Before moving forward I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 12:10-12.

Rev 12:10 I then heard a horrendous victorious shout which reverberated throughout the heavens: "Our God has shown His power of deliverance for His Kingdom has come! God's own Chosen One, the Christ, has shown His authority and inherent power. Satan who for ages has accused the brethren has been thrown out of heaven and never more permitted to return.

Rev 12:11 The poor Saints of the Tribulation faced now with a defeated and desperate Satan overcame his last intense though hopeless attacks, they were able to overcome by first a faith alone in Christ alone and then a total reliance on the grace of God as set forth in His Word. They were by means of His power willing to give up their lives in honor of their King Jesus.

Rev 12:12 The heavens themselves together with those living there rejoiced but then the voice lamented "Pity the earth and the sea, because the devil has been thrown out of heaven and he knows his time is short.

Now let's continue our study.

KJV

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

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Rev 12:15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

Rev 12:16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

NIV

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1. The immediate aftermath of Satan's being cast out of heaven is his persecution of the woman who brought forth the man child.

2. Walvoord writes of the casting out of heaven:

“This apparently is the beginning of the Great Tribulation of which Christ warned Israel in Mat 24:15-22.”

Mat 24:15 "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel--let the reader understand--

Mat 24:16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

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Mat 24:20 Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.

Mat 24:21 For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equaled again.

Mat 24:22 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

3. This had its foreshadowing in Herod's slaughter of the infants following the birth of Christ (Mat 2:16).

Mat 2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

4. It seems the great persecution mentioned in Rev 12:15 and 16 is a reference specifically to the Great Tribulation which is yet future.

4.1 The persecution of Israel is a part of the Satanic program to thwart and hinder the work of God.

5. Israel is hated by Satan not because of any of its own characteristics but because she is the chosen of God and essential to the overall purpose of God for time and eternity.

6. Let me here give you several points relating to Anti-Semitism:

6.1 One of the grimmest recurrences of history has been the continuing irrational hatred and persecution of the Jewish people.

6.2 These people have had their national homeland torn from them; they have been led as captives into other lands and nations; and yet they have miraculously survived incomparable persecutions in foreign lands; and twice they miraculously returned to the land of their fathers to reestablish their nation; each time against such opposition that the world stood in amazement.

6.3 The Jews' second dispersion from the land of Israel lasted from A.D. 70 to 1948. During that time the Jewish people endured some of the most inhuman treatment ever inflicted in human history.

6.4 And yet they survived as a distinct race. Virtually every country in which they took refuge ultimately turned against them.

6.4.1 From the holocaust of Titus and the Roman legions' destruction of Jerusalem through the Inquisitions and Crusades and on to the gas ovens of Germany, Anti-Semitism has kept rekindling into insane flames of hatred and slaughter.

6.5 One of the great motion pictures of our times, Fiddler on the Roof, shows the dilemma of the Jews in a little village in Russia about seventy-five years ago.

6.6. What happened there has happened a thousand times in a thousand places to many hundreds of thousands of Jews.

6.7. Have you ever wondered why?

6.8 I believe this chapter answers the puzzling mystery of Anti-Semitism. It shows that anyone who hates and persecutes a Jew is actually doing so at the instigation of a mighty spirit-being who hates all Jews.

6.9 As terrible as Jewish harassment has been in the past, Anti-Semitism will reach its most feverish pitch during the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation.

6.10 The good news for all Gentile Nations: if you take care of Israel you will be blessed.

Gen 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

7. In Revelation 12 we are introduced to the main actors involved in the drama of this awful period of Jewish persecution. The persecution is described as a "torrent of water ... to overtake the woman" in verse fifteen.

Rev 12:15 Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent.

8. Into this scene of Satanic persecution is injected the divine intervention of God. The woman is described as being given two wings of a great eagle in order to enable her to fly into the wilderness into her place.

9. This figure of speech seems to be derived from Exo 19:4 and Deu 32:11-12 and similar passages where God uses the strength of an eagle to illustrate His faithfulness in caring for Israel.

Exo 19:4 You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles wings and brought you to myself.

Deu 32:11 like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers (Rachaph) over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them on its pinions.

Deu 32:12 The LORD alone led him; no foreign god was with him.

10. The same flight is indicated in Matthew 24:16 where Christ exhorts those in Judea to flee to the mountains.

Mat 24:15 "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel--let the reader understand--

Mat 24:16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."

11. Some have felt that the reference here is to some specific place such as Petra, where at least a portion of Israel might be safe from her persecutors.

End Lesson Taught 10-31-2001

Revelation

1. Tonight we will continue our study of the book of the Revelation. We are in lesson ninety-three.

1.1 Before we do though let's remember the application of 1Jo 1:9 as might be necessary.

2. Last week I taught Rev 12:3-11 and when time ran out I was teaching Rev 12:12-16.

3. Before we return to this study I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 12:1-11:

Rev 12:1 I then saw an exciting and wondrous scene in heaven; it was obviously a sign: there I could see a woman representing Israel; she was clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head; these things representing the twelve tribes who will ultimately rule.

Rev 12:2 The woman Israel was pregnant; she cried out in pain as she was about to give birth to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev 12:3 Suddenly there appeared in heaven an enormous red dragon who was clearly Satan; he had seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads; the picture depicts the mechanics of the rise to power of a Satanically indwelt Antichrist who would be the leader of the Revived Roman Empire headquartered in the city of Rome.

Rev 12:4 Then there was a flash back to an earlier time in eternity past when Satan and a third of all the angels rebelled against God; in this rebellion both Satan and those angels falling with him decided they could run things better than God. Then I saw the dragon standing in front of Mary the mother of Jesus' humanity who was about to give birth; Satan had indwelt the old fox Herod the Great planting in his sick mind a plan to devour her child. The pronouncement came in the year of B.C. 4 when the order to slay all male infants born in Judah who were two years of age and under was given; all of this was done in order to avert God's plan of redemption.

Rev 12:5 Mary gave birth to the Godman and named Him Jesus; this is the same Godman who at the Second Advent will rule all the nations of the world with an iron fist. Because of Israel's rejection of our Lord however the Christ was snatched up to God and was caused to sit at the right side of the Father in the place of honor in the Third Heaven.

Rev 12:6 The woman Israel later in the Great Tribulation will flee (in the same manner as Mary and Joseph did when they fled to Egypt) into the waiting arms of various Gentile nations where she will be protected for 1260 days.

Rev 12:7 I then saw a horrific war break out in heaven. Michael and all of the elect angels fought a vicious all-out battle against the dragon and his demons.

Rev 12:8 Satan and his forces battled relentlessly but Michael and his great army were just too strong for the forces of evil; Satan and all of his demon minions were driven back until they reached what looked like the far end of heaven; they were forced perilously close to heaven's precipice.

Rev 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down to earth--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who had for years led the whole world astray. This was the great sign so long predicted when Satan with his gang of outlaws would be thrown out of heaven and confined to planet earth.

Rev 12:10 I then heard a mighty victorious shout which reverberated throughout the heavens: "Our God has shown His power of deliverance for His Kingdom has come! God's own Chosen One, the Christ, has shown His authority and inherent power. Satan who for ages has accused the brethren has been thrown out of heaven and never more permitted to return.

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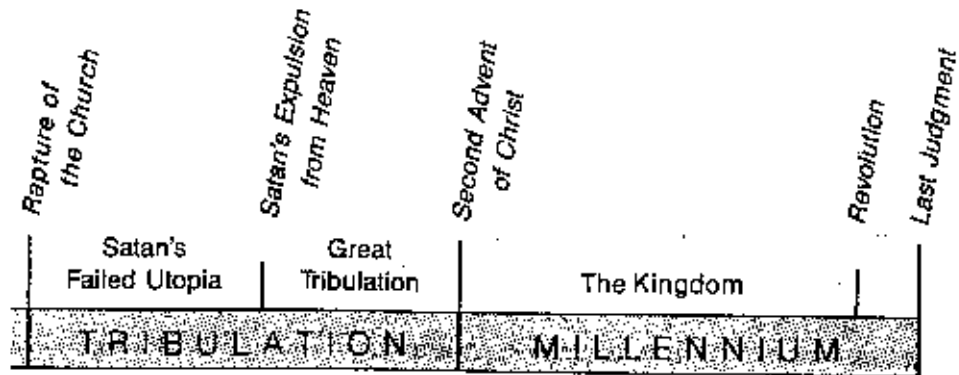
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7. In Revelation 12 we are introduced to the main actors involved in the drama of this awful period of Jewish persecution.

8. The persecution is described as a "torrent of water ... to overtake the woman" in verse fifteen.

Rev 12:15 Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent.

9. Into this scene of Satanic persecution is injected the divine intervention of God. The woman is described as being given two wings of a great eagle in order to enable her to fly into the wilderness into her place.

10. This figure of speech seems to be derived from Exo 19:4 and Deu 32:11-12 and similar passages where God uses the strength of an eagle to illustrate His faithfulness in caring for Israel.

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Mat 24:15 "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel--let the reader understand--

Mat 24:16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

11.1 Some have felt that the reference here is to some specific place such as Petra, where at least a portion of Israel might be safe from her persecutors.

12. Verse 14 implies that there is some supernatural care of Israel during this period such as that which Elijah experienced by the brook of Cherith, or that which Israel experienced during the forty years she lived on the manna in the wilderness.

13. Whether natural or supernatural means are used, it is clear that God does preserve a godly remnant, though according to Zechariah 13:8, two-thirds of Israel in the land will perish.

Zec 13:8 In the whole land," declares the LORD, "two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it.

14. The time element of Israel's suffering is described as "a time, and times, and half a time." This again seems to be a reference to the three and one-half years, the mention of time being one unit, the second reference to times, being two units, which the addition of one-half a time would make three and one-half units.

15. A parallel reference is found in Dan 7:25 and 12:7 referring to the same period of great tribulation.

Dan 7:25 He will speak against the Most High and oppress his Saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The Saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.

Dan 12:7 The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, "It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed."

15.1 The dragon is here called a serpent (Greek Ophis; compare Mat 10:16; Joh 3:14) where the word is used in other contexts.

Mat 10:16 I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

Joh 3:14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,

Joh 3:15 that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

15.2 In Rev 12:9, 14-15 and Rev 20:2 you can see where "serpent" is used in connection with the devil).

Rev 12:9 The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

Rev 12:14 The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach.

Rev 12:15 Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent.

Rev 20:2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

16. In the persecution of Israel, the serpent is described in verse 15 as casting water as a flood out of his mouth that the woman might be carried away.

Rev 12:15 Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent.

16.1 Verse 16 reveals that the earth helps the woman by swallowing the flood. Various interpretations have been given to this description.

Rev 12:16 But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

16.2 Some, like J. B. Smith, prefer to take this literally, a flood to sweep away Israel down some valley. In this case, the earth would be either naturally or supernaturally enabled to swallow the water to protect the Israelites.

17. However, the contour of the Holy Land, and the fact that Israel would probably not all flee in the same direction combine to make a physical interpretation, such as Smith offers, improbable.

18. It is more plausible that this passage should be understood in a symbolic way. The flood cast after Israel is the total effort of Satan to exterminate the nation, and the resistance of earth is the natural difficulty in executing such a massive program.

19. The nature of the terrain in the Middle East, including many areas not heavily populated, provides countless places of refuge for a fleeing people.

19.1 Whether the exact meaning of these two verses can be determined with certainty, the implication is that Satan strives with all his power to persecute and exterminate the people of Israel.

19.2 By divine intervention, both natural and supernatural means are used to circumvent the program and to carry a remnant of Israel safely through their time of great tribulation.

20. Before we move to verse seventeen and the last verse of our chapter, I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 12:13-16.

Rev 12:13 When Satan realized he had been defeated and cast out of heaven without any future recourse to heaven, he pursued with a vengeance true Israel for he was furious at her for giving birth to Jesus the Christ.

Rev 12:14 True Israel however was given an abundance of logistical grace and a hedge of fire for protection, so she might be hurried away to the various places of protection prepared for her not only in the south of Palestine but in various client nations and there to remain in safety out of Satan's reach.

Rev 12:15 Satan, realizing his predicament then set in motion a series of world events designed to eliminate true Israel; battles raged in Palestine as nations from all over the world began to ravage the once peaceful land of Israel.

Rev 12:16 Many places of refuge were discovered by the Jewish believers in the south of Palestine and many believing Saints found refuge in gentile lands who exercised their national prerogatives by refusing to "kowitz" to the world's international favorite, an indwelt Antichrist.

Now let's look at our last verse of chapter twelve, Rev 12:17:

KJV

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

NIV

Rev 12:17 Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring--those who obey God's commandments and hold fast to the testimony of Jesus.

Principles:

1. The last verse of chapter 12 states that the dragon is especially angry with those within the nation Israel who "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

2. While the program of Satan is against the Jewish race as such, Anti-Semitism as a whole will reach its peak against Jewish believers during this period.

- 2.1 There is a double antagonism against those in Israel who turn to Christ as their Messiah and Saviour in those critical days.

3. No doubt many of them will suffer a martyr's death, but others will survive the period including the 144,000 sealed in chapter seven.

4. The remnant mentioned here is a translation from the Greek, *ton Loipon* and literally means "the rest,"; it is not the same Greek used for "remnant" found elsewhere as in Rom 9:27 where the Greek *Hupoleimma* is found and in Rom 11:5, where just *Leimma* is used.

Rom 9:27 Isaiah also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a "remnant" shall be saved:

Rom 11:5 Even so then at this present time also there is a "remnant" according to the election of grace.

5. However, all these words come from the verb Leipo, which is commonly translated "the rest".

5.1 Though the words, therefore, are different in form, the similarities are such as to provide no good reason to deny that they are merely descriptions of several godly remnants of differing dispensations.

5.2 Careful study reveals Hupoleimma in Rom 9:27 describes a believing remnant of the Jewish Age and Leimma in Rom 11:5 describes a believing remnant of the Church Age.

5.3 Loipon in our verse 17 would then describe the believing remnant of the Tribulation.

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

6. Smith attempts to build a distinction between the woman in verse 14 as Israel in Palestine and the remnant in verse 17 as Israel elsewhere in the world. There does not seem to be sufficient evidence to make this distinction.

7. Rather than a geographic contrast, the difference seems to be between the nation as a whole symbolized by the woman and the godly remnant in the nation who turn to Christ.

8. Taken as a whole, chapter 12 is a fitting introduction to the important revelations given in chapter 13.

9. In chapter sixteen we will see the principal actors of the great tribulation with the historic background which provides so much additional information.

10. Israel, Satan, Christ, the archangel, and the godly remnant figure largely in the closing scenes of the age.

10.1 Next the two principal human actors are introduced: the beast out of the sea and the beast out of the earth, the human instruments which Satan uses to direct his program during the Tribulation.

Revelation Chapter Thirteen Introduction:

1. Two dreadful rulers enter the scene in chapter 13, one coming up out of the sea, and the other coming up out of the earth.
2. Swete has written: "The sea here is undoubtedly "a symbol of the agitated surface of unregenerate humanity, and especially of the seething cauldron of national and social life out of which the great historical movements of the world arise"."
3. The sea as we have earlier seen has a consistent metaphoric meaning i.e. gentiles or nations so we can assume the Antichrist will be a gentile and the false prophet a Jew.
4. The first beast, whose horns and crowns of royalty represent power, is himself energized by Satan.
5. It is almost unbelievable that the whole earth will worship both the dragon and the beast.
6. There will be much religion on earth, but it will be godless and blasphemous.
7. This first beast is against God. He is energized and indwelt by Satan; he is militarily supreme; he possesses world-wide power and he persecutes the Saints of God.
8. The question is how can he rise so rapidly to power? To answer that men have for years conjectured; their imaginations have in fact run wild.
9. The first seal "the man on the white horse" must come rapidly to power and to do that it would seem there must be some huge problem that he alone can solve.
10. The peace and safety temporarily accomplished in the first half of Daniel's 70th week will likely be ushered in by the Coming World Leader - no doubt because he will solve some major global disturbance.
11. Although the employment of peace as a part of his plan will certainly reassure the masses and help to quiet the nonconformists, this peace will prove to be false and short-lived.
12. Ultimately, the result of his "peace plan" will be the death and destruction of many.
- 12.1 The question many have pondered is, what kind of catastrophe or global disruption will precede the unification and false peace brought by the Coming World Leader?
13. Of course the number of possible scenarios is endless and as earlier said many have conjectured.
14. Assuming the rapture occurs before I finish tonight, the old Antichrist himself would have a field day solving the terrorist problem and bringing Israel and the 30,000,000 Arabs surrounding them into "peaceful relations".

15. His work might also include a peace treaty not only between Israel, Syria, the PLO, Jordan, Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, etc. but all Islam, Judaism and Christianity might join into a global unity pact and live in perfect harmony for 1260 days.

16. Some have suggested that a global economic collapse or war in the Middle East will necessitate the Antichrist's arrival.

17. Others suggest a global environmental crisis as the source of unification.

18. Still others suggest that it will be some novel explanation of the Rapture of the Church.

18.1 Chuck Missler has researched the UFO, alien sightings, and alien abduction phenomena noting that most of the people claiming alien contact are practitioners of the occult.

18.2 Missler makes the case that alien abductions will be Satan's way of explaining the Rapture.

18.3 Missler has also postulated that a serious threat from outer space might be just the global problem needed to vault the Antichrist onto center stage; the assumption by Church Missler is that the Antichrist would somehow solve this threat from "space".

19. A number of prominent people have expressed their belief that a global threat from outer space would be a powerful unifying force for the nations of the world.

20. For example Chuck Missler writes: "On September 21, 1987, President Reagan, in his address to the 42nd General Assembly of the United Nations, made a startling statement regarding the unifying effect of an "alien threat."

"Perhaps we need some outside, universal threat to make us recognize this common bond I occasionally think how quickly our differences world-wide would vanish if we were facing an alien threat from outside this world. And yet, I ask you, is not an alien force already among us?"

21. More recently, in an address to the Bilderbergers meeting in Evian, France, on May 21, 1992, according to USA Today and other newspapers, Henry Kissinger stated:

"Today Americans would be outraged if UN troops entered Los Angeles to restore order; tomorrow they will be grateful! This is especially true if they were told there was an outside threat from beyond, whether real or promulgated, that threatened our very existence. It is then that all peoples of the world will pledge with world leaders to deliver them from this evil. The one thing every man fears is the unknown.

When presented with this scenario, individual rights will be willingly relinquished for the guarantee of their well-being granted to them by their world government."

22. Whatever the global malady, it will be severe and will be quickly and "supernaturally" solved by none other than an indwelt Antichrist assisted and served by his handpicked cast of characters.

23. Let's take a look at what kind of catastrophe led to the acquisition of power in a single man ultimately called Caesar, leader of the original Roman Empire. We will see how its citizens became so enamored that they ultimately worshiped him as god.

23.1 By doing this perhaps we can better understand how the Antichrist will rise to power and the ultimate "Theocrat" ruling the Revived Roman Empire.

"The streets of our country are in turmoil; the universities are filled with students rebelling and rioting; Communists are seeking to destroy our country, and the Republic is in danger yes, danger from within and without. We need law and order! Without law and order our nation cannot survive!"

23.3 Who do you think uttered these words? An irate congressman of the 1970's? The mayor of a midwestern farming community or a public spirited citizen of that same era?

23.4 It was none of the above. The words were spoken in 1932 by Adolf Hitler!

23.5 Dictators rarely take over nations by brute force. Almost always political or economic problems pave the way for tyranny.

23.6 Even the leaders of the notorious Roman Empire did not at first exercise dictatorial power over their subjects.

23.7 The nations conquered by Rome were customarily ruled by local dignitaries. Only the later Caesars played God over the people.

23.8 How did the Roman Empire lead to such a power accumulation in one man? What led to the ultimate outrage of Caesar worship?

23.9 When the Roman Empire first started taking over provinces, the conquered people felt indebted to Rome for the law and order which it provided. The smaller countries in particular were grateful for the new found stability which replaced their once-shaky political structures.

23.10 In a number of cases, obnoxious little tyrants were replaced by temperate Roman rulers. So the people were "happy."

23.11 In Asia Minor especially, the people became so enthusiastic about the Roman Empire that they came to regard it as an object of veneration and respect.

23.12 But, as historian Arnold Toynbee wisely pointed out, "it's hard to worship an impersonal system! Eventually, therefore, the Roman subjects conceived the idea of emperor worship."

23.13 The first recorded case of emperor worship in the Roman Empire took place in Pergamum in 29 B.C. Here the local citizens erected the first known statue of a Roman Caesar.

23.14 But full blown Caesar worship took a number of years to develop. The first Caesars to be worshipped were actually somewhat embarrassed by all the public attention. Later Caesars, however, came to realize the important advantages of accepting public veneration.

23.15 The first Roman Empire extended its control over dozens of cultures, languages, and religions. What the Roman Senate was looking for was some strong unifying principle something that would bind the entire Empire together.

23.16 The mandating of Caesar worship seemed to be the answer. So late in the first century A.D. the worshiping of Caesar (whichever one happened to be ruling at the time!) became an official government requirement.

23.17 At first the edict wasn't taken very seriously, but later, under Domitian, every Roman subject was expected to comply with the order. Once a year each person had to appear before an official "priest" and swear allegiance to Caesar.

23.18 The oath would be witnessed by a signed certificate and would also often be accompanied by an animal sacrifice.

23.19 Caesar worship was once a kind of an inside joke among the government leaders, but it soon turned into a Frankenstein-like monster. Nero came to believe that he actually was God in the flesh.

23.20 Other Caesars had self-delusions almost as strong as Nero's. The whole episode turned out to be a nightmare for the Christians and Jews.

23.21 For most of the subjects of Rome, Caesar worship was nothing more than an annoyance. In some cases it simply added another "god" to their list of deities.

23.22 But for the Christians the picture was entirely different.

23.23 So these early Christians refused to swear allegiance to Caesar, and instead developed a little chant: "Jesus Christ is Lord, and none other." Secret disciples abounded and the Ichthus sign became their secret escutcheon.

23.24 In no time at all Christians were labeled as traitors. Soon the Romans invented a clever way to dispose of these "traitors to the Empire" feed them to the lions!

23.25 And so the Coliseum games began to feature half-time shows of lion feedings, with whole families of devoted believers as "one-time guest stars!"

23.26 It's really a sickening tale of disgrace for the Romans. The blood ran so freely that to this day the floor of the Coliseum is stained with the blood of the saints.

23.27 Now remember how all this got started: nations in political or economic turmoil succumbed to the seemingly "benevolent" tentacles of Rome.

23.28 For a short time there was unprecedented peace, justice, and order. The leader of this "domestic tranquility" then came to be deified by many of his subjects.

23.29 Then the leader took the veneration of his citizens to heart and proclaimed himself as the absolute and infallible monarch of the world.

23.30 Nazi Germany replayed the drama of dictatorship in the '30's and '40's. In 1930 Germany was in desperate financial straits.

23.31 Inflation was so severe that thousands of people were virtually starving. No one seemed able to create order out of the confusion.

23.32 Germany was on the verge of collapse and suddenly onto the stage of history came a type of Antichrist - Adolph Hitler.

23.33 Actually Adolf Hitler was something of a savior at first. The rioting stopped, men started working, people started eating, and Mr. Porsche designed the first Volkswagen!

23.34 Most important of all, every citizen had a new sense of national purpose and pride. Now their Fuhrer would lead them into the millennium of the Third Reich!

23.35 Does all this sound similar to what we have learned the Antichrist will do in the Tribulation? After all there is nothing new under the sun and the spirit of the Antichrist has always been in the world.

23.36 Most people have no idea that the key to history is the Bible. What a tragedy.

23.37 Hegel said, "History teaches us that man learns nothing from history." The Caesars and Adolf Hitler were but a "choir boy" when compared, with the dictator who will take over the world during the Tribulation.

23.38 Given the imminent nature of the Rapture I believe that the Antichrist lives right now somewhere in Europe, inflaming his soul with visions of what he will be able to do for mankind with all his grand schemes and revolutionary ideas.

23.39 A biographical sketch of this man appears in chapter thirteen. He's called by various names in the Bible.

23.40 Here are just a few: Little Horn (Daniel 7:8; 8:9); Man of Sin, Son of Perdition (2Th 2:3) Antichrist (1Jo 2:18); Beast (Rev 13:1)

Dan 7:8 I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.

Dan 8:9 And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.

2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

1Jo 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

Rev 13:1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

24. The Antichrist will be a supreme humanist, believing passionately that man can solve his own dilemmas. He will not accept the Bible's evaluation that man is on the verge of chaos because of sin.

25. In fact, He will no doubt react violently to groups and individuals who analyze man's problem as sin. He will feel that he is doing a good thing by bringing repressive measures against believers, whom he will consider "non-progressives."

26. This Antichrist will be against every solution the Bible presents for the world's problems and because He will be so persuasive He will turn the whole world against Christ and the believers and convince many that he has the answers to the human dilemma.

27. Is the Antichrist near? Who knows for sure All we can declare with certainty is that the stage is set and the time is right in the sense that there are no signs yet to occur before the Rapture. The immanency of the Rapture is declared in more than one place in Scripture.

End Lesson Taught 11-7-2001

