

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, Part 2

General Introduction

Ministers and people have declared the prophecies of Daniel and John to be a collection of mysteries which no one could understand or explain. But the very title of the book of Revelation contradicts these assertions: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John, who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand." [Revelation 1:1-3.]

Says the prophet, "Blessed is he that readeth" (there are some who will not read; the blessing is not for them) "and they that hear" (there are some, also, who refuse to hear anything concerning the prophecies; the blessing is not for this class) "and keep those things that are written therein" (many refuse to heed the warnings and instructions contained in the Revelation). None of these can claim the blessing promised. All who ridicule the subjects of the prophecy, and mock at the symbols here solemnly given, all who refuse to reform their lives, and prepare for the coming of the Son of man, will be unblest.

In view of the testimony of Inspiration, how dare ministers teach that the Revelation is a mystery beyond the reach of human understanding? It is a mystery revealed, a book opened. The study of the Revelation directs the mind to the prophecies of Daniel, and both present most important instruction, given of God to men, concerning events to take place at the close of this world's history.

To John were opened scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the experience of the church. He saw the position, dangers, conflicts, and final deliverance of the people of God. He records the closing messages which are to ripen the harvest of the earth, either as sheaves for the heavenly garner or as fagots for the fires of the last day. Subjects of vast importance were revealed to him especially for the last church, that those who should turn from error to truth might be instructed concerning the perils and conflicts before them. None need be in darkness in regard to what is coming upon the earth.

Why, then, this wide-spread ignorance concerning an important part of Holy Writ? Why this general reluctance to investigate its teachings? It is the result of a studied effort of the prince of darkness to conceal from men that which reveals his deceptions. For this reason, Christ the Revelator, foreseeing the warfare that would be waged against the study of the Revelation, pronounced a blessing upon all who should read, hear, and observe the words of the prophecy. *Spirit of Prophecy Volume 4*, pages 210-212.

Lesson 1: 'The dragon was wroth with the woman'

MEMORY VERSE: '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.' Revelation 12:11.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, page 291.

Introduction

'Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defence will be prayer.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 289.

'A great wonder'

1. What did John see first in this vision? Revelation 12:1-2. (Compare Malachi 4:2.)

NOTE: 'A woman [is] a figure which is used in the Bible as the symbol of a church, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a vile woman an apostate church.' *Great Controversy*, page 381.

'The woman is pictured as being in glorious attire, "clothed with the sun". This represents the righteousness of Jesus Christ... The woman is standing on the moon which is represented as the church's foundation. The moon is an object that reflects the sun's light. What is it that reflects Jesus Christ and is the basis of the Christian Church? It is the Old Testament scriptures. They are a reflection of Christ. The crown denotes rulership and organisation. Twelve is consistently associated in scripture with church government.' [See 12 tribes, 12 judges, 2 times twelve courses of priests, 12 apostles. The final church consists of 12 times 12,000.] Cooke, *War on God's Woman*, pages 2-4.

2. What second figure was next revealed to John? Who is the dragon? Revelation 12:3, 9.

NOTE: 'The dragon is said to be Satan (Revelation 12:9); he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian era was the Roman Empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. Thus while the dragon, primarily, represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome.' *Great Controversy*, page 438.

'And there was war in heaven'

3. What conflict was John shown in heaven? Revelation 12:7. Compare Isaiah 14:12-15.

NOTE: '[The] work of opposition to the law of God had its beginning in the courts of heaven, with Lucifer, the covering cherub. Satan determined to be first in the councils of heaven, and equal with God. He began his work of rebellion with the angels under his command, seeking to diffuse among them the spirit of discontent. And he worked in so deceptive a way that many of the angels were won to his allegiance before his purposes were fully known. Even the loyal angels could not fully discern his character, nor see to what his work was leading. When Satan had succeeded in winning many angels to his side, he took his cause to God, representing that it was the desire of the angels that he occupy the position that Christ held. The evil continued to work until the spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt. Then there was war in heaven.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, January 28, 1909.

4. What was the outcome of the war in heaven? Revelation 12:8-9. Compare Revelation 12:4, first part.

NOTE: 'God in His wisdom did not use measures of force to suppress Satan's rebellion. Such measures would have aroused sympathy for Satan, strengthening his rebellion rather than lessening his power. If God had at the outset punished his rebellion, many more would have looked upon him as one who had been dealt with unjustly, and would have followed his example. It was necessary for him to have time and opportunity to develop his false principles. There was war in heaven, and the Prince of life overcame the apostate. Satan was cast out of heaven, with the angels who had united with him.' *Signs of the Times*, July 23, 1902.

'The casting down of Satan as an accuser of the brethren in heaven was accomplished by the great work of Christ in giving up His life. Notwithstanding Satan's persistent opposition, the plan of redemption was being carried out. Man was esteemed of sufficient value for Christ to sacrifice His life for him.' *Spirit of Prophecy Volume 3*, pages 194, 195.

5. What cry of triumph accompanied the dragon's fall from heaven and what warning was given to the earth? Revelation 12:10, 12.

NOTE: 'He who overcomes must watch; for, with worldly entanglements, error, and superstition, Satan strives to win Christ's followers from Him. It is not enough that we avoid glaring dangers and perilous, inconsistent moves. We are to keep close to the side of Christ, walking in the path of self-denial and sacrifice. We are in an enemy's country. He who was cast out of heaven has come down with great power. With every conceivable artifice and device he is seeking to take souls captive. Unless we are constantly on guard we shall fall an easy prey to his unnumbered deceptions. Warning, admonition, promise, all are for us, upon whom the ends of the world are come. "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thessalonians 5:6). Watch against the stealthy approach of the enemy, watch against old habits and natural inclinations, lest they assert themselves; force them back, and watch. Watch the thoughts, watch the plans, lest they become self-centred... If you draw close to Jesus and seek to adorn your profession by a well-ordered life and godly conversation, your feet will be kept from straying into forbidden paths. If you will only watch, continually watch unto prayer, if you will do everything as if you were in the immediate presence of God, you will be saved from yielding to temptation, and may hope to be kept pure, spotless, and undefiled till the last. If you hold the beginning of your confidence firm unto the end, your ways will be established in God; and what grace has begun, glory will crown in the kingdom of our God.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 332.

'To devour her child'

6. What did the dragon plan to do with the Child? Revelation 12:4, last part.

NOTE: 'God's promise to Eve [Genesis 3:15] in Eden was cherished by His people. They waited long for the coming of the promised "Seed" – Christ. Galatians 3:16. The devil also waited, and at every turn he endeavoured to thwart the plan of heaven to save the world. Many times he almost succeeded... When Jesus was born the dragon was there to attack Him. Escape came by fleeing to Egypt. In the wilderness the dragon leaped to attack, only to be defeated by the word of God. Then all the black passions of hate were let loose at Golgotha. Betrayed and crucified, the world's Redeemer was at last buried in a rock-hewn tomb. How evil triumphed! But only for a few hours.' Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 116.

7. Where was the Manchild taken to? Revelation 12:5

NOTE: 'He arose for our justification, and as King of righteousness He now ministers at the throne of grace. Hebrews 4:14, 8:1; Who can bring any accusation against the elect of God? As we are justified in Christ and vindicated by His power, nothing now can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:33-34.' Anderson, *Unfolding the Revelation*, page 116.

'The devil is come down among you'

8. When the dragon was no longer able to threaten the Manchild, to whom did he transfer his anger? Revelation 12:13.

NOTE: 'Undoubtedly the dragon primarily represents Satan. But Satan does not appear upon the earth in person; he works through agents. It was in the person of wicked men that he sought to destroy Jesus as soon as He was born. Wherever Satan has been able to control a government so fully that it would carry out his designs, that nation became, for the time, Satan's representative. This was the case with all the great heathen nations. For instance, see Ezekiel 28, where Satan is represented as actual king of Tyre. This was because he fully controlled that government. In the first centuries of the Christian era, Rome, of all the pagan nations, was Satan's chief agent in opposing the Gospel, and was therefore represented as the dragon.

But there came a time when paganism in the Roman Empire fell before the advancing form of Christianity. Then “paganism had given place to the Papacy. The dragon had given to the beast ‘his power, and his eat, and great authority.’” That is, Satan then began to work through the Papacy, just as he had formerly worked through paganism. But the papacy is not represented by the dragon, because it is necessary to introduce another symbol [see Revelation 13:1-2] in order to show the change in the form of the opposition to God. Previous to the rise of the Papacy, all opposition to the law of God had been in the form of paganism; God had been openly defied; but from that time the opposition was carried on under the guise of professed allegiance to Him. The Papacy, however, was no less the instrument of Satan than was pagan Rome; for all the power, the seat, and the great authority of the papacy, were given it by the dragon. And so, although the pope professes to be the vicerent of Christ, he is, in reality, the vicerent of Satan, he is Antichrist,’ *Great Controversy, 1888 edition, appendix, pages 679-680.*

9. How did God intervene to preserve the woman? Revelation 12:14. Compare Revelation 12:6.

NOTE: ‘In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. Paganism had given place to the papacy. The dragon had given to the beast “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” Revelation 13:2. And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5-7. Christians were forced to choose either to yield their integrity and accept the papal ceremonies and worship, or to wear away their lives in dungeons or suffer death by the rack, the fagot, or the headsman’s axe. Now were fulfilled the words of Jesus: “Ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake.” Luke 21:16, 17. Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battlefield. For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity. Thus says the prophet: “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 three-score days.” Revelation 12:6.’ *Great Controversy, page 54.*

‘The earth helped the woman’

10. How did the dragon try to destroy the woman? Revelation 12:15. Compare Isaiah 59:19, Jeremiah 46:7-8.

NOTE: ‘The Holy Spirit uses this flooding to illustrate the rising up or overflowing of the church’s enemies in an effort to destroy her. During the 1260 years of Papal supremacy, as a result of serpentine propaganda, “the waters [or people] on which the whore sits” (Revelation 17) rose up to sweep away the saints. Multitudes were inspired to mount crusades against the “heretics”... in an endeavour to sweep away God’s people.’ Cooke, *War on God’s Woman, pages 28-30.*

11. How did God intervene to protect His church? Revelation 12:16.

NOTE: ‘Six times in this chapter, the word “earth” is used. Other terms in this chapter, such as “the woman”, “the mouth of the serpent”, and “the flood”, are symbolic. Should we understand the term “earth” to be symbolic also? Maybe it has a literal as well as a symbolic application. Did God employ the literal elements of the earth, the natural world, to deliver his saints from destruction during those dark years? Yes, He certainly did! He used the mountain fastnesses, the isolated valleys, deep forests, secret caves, cloud and mist, wind and tempest, water and floods to protect and deliver His people.’ Cooke, *War on God’s Woman, pages 30-31.*

‘They overcame him’

12. How is the final remaining part of the church identified? Revelation 12:17.

NOTE: ‘In the twelfth chapter of Revelation is represented the great conflict between the obedient and the disobedient. The sign of obedience is the observance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. The Sabbath is a test to this generation. In obeying the fourth commandment in spirit and truth, men will obey all the precepts of the Decalogue. To fulfil this commandment one must love God supremely, and exercise love toward all the creatures that He has made. The time is coming when God’s people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day. The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, and who has always oppressed the people of God, will cause laws to be made enforcing the observance of the first day of the week. But God’s people are to stand firm for Him. Let no one yield to temptation and become less fervent in his attachment to God’s law because of the contempt placed upon it; for that is the very thing that should make us pray with all our heart, and soul, and voice, “It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law.” Psalm 119:126. Therefore, because of the universal contempt, I will not turn traitor when God will be most glorified and most honoured by my loyalty.’ *The Faith I Live By, page 291.*

13. What was the secret of the church’s victory over the devil? Revelation 12:11.

NOTE: ‘Some expect to overcome alone by the blood of the Lamb, without making any special effort of their own. I saw that God has been merciful in giving us the power of speech. He has given us a tongue, and we are accountable to Him for its use. We should glorify God with our mouth, speaking in honour of the truth and of His unbounded mercy, and overcome by the word of our testimony through the blood of the Lamb.’ *Early Writings, page 114.*

Lesson 2: ‘If any man worship the beast and his image’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out

without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.’ Revelation 14:9-10.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 439-450.

Introduction

‘Under the symbols of a great red dragon, a leopard-like beast, and a beast with lamblike horns, the earthly governments which would especially engage in trampling upon God’s law and persecuting His people, were presented to John. The war is carried on till the close of time. The people of God, symbolised by a holy woman and her children, were represented as greatly in the minority. In the last days only a remnant still existed. Of these John speaks as they “which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”’ *Signs of the Times*, November 1, 1899.

‘The beast which I saw’

1. What new persecuting power did John see coming on the scene? Revelation 13:1.

NOTE: ‘In chapter 13 (verses 1-10) is described another beast, “like unto a leopard,” to which the dragon gave “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” This symbol, as most Protestants have believed, represents the papacy, which succeeded to the power and seat and authority once held by the ancient Roman Empire. Of the leopardlike beast it is declared: “There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. . . . And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” This prophecy, which is nearly identical with the description of the little horn of Daniel 7, unquestionably points to the papacy.’ *Great Controversy*, page 439.

2. How did John describe the beast that he saw? Revelation 13:2.

NOTE: In Daniel 7, the prophet was shown four successive persecuting powers under the symbolism of monsters, a winged lion, representing Babylon; a deformed bear, representing Medo-Persia; a four-headed, four winged leopard, representing Greece; and a ten-horned beast representing Rome. The beast John saw resembled all these monsters. The papacy is idolatrous, as was Babylon (see Daniel 3). Medo-Persia claimed infallibility (see Daniel 6:8, 15) as does the papacy. Greek philosophers taught the immortality of the soul, a central teaching of the papacy, while Imperial Rome provided the seat and authority of the papacy.

‘Here is wisdom’

3. What especially was John shown about the beast? Revelation 13:5-6. Compare Daniel 7:25, first part. See also Mark 2:7 & John 10:33.

NOTE: The Bible describes as blasphemy the practice of claiming to forgive sin. Roman Catholic priest Michael Muller expresses the papal doctrine thus: ‘The priest not only declares that the sinner is forgiven, but he really forgives him; so great is the power of the priest, that the judgments of heaven itself are subject to his decision.’ (*The Catholic Priest*, published by Kreuzer Bros., 1876) The Bible also describes as blasphemy the claim of a man to be God. The Catholic Encyclopaedia (Volume 6 page 48) quotes the following from Ferraris’ *Prompta Bibliotheca Canonica Juridica Moralis Theologica*: ‘The pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God... The Pope is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief king of kings.’

4. What further aspect of the beast’s activities was John shown? Revelation 13:7. Compare Daniel 7:25.

NOTE: ‘That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history. The memorials, indeed, of many of her persecutions are now so scanty, that it is impossible to form a complete conception of the multitude of her victims, and it is quite certain that no power of imagination can adequately realise their sufferings.’ Dr W. E. H. Lecky, *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, Volume 2, page 32.

‘From the birth of popery in 606 to the present time, it is estimated by careful and credible historians that more than fifty millions of the human family have been slaughtered by popish persecutors, an average of more than forty thousand religious murders for every year of the existence of Popery.’ Dr J. Dowling, *History of Romanism*, pages 541-542.

5. What further identifying feature of the beast was John shown? Revelation 13:18.

NOTE: In the (Roman Catholic) Douai Bible, the following footnote is found under Revelation 13:18: ‘666. The numeral letters of his name shall make up this number.’ In several ancient languages (e.g. Latin, Greek and Hebrew), no separate numerals existed and letters of the alphabet were given numerical values.

It has been known for four hundred years that the title ‘Vicarius Filii Dei’ (Vicar or Deputy of the Son of God) has the numerical value of 666. At least six Roman Catholic authorities (*Decretum of Gratian*, founder of the system of Canon Law 1148-1582, Revised Edition of the ‘Decretum’ 1582-present, the Catholic Encyclopaedia Volume 6 page 48, Cardinal Manning in *The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Christ*, pages 231-232, Labbe in *Sacrosanta concilia ad regiam editionem exacta*, Volume 1 page 1534, and the *Donation of Constantine* (the forgery used by the papacy for centuries to establish its authority ‘over all kindreds, tongues and nations’) confirm this to be a title claimed by the pope. The pope is hailed by this title as the crown is placed on the his head at his coronation. The title means ‘vicar of the Son of God.’ A vicar is one who stands in

for another, a deputy or substitute. The Greek word 'antichristos', used by John in 1 John 2:18 & 22, 1 John 4:3 and 2 John v.7, means one who stands in for Christ, a deputy or substitute for Christ, 'anti-' in Greek being a prefix meaning 'in place of'. Thus when the pope describes himself as Vicar of Christ, he is in effect claiming to be antichrist. Andreas Helwig of Friedland, who was the first to reach this conclusion, had already concluded from other passages that the papacy is referred to here. He showed that not only must the name or title yield the number 666; it must also agree with the other Bible evidence identifying the antichrist. It must not be a term of abuse applied by his enemies but must be a title acceptable to the antichrist and indeed one of which he can boast.

'Wounded to death'

6. At the end of the beast's period of power, what did John see happening to it? Revelation 13:3 & 10.

NOTE: "Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." And, says the prophet, "I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death." And again: "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." The forty and two months are the same as the "time and times and the dividing of time," three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7, the time during which the papal power was to oppress God's people. This period... began with the supremacy of the papacy, A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798. At that time the pope was made captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity." *Great Controversy*, page 439.

7. Was the wound in fact fatal to the beast? Revelation 13:3, last part.

NOTE: 'What was it that constituted the deadly wound? It was the stripping from the Papacy of its political power. The church continued as a religious body but the political element was destroyed.' Cooke, *The Antichrist 666*, page 22.

'The infliction of the deadly wound points to the downfall of the papacy in 1798. After this, says the prophet, "his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Paul states plainly that the "man of sin" will continue until the Second Advent. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8. To the very close of time he will carry forward the work of deception. And the Revelator declares, also referring to the papacy: "All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life." Revelation 13:8. In both the Old and the New World, the papacy will receive homage in the honour paid to the Sunday institution that rests solely upon the authority of the Roman Church. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, students of prophecy in the United States have presented this testimony to the world. In the events now taking place is seen a rapid advance toward the fulfilment of the prediction.' *Great Controversy*, page 578.

8. What is world's reaction to the healing of the deadly wound? Revelation 13:3, last part & 8.

NOTE: 'The Papacy's revival and restoration has amazed the world. One hundred years ago, no Roman Catholic could hold public office in Great Britain or the United States. The Roman Catholic Church was an unpopular, hated and despised church. It was considered by millions to be unchristian, pagan, idolatrous, degrading, oppressive and even a curse to the community. Today, Roman Catholicism is looked upon in exactly the opposite light. It is an amazing reversal of public opinion.' Cooke, *The Antichrist 666*, page 23.

'And I beheld another beast'

9. As the first beast was being led away into captivity, what did John see? Revelation 13:11.

NOTE: 'There are very clear identification marks associated with the second beast and by these we can be sure as to who the power is:

- It rises to power when the Papacy receives a deadly wound.
- This power rises out of the earth, an area that is the opposite to the sea, from which the first beast arises. [Sea or waters represent peoples and nations. When troubled, they represent strife and warfare.]
- It rises silently, like a plant growing out of the earth. This is the meaning of the Greek word 'anabaino' translated 'coming up'.
- It is lamblike. This means that it is youthful, innocent, harmless and gentle.
- It has two symbols of power (horns) that are lamblike. Christ is represented as the Lamb of God.
- It ultimately possesses world-wide influence.
- After the healing of the deadly wound, it enforces papal policy.
- It promotes the formation of 'the image to the beast'.
- It enforces obedience to 'the image to the beast'.
- The form of enforcement is characterised by a particular mark, 'the mark of the beast'.

The only power that fulfils ([or will fulfil] these points in the United States of America.

(Condensed from Cooke, *When Religious Persecution Returns*, page 3.)

10. How does the second beast resemble the first? Revelation 13:12

NOTE: 'The prediction that it will speak "as a dragon" and exercise "all the power of the first beast" plainly foretells a development of the spirit of intolerance and persecution that was manifested by the nations represented by the dragon and the leopardlike beast. And the statement that the beast with two horns "causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast" indicates that the authority of this nation is to be exercised in enforcing some observance which shall be an act of homage to the papacy.' *Great Controversy*, page 442.

‘Great wonders’

11. What means will be used to induce people to worship the first beast? Revelation 13:13.

NOTE: ‘Some will be tempted to receive these wonders as from God. The sick will be healed before us. Miracles will be performed in our sight. Are we prepared for the trial which awaits us when the lying wonders of Satan shall be more fully exhibited? Will not many be ensnared and taken? By departing from the plain precepts and commandments of God and giving heed to fables, the minds of many are preparing to receive these lying wonders. We must all now seek to arm ourselves for the contest in which we must soon engage. Faith in God’s word, prayerfully studied and practically applied, will be our shield from Satan’s power and will bring us off conquerors through the blood of Christ.’ *Testimonies for the Church, volume I*, page 302.

12. What is the purpose of these wonders and miracles? Revelation 13:14. Compare 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 & Revelation 16:13-14.

NOTE: ‘Among the most successful agencies of the great deceiver are the delusive teachings and lying wonders of spiritualism. Disguised as an angel of light, he spreads his nets where least suspected. If men would but study the Book of God with earnest prayer that they might understand it, they would not be left in darkness to receive false doctrines. But as they reject the truth they fall a prey to deception... Many endeavour to account for spiritual manifestations by attributing them wholly to fraud and sleight of hand on the part of the medium. But while it is true that the results of trickery have often been palmed off as genuine manifestations, there have been, also, marked exhibitions of supernatural power... But none need be deceived by the lying claims of spiritualism. God has given the world sufficient light to enable them to discover the snare. As already shown, the theory which forms the very foundation of spiritualism is at war with the plainest statements of Scripture. The Bible declares that the dead know not anything, that their thoughts have perished; they have no part in anything that is done under the sun; they know nothing of the joys or sorrows of those who were dearest to them on earth.’ *Great Controversy*, pages 524, 553 & 556.

‘To receive a mark’

13. How will the worship of the beast and its image be enforced? Revelation 13:16-17.

NOTE: ‘Heaven will be cheap enough, if we obtain it through suffering. We must deny self all along the way, die to self daily, let Jesus alone appear, and keep His glory continually in view. I saw that those who of late have embraced the truth would have to know what it is to suffer for Christ’s sake, that they would have trials to pass through that would be keen and cutting, in order that they may be purified and fitted through suffering to receive the seal of the living God, pass through the time of trouble, see the King in His beauty, and dwell in the presence of God and of pure, holy angels. As I saw what we must be in order to inherit glory, and then saw how much Jesus had suffered to obtain for us so rich an inheritance, I prayed that we might be baptized into Christ’s sufferings, that we might not shrink at trials, but bear them with patience and joy, knowing what Jesus had suffered that we through His poverty and sufferings might be made rich. Said the angel, “Deny self; ye must step fast.” Some of us have had time to get the truth and to advance step by step, and every step we have taken has given us strength to take the next. But now time is almost finished, and what we have been years learning, they will have to learn in a few months. They will also have much to unlearn and much to learn again. Those who would not receive the mark of the beast and his image when the decree goes forth, must have decision now to say, Nay, we will not regard the institution of the beast.’ *Early Writings*, page 67.

14. What threat will hang over those who refuse to conform to these laws? Revelation 13:15.

NOTE: ‘When Jesus leaves the most holy, His restraining Spirit is withdrawn from rulers and people. They are left to the control of evil angels. Then such laws will be made by the counsel and direction of Satan, that unless time should be very short, no flesh could be saved. I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus’ work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues. These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob’s trouble. I saw the leading men of the earth consulting together, and Satan and his angels busy around them. I saw a writing, copies of which were scattered in different parts of the land, giving orders that unless the saints should yield their peculiar faith, give up the Sabbath, and observe the first day of the week, the people were at liberty after a certain time to put them to death. Though a general decree has fixed the time when commandment keepers may be put to death, their enemies will in some cases anticipate the decree, and before the time specified, will endeavour to take their lives. But none can pass the mighty guardians stationed about every faithful soul. Some are assailed in their flight from the cities and villages; but the swords raised against them break and fall powerless as a straw. Others are defended by angels in the form of men of war. Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ’s patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress and have heard their prayers. They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril. But they must wait yet a little longer. The people of God must drink of the cup and be baptized with the baptism.’ *Maranatha*, page 268.

Lesson 3: ‘To every nation and kindred and tongue and people’

MEMORY VERSE: 'And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' Mark 16:15.
STUDY HELP: *Testimonies Volume 5*, pages 454-467.

Introduction

'I saw the mercy and goodness of God in sending a warning to the people of the earth, and repeated messages to lead them to a diligent searching of heart, and study of the Scriptures, that they might divest themselves of errors which have been handed down from the heathen and papists. Through these messages God has been bringing out His people where He can work for them in greater power, and where they can keep all His commandments.' *Early Writings*, page 250.

'The everlasting Gospel'

1. What vital message is to be proclaimed? Revelation 14:6.

NOTE: 'These three angels represent the people who accept the light of God's messages, and go forth as His agents to sound the warning throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Christ declared to His followers, "Ye are the light of the world." To every soul that accepts Jesus, the cross of Calvary speaks: Behold the worth of the soul. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Nothing is to be permitted to hinder this work. It is the all-important work for this time, and it is to be far-reaching as eternity.' *Signs of the Times*, January 25, 1910.

'The fact that an angel is said to be the herald of this warning is significant. By the purity, the glory, and the power of the heavenly messenger, divine wisdom has been pleased to represent the exalted character of the work to be accomplished by the message and the power and glory that were to attend it. And the angel's flight "in the midst of heaven," the "loud voice" with which the warning is uttered, and its promulgation to all "that dwell on the earth," "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," give evidence of the rapidity and world-wide extent of the movement.' *Great Controversy*, page 355.

2. What is the Gospel? Romans 1:16.

NOTE: 'God is an overflowing fountain of efficiency and strength. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes. When this power is utilised, it will be found to be more than sufficient to meet the power of the enemy.' *Signs of the Times*, November 28, 1906.

'The truth for this time embraces the whole gospel. Rightly presented, it will work in man the very changes that will make evident the power of God's grace upon the heart. It will do a complete work and develop a complete man.' *Counsels on Health*, page 516.

He bore my soul's disgrace, that in His name I might be an overcomer, and be exalted to His throne. Tell of His power, sing of His matchless love. In every trial He will be near you, and will give grace and power according to your need.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, July 19, 1892.

3. To whom is this message to be proclaimed? Revelation 14:6, last part, Mark 16:15.

NOTE: 'Service to God includes personal ministry. By personal effort we are to co-operate with Him for the saving of the world. Christ's commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," is spoken to every one of His followers. (Mark 16:15.) All who are ordained unto the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. Their hearts will throb in unison with the heart of Christ. The same longing for souls that He has felt will be manifest in them. Not all can fill the same place in the work, but there is a place and a work for all.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 300.

'Fear God'

4. What is the first component of the first angel's message? Revelation 14:7, first part.

NOTE: 'The law of God is to be the means of education in the family. Parents are under a most solemn obligation to obey this law, setting their children an example of the strictest integrity. Men in responsible positions, whose influence is far-reaching, are to guard well their ways and works, keeping the fear of the Lord ever before them. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Psalm 111:10. Those who hearken diligently to the voice of the Lord and cheerfully keep His commandments will be among the number who see God. "The Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as He hath commanded us." Deuteronomy 6:24, 25.' *Counsels on Health*, page 359.

5. What does it mean to fear God? Psalm 34:11-14. See also Ecclesiastes 12:13, Deuteronomy 6:2, 24, Deuteronomy 10:12.

NOTE: 'By the first angel, men are called upon to "fear God, and give glory to Him" and to worship Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must obey His law. Says the wise man: "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. Without obedience to His commandments no worship can be pleasing to God. "This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." 1 John 5:3; Proverbs 28:9.' *Great Controversy*, page 436.

'Give glory to Him'

6. What is the second component of the first angel's message? Revelation 14:7, next part.

NOTE: 'Oh, how much we have lost as a people by our lack of faith! We have suffered loss to our own souls, and have failed to reveal to others, by our words and in our character, what Christ is and will be to everyone who comes to Him believing. He is "made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." To give glory to God is to reveal His character in our own, and thus make Him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God.' *Signs of the Times*, October 17, 1892.

7. How did Christ glorify God? John 17:4. Compare John 14:9. See also John 15:8.

NOTE: 'The glory of the Father was revealed in the Son; Christ made manifest the character of the Father. He was so perfectly connected with God, so completely embraced in His encircling light, that he who had seen the Son, had seen the Father. His voice was as the voice of God. Mark Christ's prayer before His crucifixion: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." Again He says, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*. January 7, 1890.

'As Christ glorified the Father by the demonstration of His love, so the Spirit was to glorify Christ by revealing to the world the riches of His grace. The very image of God is to be reproduced in humanity. The honour of God, the honour of Christ, is involved in the perfection of the character of His people.' *Our High Calling*, page 154.

'Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.' Fruit-bearing, then, is the condition of discipleship. What is the fruit that is to be borne? Purity of character, unselfish deeds, Christlike words. Those who do not bear this fruit, those whose lives do not reveal the tenderness of Christ, are not accepted as representatives of God.' *Australasian Union Conference Record*, November 15, 1903.

'The hour of His judgement is come'

8. Why is this message so urgent? Revelation 14:7, middle part.

NOTE: 'The message itself sheds light as to the time when this movement is to take place. It is declared to be a part of the "everlasting gospel;" and it announces the opening of the judgement. The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but this message is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed only in the last days, for only then would it be true that the hour of judgment had come. The prophecies present a succession of events leading down to the opening of the judgment. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. But that part of his prophecy which related to the last days, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal "to the time of the end." Not till we reach this time could a message concerning the judgment be proclaimed, based on the fulfilment of these prophecies. But at the time of the end, says the prophet, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4.' *Great Controversy*, page 355.

'The hour of God's judgment has come, and upon the members of His church on earth rests the solemn responsibility of giving warning to those who are standing as it were on the very brink of eternal ruin. All can do something in the work. None will be pronounced guiltless before God unless they have worked earnestly and unselfishly for the salvation of souls. Your duty cannot be shifted upon another. No one but yourself can do your work. If you withhold your light, someone must be left in darkness through your neglect. The Lord has a place for everyone in His great plan.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 290.

9. Who is the whole world called upon to worship? Revelation 14:7, last part. Compare Exodus 20:8-11.

NOTE: 'In Revelation 14, men are called upon to worship the Creator; and the prophecy brings to view a class that, as the result of the threefold message, are keeping the commandments of God. One of these commandments points directly to God as the Creator. The fourth precept declares: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:10, 11. Concerning the Sabbath, the Lord says, further, that it is "a sign, . . . that ye may know that I am the Lord your God." Ezekiel 20:20. And the reason given is: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed." Exodus 31:17. "The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God" - because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. "The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten." (J. N. Andrews, *History of the Sabbath*, chapter 27.) It was to keep this truth ever before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden; and so long as the fact that He is our Creator continues to be a reason why we should worship Him, so long the Sabbath will continue as its sign and memorial. Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, "Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment.' *Great Controversy*, page 437.

'Babylon is fallen'

10. What proclamation is given by the second angel? Revelation 14:8.

NOTE: 'As the churches refused to receive the first angel's message, they rejected the light from heaven and fell from the favour of God. They trusted to their own strength, and by opposing the first message placed themselves where they could not

see the light of the second angel's message. But the beloved of God, who were oppressed, accepted the message, "Babylon is fallen," and left the churches.' *Early Writings*, page 237.

11. How will this message be repeated before Christ returns? Revelation 18:1-4.

NOTE: 'Babylon is said to be "the mother of harlots." By her daughters must be symbolised churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. The message of Revelation 14, announcing the fall of Babylon must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days; therefore it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries. Furthermore, in the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation the people of God are called upon to come out of Babylon. According to this scripture, many of God's people must still be in Babylon. And in what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith. At the time of their rise these churches took a noble stand for God and the truth, and His blessing was with them. Even the unbelieving world was constrained to acknowledge the beneficent results that followed an acceptance of the principles of the gospel. In the words of the prophet to Israel: "Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God." But they fell by the same desire which was the curse and ruin of Israel, the desire of imitating the practices and courting the friendship of the ungodly. "Thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown." *Ezekiel 16:14, 15.* *Great Controversy*, page 382.

'The wine of the wrath of her fornication'

12. Why has Babylon fallen? Revelation 14:8, last part.

NOTE: 'The great sin charged against Babylon is that she "made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." This cup of intoxication which she presents to the world represents the false doctrines that she has accepted as the result of her unlawful connection with the great ones of the earth. Friendship with the world corrupts her faith, and in her turn she exerts a corrupting influence upon the world by teaching doctrines which are opposed to the plainest statements of Holy Writ.' *Great Controversy*, page 388.

13. What does fornication symbolise? Ezekiel 16:26 & 29. Read this chapter and compare Jeremiah 3:6-10.

NOTE: 'In the Bible the sacred and enduring character of the relation that exists between Christ and His church is represented by the union of marriage. The Lord has joined His people to Himself by a solemn covenant, He promising to be their God, and they pledging themselves to be His and His alone. He declares: "I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies." Hosea 2:19. And, again: "I am married unto you." Jeremiah 3:14. And Paul employs the same figure in the New Testament when he says: "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Corinthians 11:2. The unfaithfulness of the church to Christ in permitting her confidence and affection to be turned from Him, and allowing the love of worldly things to occupy the soul, is likened to the violation of the marriage vow. The sin of Israel in departing from the Lord is presented under this figure; and the wonderful love of God which they thus despised is touchingly portrayed: "I swear unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest Mine." "And thou wast exceeding beautiful and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee. . . . But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown." "As a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel, saith the Lord;" "as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband!" *Ezekiel 16:8, 13-15, 32; Jeremiah 3:20.* In the New Testament, language very similar is addressed to professed Christians who seek the friendship of the world above the favour of God. Says the apostle James: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.'" *Great Controversy*, page 382.

Lesson 4: 'Here are they'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Revelation 14:12.

STUDY HELP: *Early Writings*, pages 277-282.

Introduction

'The theme of greatest importance is the third angel's message, embracing the messages of the first and second angels. All should understand the truths contained in these messages and demonstrate them in daily life, for this is essential to salvation. We shall have to study earnestly, prayerfully, in order to understand these grand truths; and our power to learn and comprehend will be taxed to the utmost.' *Evangelism*, page 196.

‘If any man worship the beast and his image’

1. What solemn warning is to be proclaimed to the world? Revelation 14:9-11.

NOTE: ‘With the issue thus clearly brought before him, whoever shall trample upon God’s law to obey a human enactment receives the mark of the beast; he accepts the sign of allegiance to the power which he chooses to obey instead of God. The warning from heaven is: “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation.” Revelation 14:9, 10. But not one is made to suffer the wrath of God until the truth has been brought home to his mind and conscience, and has been rejected. There are many who have never had an opportunity to hear the special truths for this time. The obligation of the fourth commandment has never been set before them in its true light. He who reads every heart and tries every motive will leave none who desire a knowledge of the truth, to be deceived as to the issues of the controversy. The decree is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Everyone is to have sufficient light to make his decision intelligently.’ *Great Controversy*, pages 604-605.

2. How will the worship of the beast and his image be enforced? Revelation 13:15-17.

NOTE: ‘The beast with two horns “causeth [commands] all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Revelation 13:16, 17. The third angel’s warning is: “If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.” “The beast” mentioned in this message, whose worship is enforced by the two-horned beast, is the first, or leopardlike beast of Revelation 13, the papacy. The “image to the beast” represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas... After the warning against the worship of the beast and his image the prophecy declares: “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Since those who keep God’s commandments are thus placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God’s law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshippers of God and the worshippers of the beast.’ *Great Controversy*, page 445.

‘The wine of the wrath of God’

3. What fate awaits those who worship the beast and his image? Revelation 14:10.

NOTE: ‘The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel’s message. That must be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God’s judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them. In the issue of the great contest, two distinct, opposite classes are developed. One class “worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark,” and thus bring upon themselves the awful judgments threatened by the third angel. The other class, in marked contrast to the world, “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:9, 12.’ *The Story of Redemption*, page 383.

4. What is the wine of the wrath of God? Revelation 15:1. Read the whole of Revelation 16.

NOTE: ‘When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel, were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God’s people. Says the Revelator, in describing those terrific scourges: “There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.” The sea “became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.” And “the rivers and fountains of waters . . . became blood.” Rev. 16:2-4. Terrible as these inflictions are, God’s justice stands fully vindicated. These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmingled with mercy.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 340.

‘I will keep thee’

5. What promise of protection has God made during the time of the plagues? Revelation 3:10.

NOTE: ‘In the time of trial just before us, God’s pledge of security will be placed upon those who have kept the word of his patience. If you have complied with the conditions of God’s word, Christ will be to you a refuge from the storm. He will say to his faithful ones: “Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast.” The Lion of Judah, so terrible to the rejecters of His grace, will be the Lamb of God to the obedient and faithful. The pillar of cloud will speak terror and wrath to the transgressor of God’s law, but light and mercy and deliverance to those who have kept His commandments. The Arm, strong to smite the rebellious, will be strong to deliver the loyal. Every faithful one will surely be gathered. “He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”’ *Home Missionary*, November 1, 1893.

6. Who will be able to claim the promise of protection? Psalm 91:9-11. Read this whole psalm.

NOTE: 'Many do not realise what they must be in order to live in the sight of the Lord without a high priest in the sanctuary, through the time of trouble. Those who receive the seal of the living God, and are protected in the time of trouble, must reflect the image of Jesus fully. I saw that many were neglecting the preparation so needful, and were looking to the time of "refreshing" and the "latter rain" to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord, and to live in His sight. Oh, how many I saw in the time of trouble without a shelter! They had neglected the needful preparation, therefore they could not receive the refreshing that all must have to fit them to live in the sight of a holy God. Those who refuse to be hewed by the prophets, and fail to purify their souls in obeying the whole truth, and who are willing to believe that their condition is far better than it really is, will come up to the time of the falling of the plagues, and then see that they needed to be hewed and squared for the building. But there will be no time then to do it and no Mediator to plead their cause before the Father.' *Christian Experience & Teachings*, page 112.

'He who walked with the Hebrew worthies in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain. In the midst of the time of trouble, trouble such as has not been since there was a nation, His chosen ones will stand unmoved. Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a "God of gods," able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him.' *Conflict & Courage*, page 252.

'They that keep the commandments of God'

7. How are the saints contrasted with those that receive the mark of the beast? Revelation 14:12.

NOTE: 'This symbol [the beast], as most Protestants have believed, represents the Papacy. The "image to the beast" represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas. As the sign of the authority of the Catholic Church, papist writers cite "the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday." What then is the change of the Sabbath, but the sign, or mark, of the authority of the Roman Church, "the mark of the beast"? Sunday-keeping is not yet the mark of the beast, and will not be until the decree goes forth causing men to worship this idol sabbath. And it is not until the issue is plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast." When God sends to men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to heed the message.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 286.

8. What is 'the faith of Jesus'? John 12:49-50. Compare John 11:41-42.

NOTE: 'If we have constant dependence on the merits of our Saviour, and walk in His footsteps, we shall be like Him, pure and undefiled. Our Saviour does not require impossibilities of any soul. He expects nothing of His disciples that He is not willing to give them grace and strength to perform. He would not call upon them to be perfect if He had not at His command every perfection of grace to bestow on the ones upon whom He would confer so high and holy a privilege. Our work is to strive to attain in our sphere of action the perfection that Christ in His life on the earth attained in every phase of character. He is our example. In all things we are to strive to honour God in character. We are to be wholly dependent on the power that He has promised to give us. Jesus revealed no qualities, and exercised no powers, that men may not have through faith in Him. His perfect humanity is that which all His followers may possess, if they will be in subjection to God as He was.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 230.

9. What special blessing is for those who lay down their lives rather than receive the mark of the beast? Revelation 14:13.

NOTE: 'Many will be laid away to sleep in Jesus before the fiery ordeal of the time of trouble shall come upon our world. This is another reason why we should say after our earnest petition, "Nevertheless, not my will, but Thine, O Lord, be done." Such a petition will never be registered in heaven as a faithless prayer. The Apostle was bidden to write: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." From this we can see that every one is not to be judged as unworthy of eternal life. If Jesus, the world's Redeemer, prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," and then added, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt," how very appropriate is it for poor, finite mortals to make surrender to the wisdom and will of God.' *Spalding-Magan Collection*, page 6.

'One like unto the Son of man'

10. Whom did John next see in his vision? Revelation 14:14.

NOTE: 'Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man's hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The people of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it as it draws nearer the earth, becoming lighter and more glorious, until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a "Man of Sorrows," to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. "Faithful and True," "in righteousness He doth judge and make war." And "the armies which were in heaven" (Revelation 19:11, 14) follow Him. With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms, "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendour. "His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light." Habakkuk 3:3,4. As the

living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head; but a diadem of glory rests on His holy brow. His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun. "And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." Revelation 19:16.' *Great Controversy*, page 640.

11. What command comes from the temple in heaven? Revelation 14:15-16.

NOTE: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Galatians 5:22, 23. This fruit can never perish, but will produce after its kind a harvest unto eternal life. "When the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. It is the privilege of every Christian not only to look for but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, (2 Peter 3:12, margin). Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last great harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 69.

'Her grapes are fully ripe'

12. What other harvest will also be ripe when Christ returns? Revelation 14:17-18.

NOTE: 'The point is fast being reached when the iniquity of transgressors will be to the full. God gives nations a certain time of probation. He sends light and evidence, that, if received, will save them, but if refused as the Jews refused light, indignation and punishment will fall upon them. If men refuse to be benefited, and choose darkness rather than light, they will reap the results of their choice. "Behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." The professed Christian world is advancing, as did the Jewish nation, from one degree of sinfulness to a greater degree, refusing warning after warning, and rejecting a Thus saith the Lord, while crediting the fables of men. The Lord God will soon arise in His wrath, and pour out His judgments upon those who are repeating the sins of the inhabitants of the Noachic world. Those whose hearts are fully set in them to do evil, as were the hearts of the inhabitants of Sodom, will like them be destroyed. The fact that God had long forbearance, patience and mercy, the fact that His judgments have been long delayed, will not make the punishment any less severe when it does come.' *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 4*, page 1143.

13. How is this harvest pictured? Revelation 14:19-20.

NOTE: 'When the storm of God's wrath breaks upon the world, it will be a terrible revelation for souls to find that their house is being swept away because it is built upon the sand. Let the warning be given them before it is too late. We should now feel the responsibility of labouring with intense earnestness to impart to others the truths that God has given for this time. We cannot be too much in earnest. The heart of God is moved. Souls are very precious in His sight. It was for this world that Christ wept in agony; for this world He was crucified. God gave His only-begotten Son to save sinners, and He desires us to love others as He has loved us. He desires to see those who have a knowledge of the truth imparting this knowledge to their fellow men. Now is the time for the last warning to be given. There is a special power in the presentation of the truth at the present time; but how long will it continue? Only a little while. If there was ever a crisis, it is now. All are now deciding their eternal destiny. Men need to be aroused to realize the solemnity of the time, the nearness of the day when human probation shall be ended. Decided efforts should be made to bring the message for this time prominently before the people. The third angel is to go forth with great power. Let none ignore this work or treat it as of little importance. The light we have received upon the third angel's message is the true light. The mark of the beast is exactly what it has been proclaimed to be. Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood until the unrolling of the scroll; but a most solemn work is to be accomplished in our world. The Lord's command to His servants is: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1.' *Testimonies Volume 6*, pages 16-17.

Lesson 5: 'Them that had gotten the victory'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.' Revelation 14:5.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 648-652.

Introduction

'The law of God, which is perfect holiness, is the only true standard of character. Love is expressed in obedience, and perfect love casteth out all fear. Those who love God, have the seal of God in their foreheads, and work the works of God. Would that all who profess Christianity knew what it means to love God practically. They would have some realisation of the infinite holiness of God, knowing that He is high and lifted up, and the train of His glory fills the temple. They would have a powerful influence upon the life and character of those around them, which would work as leaven amid the mass of humanity, transforming others through the power of Jesus Christ.' *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 51.

‘An hundred and forty and four thousand’

1. How is the final victory of the hundred and forty-four thousand pictured? Revelation 14:1.

NOTE: ‘Christ’s true disciples follow Him through sore conflicts, enduring self-denial and experiencing bitter disappointment; but this teaches them the guilt and woe of sin, and they are led to look upon it with abhorrence. Partakers of Christ’s sufferings, they are destined to be partakers of His glory. In holy vision the prophet saw the ultimate triumph of God’s remnant church.’ *Acts of the Apostles*, page 590.

2. Who are these people? Revelation 7:3-4, 13-14.

NOTE: ‘With the Lamb upon Mount Zion, “having the harps of God,” they stand, the hundred and forty and four thousand that were redeemed from among men. These, having been translated from the earth, from among the living, are counted as “the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” Revelation 15:2, 3; 14:1-5. “These are they which came out of great tribulation;” they have passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they have endured the anguish of the time of Jacob’s trouble; they have stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God’s judgments.’ *Great Controversy*, page 648.

‘Without fault’

3. What is said about the experience of the 144,000? Revelation 14:4, first part. Contrast Revelation 2:20.

NOTE: ‘A woman is in Scripture the symbol of a church, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a corrupt woman an apostate church. It is, then, a characteristic of this company that at the time of their deliverance they are not defiled with, or have no connection with, the fallen churches. Yet we are not to understand that they never had any connection with these churches; for it is only at a certain time that people become defiled by them. In chapter 18:4, we find a call issued to the people of God while they are in Babylon to come out, **lest** they become partakers of her sins. Heeding that call, and leaving her connection, they escape the defilement of her sins. So of the 144,000; though some of them may once have had a connection with corrupt churches, they sever that connection when it would become sin to retain it longer.’ Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, page 548.

4. What is said of the character of the 144,000? Revelation 14:5. Compare Jude verses 24-25, Psalm 32:2.

NOTE: ‘I address the people of God who today are holding fast their confidence, who will not depart from the faith once delivered unto the saints, who stand amid the moral darkness of these days of corruption. The word of the Lord to you is: “I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people.” Can we not here see the paternal love of God expressed to those who hold fast to the faith in righteousness? The closest relationship exists between God and His people. Not only are we objects of His sparing mercy, His pardoning love; we are more than this. The Lord rejoices over His people. He delights in them. He is their surety. He will beautify all who are serving Him with a whole heart with the spirit of holiness. He clothes them with righteousness. He loves those who do His will, who express His image. All who are true and faithful are conformed to the image of His Son. In their mouth is found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God.’ *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 414.

‘A new song’

5. How is the music of the 144,000 described? Revelation 14:2-3.

NOTE: ‘They sing “a new song” before the throne, a song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand. It is the song of Moses and the Lamb, a song of deliverance. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song, for it is the song of their experience, an experience such as no other company have ever had.’ *Last Day Events*, page 268.

6. What is the song that they sing? Revelation 15:3-4.

NOTE: ‘The prophet of Patmos beholds the white-robed multitude that “have gotten the victory,” standing on the “sea of glass mingled with fire,” having “the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb” (Revelation 15:2, 3). “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth’s sake” (Psalm 115:1). Such was the spirit that pervaded Israel’s song of deliverance, and it is the spirit that should dwell in the hearts of all who love and fear God. In freeing our souls from the bondage of sin, God has wrought for us a deliverance greater than that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. The daily blessings that we receive from the hand of God, and above all else the death of Jesus to bring happiness and heaven within our reach, should be a theme for constant gratitude. What compassion, what matchless love, has God shown to us, lost sinners, in connecting us with Himself, to be to Him a peculiar treasure! We should praise God for the blessed hope held out before us in the great plan of redemption, we should praise Him for the heavenly inheritance and for His rich promises; praise Him that Jesus lives to intercede for us.’ *God’s Amazing Grace*, page 352.

‘The song of Moses’

7. What was the song of Moses? Exodus 15:1-2, 6, 11-13, 18.

NOTE: ‘This song and the great deliverance which it commemorates made an impression never to be effaced from the memory of the Hebrew people. From age to age it was echoed by the prophets and singers of Israel, testifying that Jehovah is the

strength and deliverance of those who trust in Him. That song does not belong to the Jewish people alone. It points forward to the destruction of all the foes of righteousness, and the final victory of the Israel of God.' *God's Amazing Grace*, page 352.

8. What is the song of the Lamb? Revelation 5:12-13.

NOTE: "The power of an ever-abiding Saviour is greater now than ever before, because the emergencies are greater; and yet we are weak in spiritual life and experience. Oh, how much we have lost as a people by our lack of faith! We have suffered loss to our own souls, and have failed to reveal to others, by our words and in our character, what Christ is and will be to everyone who comes to Him believing. He is "made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." To give glory to God is to reveal His character in our own, and thus make Him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God. False views of God, and hence of Christ, are largely entertained to-day. Well may we offer the prayer of Moses, "Show me Thy glory." What did the Lord answer? "I will make all My goodness pass before thee." God might have answered Moses: "Why do you ask this question? Have I not revealed to you My glory in the deliverance of My people from Egyptian bondage? Did I not deliver you by the right arm of My power, and lead you dry shod through the midst of the Red Sea? Did I not reveal My glory in giving you bread from heaven? Did I not bring you water out of the flinty rock? Have you not looked upon My glory in the pillar of fire by night, and the cloud by day?" Moses might have answered that all this only kindled his desire for greater manifestations of God's power. The Lord granted the prayer of Moses, and He desires to answer us in the same way. We need to have our perceptions quickened, our hearts enlarged, that we may comprehend His glory, His goodness, His forgiveness, His forbearance, His inexpressible love.' *Signs of the Times*, October 17, 1892.

'Whithersoever He goeth'

9. What reward awaits the 144,000? Revelation 14:4, middle part.

NOTE: "The Lord has a people on the earth, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. He has His thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Such will stand with Him on Mount Zion. But they must stand on this earth, girded with the whole armour, ready to engage in the work of saving those who are ready to perish. We need not wait till we are translated to follow Christ. God's people may do this here below. We shall follow the Lamb of God in the courts above only if we follow Him here. We are not to follow Christ fitfully or capriciously, only when it is for our advantage. We must choose to follow Him. In daily life we must follow His example, as a flock trustfully follows its shepherd. We are to follow Him by suffering for His sake, saying at every step, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him" (Job 13:15). His life practice must be our life practice. And as we thus seek to be like Him and to bring our wills into conformity to His will we shall reveal Him.' *In Heavenly Places*, page 298.

10. Why are they rewarded thus? Revelation 15:2.

NOTE: "When Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honour popery above God. He is paying homage to Rome and to the power which enforces the institution ordained by Rome. He is worshipping the beast and his image. As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honour in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome, "the mark of the beast." And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast." The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel's message. That must be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God's judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them. Prophecy declares that the first angel would make his announcement to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The warning of the third angel, which forms a part of the same threefold message, is to be no less widespread. It is represented in the prophecy as being proclaimed with a loud voice, by an angel flying in the midst of heaven; and it will command the attention of the world. In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into two great classes, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond" (Revelation 13:16), to receive "the mark of the beast," yet the people of God will not receive it.' *Great Controversy*, pages 449-450.

'Written in their foreheads'

11. What mark of divine approval distinguishes these people? Revelation 14:1.

NOTE: "In this world their minds were consecrated to God; they served Him with the intellect and with the heart; and now He can place His name "in their foreheads.'" *Acts of the Apostles*, page 591.

'Are we striving with all our power to attain to the stature of men and women in Christ? Are we seeking for His fullness, ever pressing toward the mark set before us, the perfection of His character? When the Lord's people reach this mark, they will be sealed in their foreheads. Filled with the Spirit, they will be complete in Christ, and the recording angel will declare, "It is finished.'" *God's Amazing Grace*, page 216.

12. How is this described elsewhere in the Bible? Revelation 7:3.

NOTE: 'It is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 287.

'What are you doing in the great work of preparation? Those who are uniting with the world are receiving the worldly mould and preparing for the mark of the beast. Those who are distrustful of self, who are humbling themselves before God and purifying their souls by obeying the truth, these are receiving the heavenly mould and preparing for the seal of God in their foreheads. When the decree goes forth and the stamp is impressed, their character will remain pure and spotless for eternity. [See Revelation 22:11.] Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God, candidates for heaven. Every individual soul, if he would receive the seal of the living God, must hear the Word of the Lord, and do it with exactitude. There must be no such thing as haphazard religion if men would have a place in the family of God. Now is the time, while the four angels are holding the four winds, to make our calling and election sure.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 288.

Lesson 6: 'The wrath of God'

MEMORY VERSE: 'Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.' Psalm 91:9-10.

STUDY HELP: *Last Day Events*, pages 238-251.

Introduction

'When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt, when God was about to deliver Israel, were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 340.

'The temple was filled with smoke'

1. What is the wrath of God? Revelation 14:9-10, Revelation 15:1. Compare v.7 and Revelation 16:1.

NOTE: 'I saw that Jesus would not leave the most holy place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished His work in the most holy place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth. I saw that the anger of the nations, the wrath of God, and the time to judge the dead were separate and distinct, one following the other, also that Michael had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced. The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out. I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus' work was done in the sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues.' *Early Writings*, page 36.

2. What scene did John behold in the heavenly sanctuary? Revelation 15:5-7. Compare Revelation 11:19.

NOTE: 'The Ark was called "the Ark of the Testimony" for it contained the tables of Testimony or the Ten Commandments. [Exodus 31:18] The plague angels came from before the Ten Commandments. It is because these eternal principles have been broken that the plagues fall on the commandment-breakers.' Burnside, *Revelation's Wonders Unfolded*, page 181.

3. After the seven angels had left the temple and received the vials of God's wrath, what did John see about the temple? Revelation 15:8. (But see also Matthew 28:20, last part.)

NOTE: 'Currently there is a Man in the temple, "the Man Christ Jesus," the "one mediator between God and men." (2 Timothy 2:5) When the plagues commence, no one stands between guilty men and an offended God. Christ's intercession has ceased. Likewise the Holy Spirit, our spiritual intercessor on earth, is withdrawn from the earth... Thus at the close of probation, the divine restraint will be withdrawn from men and the race will be under Satan's complete control.' Cooke, *God's Strange Act*, page 5.

'Go and pour out the vials'

4. What command then came from the heavenly temple? Revelation 16:1.

NOTE: 'The words will soon be spoken, "Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth." These heavenly beings, in executing the mandate of God, ask no questions, but do as they are bid. Jehovah of hosts, the Lord God Almighty, the just, the true, and the holy, has given them their work to do. With unswerving fidelity they go forth panoplied in pure white linen, having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And when their task is done, when the last vial of God's wrath is poured out, they return and lay their emptied vials at the feet of the Lord.' *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 432.

5. What will be the first of these plagues to fall on sinful mankind? Revelation 16:2. Compare Job 2:7-8, 12-13.

NOTE: 'These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy. The bolts of God's wrath are soon to fall, and when He shall begin to punish the transgressors, there will be no period of respite until the end. The storm of God's wrath is gathering, and those only will stand who are sanctified through the truth in the love of God. They shall be hid with Christ in God till the desolation shall be overpast.' *Maranatha*, page 267.

'Thou art righteous'

6. What second and third plagues follow? Revelation 16:3-4. Compare Exodus 7:17-18, 20-21.

NOTE: 'When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (Revelation 14:9, 10), will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel, were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people. Says the Revelator, in describing those terrific scourges: The sea "became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea" The plagues were falling upon the inhabitants of the earth. Some were denouncing God and cursing Him. Others rushed to the people of God and begged to be taught how they might escape His judgments. But the saints had nothing for them. The last tear for sinners had been shed, the last agonising prayer offered, the last burden borne, the last warning given.' *Last Day Events*, page 244.

7. How does the third angel show that this punishment is justified? Revelation 16:5-6.

NOTE: 'Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: "Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy." Revelation 16:2-6. By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands. In like manner Christ declared the Jews of His time guilty of all the blood of holy men which had been shed since the days of Abel; for they possessed the same spirit and were seeking to do the same work with these murderers of the prophets.' *Great Controversy*, page 628.

'They repented not'

8. What fourth plague then followed? Revelation 16:8. Compare Isaiah 41:17.

NOTE: In view of the great issue which will divide the world at this time, whether to worship the Creator on His holy day or to accept the counterfeit Sabbath, it is appropriate that this plague should be directed at the sun. 'Sun worship has always been the great counterfeit. It was the devil's system. "Sunday, so named because anciently dedicated to the sun and to its worship." *Webster's Dictionary*.' Burnside, *Revelation's Wonders Unfolded*, page 183.

9. What is the reaction of those who suffer from this plague? Revelation 16:9.

NOTE: 'These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous; they thought that we had brought the judgments of God upon them, and that if they could rid the earth of us, the plagues would then be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble.' *Early Writings*, page 36.

'It is worthy of notice that every successive plague tends to augment the calamity of the previous ones and heighten the anguish of the guilty sufferers. We have now a noisome and grievous sore preying upon men, inflaming their blood and pouring its feverous influence through their veins. To add to their misery they have nothing but blood to allay their burning thirst; and, as if to crown all, power is given unto the sun and he pours upon them a flood of liquid fire, so that they are scorched with great heat. Here, as the record tells us, their woe first seeks utterance in fearful blasphemy,' Smith, *Daniel & the Revelation*, page 605.

'Upon the seat of the beast'

10. Where is the next plague directed? Revelation 16:10.

NOTE: Just as Elijah was blamed for the judgements that fell upon Israel [see 1 Kings 18:17], so the people of God will be blamed for the seven last plagues. By directing this plague against the seat (literally: the throne) of the beast, God will reveal the true culprit in bringing God's judgements upon the earth.

'The word "seat" in the Greek actually means "throne". This means that the fifth plague is poured upon the throne, the seat of control, of the beast, or of the papacy. This must be the Vatican. The result or effect of this plague is darkness, but not the Vatican only: "his kingdom was filled with darkness." The kingdom of the papacy by this time will be worldwide for "all that dwell on the earth shall worship him whose names are not written in the Book of Life." [Revelation 13:8.]' Cooke, *God's Strange Act*, page 18.

11. What will be the effect of this plague on those who worship the beast and his image? Revelation 16:10, last part-11.

NOTE: 'In the first three plagues it is significant to notice that there is no apparent reaction by the unsaved against God. However, in the fourth, fifth and seventh plague, the unsaved finally give vent to their true feelings. "And men blasphemed the name of God... and they repented not to give Him glory... And blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores and repented not of their deeds... and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail.' We suggest that the normal reaction of humans to such extreme pain would be to cry to God for mercy. However, in the first three plagues there is

no apparent reaction, but when the fourth plague falls upon them, they finally burst forth in rebellion, blaspheming God and REPENTED NOT. This will reveal to the universe the true state of the unsaved. Though they had been misled, deluded, hoodwinked by the religious leaders, they themselves at heart are in rebellion against God.’ Cooke, *God’s Strange Act*, page 22.

‘Thy people shall be delivered’

12. What precious promises will God’s people have to comfort them in this terrible time? Psalm 91:10-11. Read the whole psalm.

NOTE: ‘The people of God will not be free from suffering; but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation and suffer for want of food they will not be left to perish. That God who cared for Elijah will not pass by one of His self-sacrificing children. He who numbers the hairs of their head will care for them, and in time of famine they shall be satisfied. While the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence, angels will shield the righteous and supply their wants. To him that “walketh righteously” is the promise: “Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” “When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.” Isaiah 33:15, 16; 41:17.’ *Great Controversy*, page 629.

13. What promise of protection will sustain God’s people during this time of trouble? Psalm 34:6-8.

NOTE: ‘Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ’s patience. With sympathising tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress and have heard their prayers. They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril. But they must wait yet a little longer. The people of God must drink of the cup and be baptized with the baptism. The very delay, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavour to wait trustingly for the Lord to work they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religious experience. Yet for the elect’s sake the time of trouble will be shortened. “Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him? . . . I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.” Luke 18:7, 8. The end will come more quickly than men expect. The wheat will be gathered and bound in sheaves for the garner of God; the tares will be bound as fagots for the fires of destruction. The heavenly sentinels, faithful to their trust, continue their watch. Though a general decree has fixed the time when commandment keepers may be put to death, their enemies will in some cases anticipate the decree, and before the time specified, will endeavour to take their lives. But none can pass the mighty guardians stationed about every faithful soul. Some are assailed in their flight from the cities and villages; but the swords raised against them break and fall powerless as a straw. Others are defended by angels in the form of men of war.’ *Great Controversy*, pages 630-631.

Lesson 7: ‘Armageddon’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.’ Revelation 16:15.

STUDY HELP: *Last Day Events*, pages 248-251.

Introduction

‘The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude. The agencies of evil are combining their forces, and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.’ *Testimonies Volume 9*, page 11.

‘The great river Euphrates’

1. Where is the sixth plague poured out? Revelation 13:12.

NOTE: ‘The Bible reveals that the river Euphrates is the river of Babylon. Ancient Babylon is employed in the book of Revelation as a type or picture of modern [spiritual] Babylon. The Euphrates therefore is a symbolic river, connected with modern Babylon in the last days.’ Cooke, *The Drying Up of the Great River Euphrates*, page 3.

2. How did literal Babylon fall? Isaiah 44:27-45:1. Compare Daniel 5, Jeremiah 51:36-37.

NOTE: ‘Babylon was besieged by Cyrus, nephew of Darius the Mede, and commanding general of the combined armies of the Medes and Persians. But within the seemingly impregnable fortress, with its massive walls and its gates of brass, protected by the river Euphrates, and stocked with provision in abundance, the voluptuous monarch [Belshazzar] felt safe and passed his time in mirth and revelry... While still in the festal hall, surrounded by those whose doom has been sealed, the king is informed by a messenger that “his city is taken” by the enemy against whose devices he had felt so secure; “that the passages are stopped, . . . and the men of war are affrighted.” Jeremiah 51:31, 32. Even while he and his nobles were drinking from the sacred vessels of Jehovah, and praising their gods of silver and of gold, the Medes and the Persians, having turned the Euphrates out of its channel, were marching into the heart of the unguarded city. The army of Cyrus now stood under the walls

of the palace; the city was filled with the soldiers of the enemy, "as with caterpillars" (verse 14); and their triumphant shouts could be heard above the despairing cries of the astonished revellers. "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain," and an alien monarch sat upon the throne.' *Prophets & Kings*, pages 523 & 531.

'The water thereof'

3. What is the symbolic significance of the waters that are connected with Babylon? Revelation 17:1, 5, 15.

NOTE: 'What are these waters? The book of Revelation, being a book of symbols indicates that the waters are symbolic. [Revelation 17:15] The waters on which modern Babylon will sit are the numerous peoples all over the world who will support the great religious apostasy. "All that dwell on the earth shall worship" [obey] the beast. Multitudes of people around the globe are finally to give their allegiance to Babylon... Just as the river Euphrates was the protection of ancient Babylon, so modern Babylon will find its protection and its glory in the symbolic Euphrates. The millions of people around the globe who are to give their support to Babylon will be her glory and protection. All the nations, the kings or rulers of the earth, the merchants of the earth (Revelation 18:3), the world's financiers and the multinationals, etc. will all support modern Babylon. This will be her glory and protection.' Cooke, *The Drying Up of the Great River Euphrates*, pages 7 & 9.

4. When the waters are dried up, whose way will be prepared? Revelation 16:12, last part.

NOTE: 'Kings of the east' literally means 'kings from the sunrising. Just as Cyrus came from the east to overthrow ancient Babylon, so those who bring about the destruction of modern Babylon are described as 'the kings of the east.'

'To gather them to the battle'

5. What two armies are to meet in conflict at this time? Revelation 16:12, last part, Revelation 16:14.

NOTE: 'The Kings from the Sunrising are set forth in contrast to "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" (Revelation 16:14)... In the Revelator's portrayal of the final conflict, He (Jesus is the Revelator) describes two armies and only two: "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" and "the Kings from the Sunrising." "The Kings from the Sunrising" are pictured as coming to make war (Revelation 19:11) upon "the kings of the earth and of the whole world." In Revelation 19:11-21 where the coming of Christ is so graphically depicted, He is pictured as leading "the armies which were in heaven," coming to "make war" upon "the nations," "the armies" of "the beast and the kings of the earth." As His coming is plainly declared to be "from the sunrising", "the east" [see Matthew 24:27], then Revelation 19:11-21 repeats what is pictured in Revelation 16:12-16. "The armies of heaven" come from the eastern heavens, "from the sunrising", to make war upon the kings of the earth and of the whole world." Were, *The Kings That Come From The Sunrising*, page 44.

6. What unites "the kings of the earth and of the whole world"? Revelation 16:13-14. Compare 1 Timothy 4:1.

NOTE: The dragon is the devil. See Revelation 12:9. The beast is the papacy, and the false prophet is the second beast of Revelation 13. Compare Revelation 13:12-14 with Revelation 19:20. The beast is the combining of churchcraft and statecraft through the papacy. The false prophet is the uniting of church and state in the United States. These three powers will be united in their work of deception by the operation of evil spirits, masquerading under the guise of truth.

'By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, [the United States] will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, [the United States] shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvellous working of Satan and that the end is near. Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.' *Maranatha*, page 190.

'Armageddon'

7. What name is given to the final conflict? Revelation 16:16.

NOTE: A common belief, often encountered, links "Armageddon" with the valley of Megiddo in Northern Israel and proposes a military conflict to be fought there between world powers. In fact, the name "Armageddon" means "mountain of slaughter" and the chance resemblance of the two words should not create a false impression in the mind of the diligent searcher for truth. Megiddo is a plain, not a mountain.

'There are only two parties in our world, those who are loyal to God, and those who stand under the banner of the prince of darkness. Satan and his angels will come down with power and signs and lying wonders to deceive those who dwell on the earth, and if possible the very elect. The crisis is right upon us... The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white. Every form of evil is to spring into intense activity. Evil angels unite their powers with evil men, and as they have been in constant conflict and attained an experience in the best modes of deception and battle, and have been strengthening for centuries, they will not yield the last great final contest without a desperate struggle. All the world will be on one side or the other of the question. The battle of Armageddon will be fought, and that day must find none of us sleeping. Wide awake we must be, as wise virgins having oil in our vessels with our lamps. The power of the Holy Ghost must be upon

us, and the Captain of the Lord's host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle. Solemn events before us are yet to transpire. Trumpet after trumpet is to be sounded, vial after vial poured out one after another upon the inhabitants of the earth. Scenes of stupendous interest are right upon us.' *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 982.

8. What will be the outcome of this conflict? Revelation 19:19-21.

NOTE: 'In the last scenes of this earth's history, war will rage. The powers of evil will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. But Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. The Captain of the Lord's host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white. When He shall come to the earth again, He will shake "not the earth only, but also heaven." "The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage." "The heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll"; "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." But "the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." Hebrews 12:26; Isaiah 24:20; 34:4; 2 Peter 3:10; Joel 3:16.' *Maranatha*, page 297.

'It is done'

9. What happens when the seventh plague is poured out? Revelation 16:17.

NOTE: 'It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Everything in nature seems turned out of its course. The streams cease to flow. Dark, heavy clouds come up, and clash against each other. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying, "It is done." Revelation 16:17.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 182.

10. What follows as those words are heard? Revelation 16:18-21. Compare Isaiah 13:13, Job 38:22-23, Joel 3:16, Hebrews 12:26-27.

NOTE: 'That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, "such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." Verses 17, 18. The firmament appears to open and shut. The glory from the throne of God seems flashing through. The mountains shake like a reed in the wind, and ragged rocks are scattered on every side. There is a roar as of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of a hurricane like the voice of demons upon a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving away. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness are swallowed up by the angry waters. Babylon the great has come in remembrance before God, "to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." Great hailstones, every one "about the weight of a talent," are doing their work of destruction. Verses 19, 21. The proudest cities of the earth are laid low. The lordly palaces, upon which the world's great men have lavished their wealth in order to glorify themselves, are crumbling to ruin before their eyes. Prison walls are rent asunder, and God's people, who have been held in bondage for their faith, are set free.' *Maranatha*, page 280.

'Great Babylon came in remembrance'

11. Against whom especially is God's wrath directed? Revelation 16:19.

NOTE: 'Calamities by land and sea, by fire and flood, by pestilence and famine, by horrible accidents, by earthquakes in divers places, all testify in unmistakable language that the end of all things is at hand, and that great Babylon is coming into remembrance before God. The Lord is even at the door, and men's hearts are failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which shall come upon the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. But there is a defence for those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The prophet declares, "Thy righteousness shall go before thee." Whose righteousness? The righteousness of Christ. And he continues, "The glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"' *Signs of the Times*, October 1, 1894.

12. Why is 'great Babylon' singled out for particular punishment? Revelation 14:8, Revelation 18:1-3.

NOTE: 'The great sin charged against Babylon is that she "made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." This cup of intoxication which she presents to the world represents the false doctrines that she has accepted as the result of her unlawful connection with the great ones of the earth. Friendship with the world corrupts her faith, and in her turn she exerts a corrupting influence upon the world by teaching doctrines which are opposed to the plainest statements of Holy Writ. Rome withheld the Bible from the people and required all men to accept her teachings in its place. It was the work of the Reformation to restore to men the word of God; but is it not too true that in the churches of our time men are taught to rest their faith upon their creed and the teachings of their church rather than on the Scriptures?' *Great Controversy*, page 388.

'The woman (Babylon) of Revelation 17 is described as "arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness:...and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots." Says the prophet: "I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." Babylon is further declared to be "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Revelation 17:4-6, 18. The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is Rome. The purple and scarlet colour, the gold and precious stones and pearls, vividly picture the magnificence and more than kingly pomp affected by the haughty see of Rome. And no other power could be so truly declared "drunken with the blood of the saints" as that church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ.' *Great Controversy*, page 382.

Lesson 8: 'The judgement of the great whore'

MEMORY VERSE: 'These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.' Revelation 17:14.

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 381-390.

Introduction

'The term "Babylon" is derived from "Babel," and signifies confusion. It is employed in Scripture to designate the various forms of false or apostate religion. In Revelation 17 Babylon is represented as a woman, a figure which is used in the Bible as the symbol of a church, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a vile woman an apostate church... Many of the Protestant churches are following Rome's example of iniquitous connection with "the kings of the earth", the state churches, by their relation to secular governments; and other denominations, by seeking the favour of the world. And the term "Babylon", confusion, may be appropriately applied to these bodies, all professing to derive their doctrines from the Bible, yet divided into almost innumerable sects, with widely conflicting creeds and theories.' *Great Controversy*, pages 381 & 383.

'I will show unto thee'

1. What was John next shown in his vision? Revelation 17:1-2. (Compare Revelation 16:19.)

NOTE: 'The time is near when He will say, "Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isaiah 26:20, 21. Men who claim to be Christians may now defraud and oppress the poor; they may rob the widow and fatherless; they may indulge their Satanic hatred because they cannot control the consciences of God's people; but for all this God will bring them into judgment. They "shall have judgment without mercy" that have "showed no mercy." (James 2:13.) Not long hence they will stand before the Judge of all the earth, to render an account for the pain they have caused to the bodies and souls of His heritage. They may now indulge in false accusations, they may deride those whom God has appointed to do His work, they may consign His believing ones to prison, to the chain gang, to banishment, to death; but for every pang of anguish, every tear shed, they must answer. God will reward them double for their sins. Concerning Babylon, the symbol of the apostate church, He says to His ministers of judgment, "Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double." Revelation 18:5, 6.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 178.

2. How was Babylon portrayed in this vision? Revelation 17:3-4. Compare verse 18.

NOTE: A woman in prophecy represents a church while a beast (the Greek word means a ferocious beast, a totally different word from that used to describe the four beings, described in the King James Bible as 'the four beasts') represents a persecuting power. A woman riding a beast therefore signifies a church controlling and directing a persecuting power, a union of church and state. The description of the woman includes purple, scarlet, gold and precious stones, all used in the sanctuary with symbolic significance. The scarlet represents sin and the blood of Christ, the sin-bearer. Purple represents the kingship of Christ. Gold represents faith and love, two essential elements of the Christian life while the precious stones represented the people of God, worn upon the heart of the high priest, thus symbolising the tender care of Christ for His people. Babylon assumes some of the ornaments of the sanctuary but purely for adornment. Missing is the colour blue, which in sanctuary symbolism represented the law of God, and fine linen, representing the righteousness of saints. (See Numbers 15:37-40 and compare Exodus 25:4. See also Revelation 19:8.) Babylon and her daughters claim to continue the worship of God while omitting obedience to His law. The result is degeneracy and persecution of God's faithful saints.

3. Where was Babylon when John saw her in his vision? Revelation 17:3.

NOTE: John is transported in vision forward to the time when Babylon is in the wilderness. It is important to remember this fact in interpreting the symbolism which follows. Just as the true church of God was driven into the wilderness in order to find safety from the persecutions of the 1260-year tribulation, so in her turn Babylon, the persecuting power, would suffer a period of persecution and obscurity from 1798 onwards. See Revelation 13:10.

'The mother of harlots'

4. What name was in the forehead of the great whore? Revelation 17:5.

NOTE: 'The woman (Babylon) of Revelation 17 is described as "arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness:...and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots." Says the prophet: "I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." Babylon is further declared to be "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Revelation 17:4-6, 18. The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is Rome. The purple and scarlet colour, the gold and precious stones and pearls, vividly picture the magnificence and more than kingly pomp affected by the haughty see of Rome. And no other power could be so truly declared "drunken with the blood of the saints" as that church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ... Babylon is said to be "the mother of harlots." By her daughters must be symbolised churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world.' *Great Controversy*, page 382.

5. What especially did John notice about the great whore? Revelation 17:6.

NOTE: 'In the thirteenth century was established that most terrible of all the engines of the papacy, the Inquisition. The prince of darkness wrought with the leaders of the papal hierarchy. In their secret councils Satan and his angels controlled the minds of evil men, while unseen in the midst stood an angel of God, taking the fearful record of their iniquitous decrees and writing the history of deeds too horrible to appear to human eyes. "Babylon the great" was "drunken with the blood of the saints." The mangled forms of millions of martyrs cried to God for vengeance upon that apostate power. Popery had become the world's despot. Kings and emperors bowed to the decrees of the Roman pontiff. The destinies of men, both for time and for eternity, seemed under his control. For hundreds of years the doctrines of Rome had been extensively and implicitly received, its rites reverently performed, its festivals generally observed. Its clergy were honoured and liberally sustained. Never since has the Roman Church attained to greater dignity, magnificence, or power.' *Great Controversy*, pages 59-60.

'Was, and is not, and shall ascend'

6. What three phases of the great whore's career was John told of? Revelation 17:7-8. Compare verse 11,

NOTE: The papacy is to have three distinct phases, a time of power (from 538-1798), a time when she was in eclipse (from 1798 until the deadly wound is fully healed) and then a return to power once more. These three phases are described respectively as past ('was'), present ('is not') and future ('shall ascend'). This enables us to see the time to which John was transported in this vision. The first phase, the papacy's period of unbridled power, was described as past. John was seeing the papacy during its wilderness experience, while its ascent to world power is still future.

7. What was John told about the seat of the beast? Revelation 17:9. Compare Revelation 13:2 last part.

NOTE: 'Some have interpreted the seven mountains to be literal mountains or hills. Because Rome is situated on seven hills, the beast was applied to the city of Rome or the Papacy. At the Protestant Reformation, the Protestant Reformers used this application with terrible effect... The angel declared, "The seven heads are seven mountains." Here we have a double symbolism: mountains and heads. There is another double symbolism in verse 18: the woman and the city. Both the woman and the city are symbols of a great religious organisation. The seven mountains and seven heads represent seven kingdoms. A mountain is a symbol of a kingdom.' [See Jeremiah 51:25.] Cooke, *The Woman on the 7-Headed Beast*, page 21.

'There are seven kings'

8. At the time of the scene John saw in his vision, how many of the seven kings had fallen? Revelation 17:10.

NOTE: 'This means that the seven kingdoms are successive; one follows the other. How can we identify these seven kingdoms? The seven kingdoms are symbolised by seven heads on the beast on which the false church sits or controls.' Cooke, *The Woman on the 7-Headed Beast*, page 22.

In the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, various powers are symbolised as beasts, successive persecutors of God's people. We are told that, at the point in time when John is seeing the great whore, while she is in the wilderness, five of these powers had fallen, one was still in power and one was still to come. Before 1798, Babylon (the winged lion), Medo-Persia (the deformed bear), Greece (the four-headed, four-winged leopard), and pagan Rome (the ten horned terrible beast) had fallen. The beast of Revelation 13:1-2 suffered its deadly wound in 1798 and was also, for the moment, fallen. Thus five had fallen by this point. But as this beast was receiving its deadly wound, another beast was arising and this beast has been growing in power during the period of the deadly wound until, lamblike at the outset, it now begins to roar like the dragon (see Revelation 13:11). This is the one that 'is.' One more beast is yet to come and while we should be careful in speculation about unfulfilled prophecy, Revelation 16:13 speaks of three beasts uniting in warfare against God. One is the revived papacy (the beast), another is the second beast of Revelation 13 (here called the false prophet) while the third is called 'the dragon.' The dragon is identified as Satan (see Revelation 12:9) and while Satan has worked through human agents in the past, it may be that in the final struggle he will participate directly in the struggle himself. (See 2 Corinthians 11:14.)

9. How does the beast fit into the sequence of the seven kings? Revelation 17:11.

NOTE: In this vision, John sees the woman and the beast in the wilderness. Thus he is seeing the beast at the time when it 'was and is not.' The beast is, of course, 'of the seven', being the fifth in the sequence of the seven heads or powers. But unlike Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and pagan Rome, this beast's downfall was not permanent but only a temporary setback. The 'deadly wound' was to be healed (Revelation 13:3) and thus this beast comes back to world power, becoming both 'the eighth'

and also one 'of the seven.' But John is assured that, despite this beast's amazing ability to survive its deadly wound, it will still go into perdition.

'The ten horns'

10. How will the kings of the world unite with the beast? Revelation 17:12-14. Compare Revelation 16:14, Revelation 12:17.

NOTE: Notice the careful use of language. The ten horns are ten kings 'which have received no **kingdom** as yet. 'Kingdom' is singular. These powers will seek to work with the beast to unite their kingdoms to create a single kingdom. The brief duration of this united kingdom is suggested by the phrase 'one hour.' Some interpreters have attempted to see the whole world as ten power blocs. Others hoped that the European Union would end as ten nation states. The ten horns is a reminder of the division of Rome which led to the emergence of the papacy. See Daniel 7:24. It is probably unwise to speculate about the precise identity of the ten horns but await the fulfilment of the prophecy. The important thing is remember that these ten kings represent a global alliance in hostility to God and His people. Once again John is assured as to the outcome of the war that will be the result of this unholy alliance.

11. How is the symbolism of the waters upon which the whore sits explained to John? Revelation 17:15. Compare verse 1 and Revelation 16:12.

NOTE: The papacy depends for its support on the vast number of supporters it has throughout the world. Thus the whore sits, or has her throne, upon these waters. When that support dries up, Babylon will fall, just as surely as the drying up of the waters of the River Euphrates by Cyrus brought about the downfall of ancient Babylon.

'To fulfil His will'

12. What will be the outcome of the alliance between the great whore and the ten kings? Revelation 17:16.

NOTE: The downfall of the great whore will come at the hands of her erstwhile supporters.

'The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. "We are lost!" they cry, "and you are the cause of our ruin;" and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.' *Great Controversy*, page 655.

13. How was John shown that God is in control of these events? Revelation 17:17. Compare Daniel 4:17, 25 & 32.

NOTE: "'The Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.'" Isaiah 26:21. "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold everyone on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour." Zechariah 14:12, 13. In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth, priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low. "And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried." Jeremiah 25:33.' *Great Controversy*, page 656.

Lesson 9: 'Babylon is fallen'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.' Revelation 18:4.

STUDY HELP: *Counsels on Diet & Foods*, pages 32-33.

Introduction

'The great work of the gospel is not to close with less manifestation of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close. Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. Satan also works with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.' *Maranatha*, page 20.

‘The earth was lightened with his glory’

1. What message, given earlier, is now repeated with great urgency? Revelation 18:1-2. (Compare Revelation 14:8.)

NOTE: ‘This scripture points forward to a time when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, as made by the second angel of Revelation 14 (verse 8), is to be repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon, since that message was first given, in the summer of 1844. A terrible condition of the religious world is here described. With every rejection of truth the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an infidel hardihood. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the Decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred. Christ is set at nought in the contempt placed upon His word and His people. As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches.’ *Great Controversy*, page 603.

2. What reason is given for the fall of Babylon? Revelation 18:3, first part.

NOTE: ‘What is sin? “The transgression of the law.” God denounces Babylon “because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” This means that she has disregarded the only commandment which points out the true God, and has torn down the Sabbath, God’s memorial of creation. God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh, sanctifying this day, and setting it apart from all others as holy to Himself, to be observed by His people throughout their generations. But the man of sin, exalting himself above God, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself to be God, thought to change times and laws. This power, thinking to prove that it was not only equal to God, but above God, changed the rest day, placing the first day of the week where the seventh should be. And the Protestant world has taken this child of the Papacy to be regarded as sacred. This is called in the word of God her fornication. God has a controversy with the churches today. They are fulfilling the prophecy of John. “All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” They have divorced themselves from God by refusing to receive his sign. They have not the spirit of God’s true commandment-keeping people. And the people of the world in giving their sanction to a false Sabbath, and in trampling under their feet the Sabbath of the Lord, have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. God set the seventh day apart as the day of His rest. But the man of sin has set up a false Sabbath, which the kings and merchants of the earth have accepted and exalted above the Sabbath of the Bible. In doing this they have chosen a religion like that of Cain, who slew his brother Abel. Cain and Abel both offered sacrifice to God. Abel’s offering was accepted because he complied with God’s requirements. Cain’s was rejected because he followed his own human inventions. Because of this he became so angry that he would not listen to Abel’s entreaties or to God’s warnings and reproofs, but slew his brother.’ *Kress Collection*, page 147.

‘Come out of her, My people’

3. What urgent call then comes from heaven? Revelation 18:4. Compare Genesis 19:15, 17.

NOTE: ‘All in the world are not lawless and sinful. God has many thousands who have not bowed the knee to Baal. There are God-fearing men and women in the fallen churches. If this were not so, we would not be given the message to bear: “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. . . . Come out of her, My people.” Revelation 18:2-4. Many of the honest in heart are gasping for a breath of life from heaven. They will recognise the gospel when it is brought to them in the beauty and simplicity with which it is presented in God’s word.’ *Testimonies Volume 9*, page 110.

‘God has honest children among the nominal Adventists and the fallen churches, and before the plagues shall be poured out, ministers and people will be called out from these churches and will gladly receive the truth. Satan knows this; and before the loud cry of the third angel is given, he raises an excitement in these religious bodies, that those who have rejected the truth may think that God is with them. He hopes to deceive the honest and lead them to think that God is still working for the churches. But the light will shine, and all who are honest will leave the fallen churches, and take their stand with the remnant.’ *Early Writings*, page 261.

4. What fearful fate awaits those who do not heed the call to come out? Revelation 18:4, last part, Revelation 18:8.

NOTE: ‘These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy. In that day, multitudes will desire the shelter of God’s mercy which they have so long despised. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.” Amos 8:11, 12.’ *Great Controversy*, pages 628-629.

‘God hath remembered’

5. Why will God’s wrath fall upon Babylon? Revelation 18:5.

NOTE: ‘Men who claim to be Christians may now defraud and oppress the poor; they may rob the widow and fatherless; they may indulge their Satanic hatred because they cannot control the consciences of God’s people; but for all this God will bring them into judgment. They “shall have judgment without mercy” that have “showed no mercy.” (James 2:13.) Not long hence they will stand before the Judge of all the earth, to render an account for the pain they have caused to the bodies and souls of

His heritage. They may now indulge in false accusations, they may deride those whom God has appointed to do His work, they may consign His believing ones to prison, to the chain gang, to banishment, to death; but for every pang of anguish, every tear shed, they must answer. God will reward them double for their sins. Concerning Babylon, the symbol of the apostate church, He says to His ministers of judgment, "Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double." Revelation 18:5, 6. *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 178.

6. What principle will govern Babylon's punishment? Revelation 18:6. Compare Matthew 7:2.

NOTE: 'Since Jesus left the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary and entered within the second veil, the churches have been filling up with every unclean and hateful bird. I saw great iniquity and vileness in the churches; yet their members profess to be Christians. Their profession, their prayers, and their exhortations are an abomination in the sight of God. Said the angel, "God will not smell in their assemblies. Selfishness, fraud, and deceit are practiced by them without the reprovings of conscience. And over all these evil traits they throw the cloak of religion." I was shown the pride of the nominal churches. God is not in their thoughts; their carnal minds dwell upon themselves; they decorate their poor mortal bodies, and then look upon themselves with satisfaction and pleasure. Jesus and the angels look upon them in anger. Said the angel, "Their sins and pride have reached unto heaven. Their portion is prepared. Justice and judgment have slumbered long, but will soon awake. Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." The fearful threatenings of the third angel are to be realised, and all the wicked are to drink of the wrath of God.' *Early Writings*, page 274.

'Her sins have reached unto heaven'

7. What particular sin of Babylon is mentioned? Revelation 18:24.

NOTE: "Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: "Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy." Revelation 16:2-6. By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands. In like manner Christ declared the Jews of His time guilty of all the blood of holy men which had been shed since the days of Abel; for they possessed the same spirit and were seeking to do the same work with these murderers of the prophets.' *Great Controversy*, page 627.

8. What other sin is charged against Babylon? Revelation 18:23, last part.

NOTE: 'The Satanic agencies are to combine with, and inspire, the professedly Christian world. Those who have the form of godliness without the power, will rank under Satan's banner, and will display their zeal in making void the law of God. The whole world will have the opportunity of choosing between Christ and Barabbas. Men who have perverted truth, misapplied Scripture, and who have become blinded by resisting the word which is truth, form the great apostate power of the last day. It belongs to the same order as the power which the Lord Jesus revealed to John as drunken with the blood of saints. It is to pursue the same line of action, determined to rule or ruin. The crisis is right upon us, and many will be deceived. Men who have all their life had opportunity to learn of Christ, but who have tenaciously clung to their own habits and practices, unwilling to change their own course of action and walk in the light, will act like blind men. They will accept everything that will coincide with their own ideas.' *Bible Echo*, January 25, 1897.

'Alas, alas, that great city'

9. Who especially will mourn for the fall of Babylon? Revelation 18:9-10.

NOTE: 'We have come to a time when God's sacred work is represented by the feet of the image in which the iron was mixed with the miry clay... The mingling of church craft and state craft is represented by the iron and the clay. This union is weakening all the power of the churches. This investing the church with the power of the state will bring evil results. Men have almost passed the point of God's forbearance. They have invested their strength in politics, and have united with the papacy. But the time will come when God will punish those who have made void His law, and their evil work will recoil upon themselves.' *Manuscript Releases Volume 1*, page 51.

10. What other group will be especially affected by Babylon's fall? Revelation 18:11-19, 23.

NOTE: 'When the voice of God turns the captivity of his people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great game of life. While probation continued, they were blinded by Satan's deceptions, and they justified their course of sin. The rich prided themselves upon their superiority to those who were less favoured; but they had obtained their riches by violation of the law of God. They had neglected to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to deal justly, and to love mercy. They had sought to exalt themselves, and to obtain the homage of their fellow-creatures. Now they are stripped of all that made them great, and are left destitute and defenceless. They look upon the destruction of the idols which they preferred before their Maker. They sold their souls for earthly riches and enjoyments, and did not seek to become rich toward God. The result is, their lives are a failure; their pleasures are now turned to gall, their treasures to corruption. The gain of a lifetime is swept away in a moment. The rich bemoan the destruction of their grand houses, the scattering of their gold and silver. But their lamentations are silenced by the fear that they themselves are to perish with their idols. The wicked are filled with regret, not because of their sinful neglect of God and their fellow-men, but because God has conquered. They lament that the result is what it is; but they do not repent of their wickedness. They would leave no means untried to conquer if they could.' *Spirit of Prophecy Volume 4*, pages 470-471.

11. What other group benefited from Babylon? Revelation 18:22.

NOTE: 'When a church depends on parade, ceremonies, and display, be sure that inward holiness is wanting. To make up for the absence of the Spirit of God, to conceal spiritual poverty and apostasy, the outside is made attractive. Thus the Protestant churches are following in the footsteps of Rome, depending not on Christ, the divine Teacher, but upon their ornaments and shrines. Embroidered altars and magnificent architecture attract and hold the senses. Thus men become entrapped by the enemy. So the great golden image, impressive and attractive, with beautiful music to charm the senses, did honour to the prince of darkness.' *Manuscript Releases Volume 12*, page 220.

'Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now. The Papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so.' *Signs of the Times*, May 6, 1897.

'Rejoice over her'

12. How is the fall of Babylon described? Revelation 18:21. Compare Matthew 18:6.

NOTE: The expression "no more at all" is employed repeatedly in verses 21-23. Thus is expressed the finality of Babylon's fall. Nor will it be a gradual decline. The fall of Babylon will be violent. See Revelation 17:16.

13. How is the suddenness of Babylon's fall described? Revelation 18:19, last part. Compare Revelation 18:7-8.

NOTE: Some have speculated that the clause: 'Therefore shall her plagues come in one day' should be interpreted using the year-day principle and that therefore the duration of the Seven Last Plagues will be one year. Verse 19 speaks of the desolation of Babylon coming in one hour. As with all unfulfilled prophecy, it behoves the student of God's Word not to be dogmatic but to watch 'the steady tread of events.' What is clear is that Babylon's fall will be sudden.

14. What is the response of God's people to Babylon's fall? Revelation 18:20.

NOTE: It may seem strange that both heaven and the people of God on earth rejoice at the sudden and violent end of Babylon. Babylon has long been the great enemy of God and His people and this enemy is destroyed forever. The great oppression that Babylon was responsible for has finally ceased. The people of God have gained the final victory through the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Here is Heaven's estimate of Babylon's influence:

No matter what her appearance – she corrupts.

No matter what she claims – she corrupts.

No matter what she teaches – she corrupts.

No matter what she performs – she corrupts.

No matter what people are in her – she corrupts.

This is why God calls His people out of Babylon.' Cooke, *God's Final Call & Babylon's Final Fall*, page 31.

Lesson 10: 'In righteousness doth He judge and make war'

MEMORY VERSE: '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.' Revelation 19:7.

STUDY HELP: *Christ's Object Lessons*, pages 307-319.

Introduction

'If we knew that in just one year from now, the Lord would come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, what a feeling of solemnity would rest upon us! How earnestly we should strive to prepare for His coming, that, clothed in the wedding garment, we might go in unto the marriage supper of the Lamb!' *Counsels to Writers & Editors*, page 109.

'Just and true are His judgements'

1. What words greet the conclusion of the judgement? Revelation 19:1-2.

NOTE: 'The unfallen worlds have watched the conflict and trial of the Son of God in behalf of humanity. They have seen the crooked working of him who was once highly exalted of God, but who was expelled from heaven with a large number of angels, who has made this world the stage of his action, the field of his controversy against God. In heaven he complained against the law of God, declaring it unnecessary and arbitrary. He misrepresented the Lord Jehovah, and the high Commander of heaven. He claimed that he was above law, and maintained that right was upon his side; but he has fully made manifest that the principles he advocated were evil and injurious. It has been proved that "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.'" *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, April 25, 1893

2. What scene of rejoicing follows the outcome of the judgement? Revelation 19:3-6.

NOTE: The judgement has been followed with great interest by the heavenly host. Daniel, seeing the judgement in vision, described ten thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before the throne as the judgement was in progress. Now John hears the acclamation of 'much people in heaven' as they praise the judgements of God as 'true and righteous,' especially the sentence passed on Babylon for her fornication with the kings of the earth and for her persecution of the people of God.

'The marriage of the Lamb is come'

3. What especially is the reason for this rejoicing? Revelation 19:7.

NOTE: 'The marriage represents the reception by Christ of His kingdom. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which is the capital and representative of the kingdom, is called "the bride, the Lamb's wife." Said the angel to John: "Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." "He carried me away in the spirit," says the prophet, "and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Revelation 21:9, 10. Clearly, then, the bride represents the Holy City, and the virgins that go out to meet the bridegroom are a symbol of the church. In the Revelation the people of God are said to be the guests at the marriage supper. Revelation 19:9. If guests, they cannot be represented also as the bride. Christ, as stated by the prophet Daniel, will receive from the Ancient of Days in heaven, "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom;" He will receive the New Jerusalem, the capital of His kingdom, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Daniel 7:14; Revelation 21:2. Having received the kingdom, He will come in His glory, as King of kings and Lord of lords, for the redemption of His people, who are to "sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," at His table in His kingdom (Matthew 8:11; Luke 22:30), to partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb.' *Great Controversy*, page 426.

4. What has the Lamb been waiting for? Revelation 19:7, last part-8.

NOTE: 'Christ is waiting with longing desire for the manifestation of Himself in His church. When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own.' *Christ's Object Lessons*, page 69.

5. Which group are singled out for heaven's blessing? Revelation 19:9.

NOTE: 'The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father's love is as great toward us as toward Himself, the only-begotten Son, and that we shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against. In their untainted purity and spotless perfection, Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory, Christ, the great centre from which radiates all glory. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" *Sons & Daughters of God*, page 356.

'The Spirit of prophecy'

6. What was John's response when the angel showed him these things? Revelation 19:10, first part.

NOTE: 'The angel from heaven came to John in majesty, his countenance beaming with the excellent glory of God. He revealed to John scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the history of the church of God and brought before him the perilous conflicts which Christ's followers were to endure. John saw them passing through fiery trials, made white and tried, and, finally, victorious overcomers, gloriously saved in the kingdom of God. The countenance of the angel grew radiant with joy and was exceeding glorious, as he showed John the final triumph of the church of God. As the apostle beheld the final deliverance of the church, he was carried away with the glory of the scene and with deep reverence and awe fell at the feet of the angel to worship him. The heavenly messenger instantly raised him up and gently reproved him, saying, "See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'" *Early Writings*, page 230.

7. What insight did the angel reveal to John? Revelation 19:10. Compare Revelation 22:9, 1 Peter 1:10-11.

NOTE: 'In clear terms the prophet John speaks of "the remnant," or the last church, as those who "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17. In another passage the same writer gives a plain definition of what he means by "the testimony of Jesus." When on one occasions John attempted to worship the angel who appeared to him in vision, the angel said: "See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God." Revelation 19:10. Under similar circumstances the same angel said, as recorded in another place: "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets." Revelation 22:9. The thought expressed is the same in both these passages. In one, however, John's "brethren" are said to have "the testimony of Jesus;" in the other these brethren are called "the prophets." Therefore it is the prophets that have the testimony of Jesus;" and the angel who appeared to John is evidently the special messenger who conveys instruction to all the prophets, doubtless the angel Gabriel, who is mentioned as having appeared to Daniel. See Daniel 8:16, 9:21. The same angel further said to John, "The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10. Comparing the Bible expression, "the testimony of Jesus," with the statement of Revelation 12:17 concerning the remnant... which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ," we conclude that, prior to Christ's Second Coming, His true church will be keeping His commandments, and that they will have the Spirit of prophecy.' *Christian Experience & Teachings*, pages 242-243.

‘The Word of God’

8. What scene is next revealed to John’s eyes? Revelation 19:11-16. Compare John 1:1-3, 14.

NOTE: ‘There are only two parties in our world, those who are loyal to God, and those who stand under the banner of the prince of darkness. Satan and his angels will come down with power and signs and lying wonders to deceive those who dwell on the earth, and if possible the very elect. The crisis is right upon us. Is this to paralyse the energies of those who have a knowledge of the truth? Is the influence of the powers of deception so far reaching that the influence of the truth will be overpowered? The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses, clothed in fine linen, clean and white.’ *SDA Bible Commentary Volume 7*, page 982.

9. Who accompany the Rider and for what purpose? Revelation 19:14, 11, last part. Compare Revelation 16:12, last part, 14, last part & 16.

NOTE: ‘Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle. On one side stands the Creator of heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the Prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion.’ *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, May 7, 1901.

‘Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a “man of sorrows,” to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. “Faithful and True,” “in righteousness He doth judge and make war.” And “the armies which were in heaven followed Him.” Rev. 19:11, 14. With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms, “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendour. “His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light.” Habakkuk 3:3, 4. As the living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head, but a diadem of glory rests on His holy brow. His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun. “And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” Revelation 19:16.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 349.

‘Gathered together to make war’

10. What call is made before this last battle commences? Revelation 19:17-18. Compare Jeremiah 25:33.

NOTE: ‘Could those whose hearts are filled with hatred of God, of truth and holiness, mingle with the heavenly throng and join their songs of praise? Could they endure the glory of God and the Lamb? No, no; years of probation were granted them, that they might form characters for heaven; but they have never trained the mind to love purity; they have never learned the language of heaven, and now it is too late. A life of rebellion against God has unfitted them for heaven. Its purity, holiness, and peace would be torture to them; the glory of God would be a consuming fire. They would long to flee from that holy place. They would welcome destruction, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own choice. Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves, and just and merciful on the part of God.’ *Last Day Events*, page 279.

11. Who are gathered together to fight against the armies of heaven? Revelation 19:19. Compare Revelation 16:13-14, 16, Psalm 2:1-4.

NOTE: ‘The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world’s Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures. As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. The church has long professed to look to the Saviour’s advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation.’ *Great Controversy*, page 624.

‘The Lamb shall overcome them’

12. What fate is in store for the beast and the false prophet? Revelation 19:20. Compare 2 Thessalonians 2:7-9.

NOTE: The beast and the false prophet are those powers which, while professing to be Christian, actually make war against Christ and His faithful people. Revelation 17:16-17 shows how the political powers deceived into supporting Babylon will turn on her and ‘burn her with fire.’ Since the false prophet stakes the lead in enforcing ‘the mark of the beast’, it is entirely appropriate that it will share the same fate.

‘The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. “We are lost!” they cry, “and you are the cause of our ruin;” and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The

swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.' *Great Controversy*, page 655.

13. What is said about the fate of those who give their support to the beast and the false prophet? Revelation 19:21. Compare 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8, Revelation 6:15-17. See also Isaiah 1:19-20.

NOTE: 'If men and women have received increased light, what are they doing? What are they doing to warn men and women who do not understand that the Lord is soon coming? He goeth out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity. "The earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Where, I ask, is the burden for souls that are perishing out of Christ? Who will go forth without the camp bearing the reproach? Who will leave pleasant homes and dear ties of relationship, and carry the precious light of truth to lands afar off, but not beyond the domain of God? Every day and every moment comes to those entrusted with the light of truth with terrible significance, while men and women in every clime and land are fitting themselves for weal or woe, fixing their own destinies for eternity.' *Home Missionary*, November 1, 1893.

Lesson 11: 'A thousand years'

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

STUDY HELP: *Great Controversy*, pages 658-673.

Introduction

'For six thousand years, Satan's work of rebellion has "made the earth to tremble." He had "made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof." And he "opened not the house of his prisoners." For six thousand years his prison house has received God's people, and he would have held them captive forever; but Christ had broken his bonds and set the prisoners free. Even the wicked are now placed beyond the power of Satan, and alone with his evil angels he remains to realise the effect of the curse which sin has brought.' *Great Controversy*, pages 659-660.

'Bound a thousand years'

1. While the wicked are slain at the coming of Christ, what fate awaits Satan? Revelation 20:1-3.

NOTE: 'Now the event takes place foreshadowed in the last solemn service of the Day of Atonement. When the ministration in the holy of holies had been completed, and the sins of Israel had been removed from the sanctuary by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, then the scapegoat was presented alive before the Lord; and in the presence of the congregation the high priest confessed over him "all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat." Leviticus 16:21. In like manner, when the work of atonement in the heavenly sanctuary has been completed, then in the presence of God and heavenly angels and the hosts of the redeemed the sins of God's people will be placed upon Satan; he will be declared guilty of all the evil which he has caused them to commit. And as the scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, so Satan will be banished to the desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness.' *Great Controversy*, page 658.

2. What is meant by the bottomless pit? See Genesis 1:2, first part, Jeremiah 4:23-27.

NOTE: 'That the expression "bottomless pit" represents the earth in a state of confusion and darkness is evident from other scriptures. Concerning the condition of the earth "in the beginning," the Bible record says that it "was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." Genesis 1:2. [The Hebrew word here translated "deep" is rendered in the Septuagint (Greek) translation of the Hebrew Old Testament by the same word rendered "bottomless pit" in Revelation 20:1-3.] Prophecy teaches that it will be brought back, partially at least, to this condition. Looking forward to the great day of God, the prophet Jeremiah declares: "I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down." Jeremiah 4:23-26. Here is to be the home of Satan with his evil angels for a thousand years. Limited to the earth, he will not have access to other worlds to tempt and annoy those who have never fallen. It is in this sense that he is bound: there are none remaining, upon whom he can exercise his power. He is wholly cut off from the work of deception and ruin which for so many centuries has been his sole delight.' *Great Controversy*, pages 658-659.

'The rest of the dead'

3. What is to happen to the wicked that were dead at the time of the Second Coming? Revelation 20:5, first part.

NOTE: 'At the close of the thousand years the second resurrection will take place. Then the wicked will be raised from the dead, and appear before God for the execution of "the judgment written." Thus the Revelator, after describing the resurrection of the righteous, says, "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Revelation 20:5. And Isaiah declares, concerning the wicked, "They shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited." Isaiah 24:22.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 354.

4. How are those described who will be raised to life in the first resurrection? Revelation 20:5, last part-6. See 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 and consider the two resurrections spoken of in John 5:28-29.

NOTE: 'The Life-giver will call up His purchased possession in the first resurrection, and until that triumphant hour, when the last trump shall sound and the vast army shall come forth to eternal victory, every sleeping saint will be kept in safety and will be guarded as a precious jewel, who is known to God by name. By the power of the Saviour that dwelt in them while living and because they were partakers of the divine nature, they are brought forth from the dead. Our fondest hopes are often blighted here. Our loved ones are torn from us by death. We close their eyes and habit them for the tomb, and lay them away from our sight. But hope bears our spirits up. We are not parted forever, but shall meet the loved ones who sleep in Jesus. They shall come again from the land of the enemy. The Life-giver is coming. Myriads of holy angels escort Him on His way. He bursts the bands of death, breaks the fetters of the tomb, the precious captives come forth in health and immortal beauty. Our personal identity is preserved in the resurrection, though not the same particles of matter or material substance as went into the grave. In the resurrection every man will have his own character. God in His own time will call forth the dead, giving again the breath of life, and bidding the dry bones live. There will be a relinking of the family chain. When we look upon our dead, we may think of the morning when the trump of God shall sound, when "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." 1 Corinthians 15:52. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ's faithful ones will appear in "the beauty of the Lord our God," in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 185.

'Judgement was given unto them'

5. What are we told of the activity of the saints of God during the 1000 years? Revelation 20:4 & 6.

NOTE: 'During the thousand years between the first and the second resurrection, the judgment of the wicked takes place. At this time the righteous reign as kings and priests unto God. John in the Revelation says: "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them." "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Rev. 20:4, 6. It is at this time that, as foretold by Paul, "the saints shall judge the world." 1 Corinthians 6:2. In union with Christ they judge the wicked, comparing their acts with the statute book, the Bible, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body. Then the portion which the wicked must suffer is meted out, according to their works; and it is recorded against their names in the book of death.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 354.

6. How does Paul speak of this truth? 1 Corinthians 6:2-3.

NOTE: 'Satan also and evil angels are judged by Christ and His people. Says Paul, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" And Jude declares that "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 354.

'Satan shall be loosed'

7. When the rest of the dead are raised at the close of the 1000 years, what effect will this have on Satan? Revelation 20:7.

NOTE: 'Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy. While deprived of his power and cut off from his work of deception, the prince of evil was miserable and dejected; but as the wicked dead are raised and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy.' *Maranatha*, page 337.

8. What shows that neither Satan nor his followers have changed? Revelation 20:8-9.

NOTE: 'He will marshal all the armies of the lost under his banner and through them endeavour to execute his plans. The wicked are Satan's captives. In rejecting Christ they have accepted the rule of the rebel leader. They are ready to receive his suggestions and to do his bidding. Yet, true to his early cunning, he does not acknowledge himself to be Satan. He claims to be the prince who is the rightful owner of the world and whose inheritance has been unlawfully wrested from him. He represents himself to his deluded subjects as a redeemer, assuring them that his power has brought them forth from their graves and that he is about to rescue them from the most cruel tyranny. The presence of Christ having been removed, Satan works wonders to support his claims. He makes the weak strong and inspires all with his own spirit and energy. He proposes to lead them against the camp of the saints and to take possession of the City of God. With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead and declares that as their leader he is well able to overthrow the city and regain his throne and his kingdom.' *Maranatha*, page 337.

'A great white throne'

9. How does God intervene to put an end to Satan's plan? Revelation 20:11.

NOTE: 'At last the order to advance is given, and the countless host moves on, an army such as was never summoned by earthly conquerors, such as the combined forces of all ages since war began on earth could never equal. Satan, the mightiest of warriors, leads the van, and his angels unite their forces for this final struggle. Kings and warriors are in his train, and the multitudes follow in vast companies, each under its appointed leader. With military precision the serried ranks advance over the earth's broken and uneven surface to the City of God. By command of Jesus, the gates of the New Jerusalem are closed, and the armies of Satan surround the city and make ready for the onset. Now Christ again appears to the view of His enemies. Far above the city, upon a foundation of burnished gold, is a throne, high and lifted up. Upon this throne sits the Son of God, and around Him are the subjects of His kingdom. The power and majesty of Christ no language can describe, no pen portray.

The glory of the Eternal Father is enshrouding His Son. The brightness of His presence fills the City of God, and flows out beyond the gates, flooding the whole earth with its radiance.' *Great Controversy*, pages 664-665.

10. What follows the appearance of the great white throne? Revelation 20:12-13.

NOTE: 'As soon as the books of record are opened, and the eye of Jesus looks upon the wicked, they are conscious of every sin which they have ever committed. They see just where their feet diverged from the path of purity and holiness, just how far pride and rebellion have carried them in the violation of the law of God. The seductive temptations which they encouraged by indulgence in sin, the blessings perverted, the messengers of God despised, the warnings rejected, the waves of mercy beaten back by the stubborn, unrepentant heart, all appear as if written in letters of fire... Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy is made plain. God's justice stands fully vindicated. Before the whole world is clearly presented the great sacrifice made by the Father and the Son in man's behalf. The hour has come when Christ occupies his rightful position, and is glorified above principalities and powers and every name that is named.' *Spirit of Prophecy Volume 4*, pages 481 & 486.

'The lake of fire'

11. What awaits those found guilty in this judgement? Revelation 20:14-15. Compare Malachi 4:1 & Obadiah 1:16.

NOTE: 'The wicked receive their recompense in the earth. "Upon the wicked He shall rain quick burning coals, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." Fire comes down from God out of heaven. The earth is broken up. The weapons concealed in its depths are drawn forth. Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. The day has come that shall burn as an oven. The elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein are burned up. The wicked "shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts." All are punished "according to their deeds." In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch, Satan the root, his followers the branches. The full penalty of the law has been visited; the demands of justice have been met; and Heaven and earth, beholding, declare the righteousness of Jehovah.' *Southern Watchman*, March 14, 1905.

Notice that with the death of the wicked, death itself, together with the grave [hell], is also brought to an end. Following the second death, death will be forever banished from the universe. See Revelation 21:1-5.

12. What will be the fate of Satan? Revelation 20:10.

NOTE: The Greek words translated 'for ever and ever' translate a Hebrew idiom found in the Old Testament, for example in Isaiah 34:8-10, where the destruction of the land of Edom is described. Clearly this destruction was not to be eternal, as Isaiah 35 shows. The idiom denotes continuity and completion but not necessarily eternity. The context of the passage and the relevant testimony of Scripture elsewhere should determine the correct interpretation of this idiom in a particular verse, as to whether it should be translated 'for ever and ever' or whether a better translation would express a more limited meaning. The passage concerning the rebellion and fall of the anointed cherub promises his final extinction. Ezekiel 28:14-19. Just as in Exodus 21:6, the idiom translated 'for ever' simply means 'as long as he lives' so we should not require God to grant eternal life to Satan simply in order to torment him. John 3:16 clearly states that while everlasting life is promised to the believer, those who do not believe will perish. There is no promise of everlasting life to the devil or any of his followers.

Lesson 12: 'The holy city'

MEMORY VERSE: 'And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.' Revelation 22:4.

STUDY HELP: *Early Writings*, pages 14-20.

Introduction

'We are homeward bound. He who loved us so much as to die for us hath builded for us a city. The New Jerusalem is our place of rest. There will be no sadness in the City of God. No wail of sorrow, no dirge of crushed hopes and buried affections, will evermore be heard. Soon the garments of heaviness will be changed for the wedding garment. Soon we shall witness the coronation of our King. Those whose lives have been hidden with Christ, those who on this earth have fought the good fight of faith, will shine forth with the Redeemer's glory in the kingdom of God.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 362.

'A new heaven and a new earth'

1. Following the elimination of sin from the universe, what was John shown next? Revelation 21:1. Compare Isaiah 65:17, 2 Peter 3:13.

NOTE: 'Those who take no pleasure in thinking and talking of God in this life, will not enjoy the life that is to come, where God is ever present, dwelling among His people. But those who love to think of God will be in their element, breathing in the atmosphere of heaven. Those who on earth love the thought of heaven, will be happy in its holy associations and pleasures. Those who love God will have an intelligent knowledge of Him. The image of God will shine forth from the faces of His servants, and they will be openly acknowledged as sons and daughters of God. When in the world, they did not claim to be their own, and God set to His seal [see John 3:33] that they were His. Heaven will be for those who desire it with intense desire, who put forth efforts in proportion to the value of the object which they seek. The thoughts of those who will obtain heaven, will be upon heavenly things.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, May 13, 1890.

2. What things will not be found in that new heaven and new earth? Revelation 21:4-6, Revelation 22:3.

NOTE: 'The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away. No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin. One reminder alone remains: Our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought.' *Great Controversy*, page 674.

'In the home of the redeemed there will be no tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." Isaiah 33:24. One rich tide of happiness will flow and deepen as eternity rolls on. Let us consider most earnestly the blessed hereafter. Let our faith pierce through every cloud of darkness and behold Him who died for the sins of the world. He has opened the gates of Paradise to all who receive and believe on Him. Let the afflictions which pain us so grievously become instructive lessons, teaching us to press forward toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ. Let us be encouraged by the thought that the Lord is soon to come. Let this hope gladden our hearts.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 362.

'He that overcometh'

3. To whom will the new heaven and earth be given? Revelation 21:7. Compare Revelation 2:7, 11, 3:12, 21.

NOTE: 'It is the daily dying to self in the little transactions of life that makes us overcomers. Forget self, in the desire to do good to others. Many, instead of faithfully performing their duty, seek rather their own pleasure, from selfish motives. There is a decided lack of love for others. God positively enjoins upon all His followers a duty to bless others with their influence and means, to seek that wisdom of Him which will enable them to do all in their power to elevate the thoughts and affections of those who come within their influence. In doing for them, a sweet satisfaction will be experienced, an inward peace, which will be a sufficient reward. In a faithful discharge of life's manifold duties, actuated by high and noble motives to do others good, there is true happiness. This will bring more than an earthly reward; for every faithful, unselfish performance of duty is noticed by the angels, and shines in the life record. In Heaven none will think of self, nor seek their own pleasure; but all, from pure, genuine love, will seek the happiness of the heavenly beings around them. If we wish to enjoy heavenly society in the earth made new, we must be governed by heavenly principles here.' *Testimony for the Church at Battle Creek (Pamphlet No. 97)*, page 22.

4. Which people will never enter the New Jerusalem? Revelation 21:8, 27. Compare Revelation 22:15 & Ephesians 5:5.

NOTE: 'Truth will never be agreeable to a liar; meekness will not satisfy self-esteem and pride; purity is not acceptable to the corrupt; disinterested love does not appear attractive to the selfish. What source of enjoyment could heaven offer to those who are wholly absorbed in earthly and selfish interests? Could those whose lives have been spent in rebellion against God be suddenly transported to heaven and witness the high, the holy state of perfection that ever exists there, every soul filled with love, every countenance beaming with joy, enrapturing music in melodious strains rising in honour of God and the Lamb, and ceaseless streams of light flowing upon the redeemed from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne, could those whose hearts are filled with hatred of God, of truth and holiness, mingle with the heavenly throng and join their songs of praise? Could they endure the glory of God and the Lamb? No, no; years of probation were granted them, that they might form characters for heaven; but they have never trained the mind to love purity; they have never learned the language of heaven, and now it is too late. A life of rebellion against God has unfitted them for heaven. Its purity, holiness, and peace would be torture to them; the glory of God would be a consuming fire. They would long to flee from that holy place. They would welcome destruction, that they might be hidden from the face of Him who died to redeem them. The destiny of the wicked is fixed by their own choice. Their exclusion from heaven is voluntary with themselves, and just and merciful on the part of God.' *Great Controversy*, page 542.

'New Jerusalem'

5. What wonderful sight was granted to John? Revelation 21:2, 9-10. Compare Zechariah 14:4.

NOTE: 'Christ descends upon the Mount of Olives, whence, after His resurrection, He ascended, and where angels repeated the promise of His return. Says the prophet: "The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee." "And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof, . . . and there shall be a very great valley." "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one." Zechariah 14:5, 4, 9. As the New Jerusalem, in its dazzling splendour, comes down out of heaven, it rests upon the place purified and made ready to receive it, and Christ, with His people and the angels, enters the Holy City.' *Great Controversy*, page 662.

6. How is the New Jerusalem described? Revelation 21:11-21.

NOTE: Students of God's Word have long noted the symbolic significance of many of the details of the New Jerusalem. This has led to a rather unprofitable debate as to whether the New Jerusalem is a literal city or merely a symbol for the Christian Church. We should beware of those who seek to create division where none is necessary. The Old Testament sanctuary (and, for that matter, the temple in heaven) was both a literal structure and **also** highly symbolic in its many details. This should show that it is not necessary to regard the New Jerusalem as **either** symbolic **or** literal. Something may be designed by God to be both symbolic and literal, and much profit may be gained by considering both aspects of the New Jerusalem.

‘I saw no temple’

7. In what respect does the New Jerusalem differ from old Jerusalem? Revelation 21:22. Compare Revelation 21:3 & Revelation 22:4.

NOTE: “‘I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.’ Revelation 21:22. The people of God are privileged to hold open communion with the Father and the Son. “Now we see through a glass, darkly.” 1 Corinthians 13:12. We behold the image of God reflected, as in a mirror, in the works of nature and in His dealings with men; but then we shall see Him face to face, without a dimming veil between. We shall stand in His presence and behold the glory of His countenance.’ *Great Controversy*, page 676.

8. What was shown John about the measurements of the city? Revelation 21:15-17.

NOTE: ‘The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.’ When Moses was commanded to construct an earthly sanctuary, he was shown that the Most Holy Place, where was placed the ark of the testimony with the mercy seat, was to be equal in length and breadth and height.

‘Twelve gates’

9. What was John shown about the gates of the city? Revelation 21:12-13, 21. Compare Revelation 22:14.

NOTE: It has been suggested that, as the pearl’s beauty is formed through suffering, so those who enter the city will be those who have suffered and whose suffering has wrought beauty in their lives.

10. What else distinguishes the New Jerusalem? Revelation 21:23 & 25, Revelation 22:5.

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

‘The tree of life’

11. What did John see coming from the throne of God? Revelation 22:1.

NOTE: ‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. It speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, for Christ ever liveth to make intercession for us. We need to keep ever before us the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. That life-cleansing, life-sustaining blood, appropriated by living faith, is our hope. We need to grow in appreciation of its inestimable value, for it speaks for us only as we by faith claim its virtue, keeping the conscience clean and at peace with God. This is represented as the pardoning blood, inseparably connected with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer, illustrated by the ever-flowing stream that proceeds from the throne of God, the water of the river of life.’ *Our High Calling*, page 47.

12. What was growing beside the river? Revelation 22:2. Compare Genesis 2:9, Revelation 2:7 & Revelation 22:14.

NOTE: ‘In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called a country. There the heavenly Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide-spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God’s people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home.’ *The Faith I Live By*, page 368.

Lesson 13: ‘Behold I come quickly’

MEMORY VERSE: ‘Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.’ Revelation 22:14.

STUDY HELP: *The Faith I Live By*, pages 368-371.

Introduction

‘Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will “grow up” to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ’s faithful ones will appear in “the beauty of the Lord our God,” in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord. Oh, wonderful redemption! Long talked of, long hoped for, contemplated with eager anticipation, but never fully understood.’ *Maranatha*, page 325.

‘I Jesus have sent Mine angel’

1. How is the reliability of the prophecy of Revelation stated? Revelation 22:16 & 6. Compare Revelation 19:9, last part.

NOTE: We are so thankful that we have a sure word of prophecy, so that none of us need be deceived. We know that there are heresies and fables in our world at the present time, and we want to know what is truth. It becomes us to search carefully for ourselves that we may gain this knowledge. We cannot do this with a mere reading of the Scriptures, but we must compare scripture with scripture. We must search the Scriptures for ourselves, so that we shall not be led astray; and while many may be led astray because there are all kinds of doctrines in our world, there is one truth. Many may come to you and tell you that they have the truth, but it is your privilege to search the Scriptures for yourself. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We must be acquainted with the Scriptures ourselves, that we may understand the true reason of the hope that is within us.' *Lift Him Up*, page 114.

2. How does Christ commend those who heed the words of this prophecy? Revelation 22:7. Compare verse 9.

NOTE: 'Many have entertained the idea that the book of Revelation is a sealed book, and they will not devote time and study to its mysteries. They say that they are to keep looking to the glories of salvation, and that the mysteries revealed to John on the Isle of Patmos are worthy of less consideration than these. But God does not so regard this book... The book of Revelation opens to the world what has been, what is, and what is to come; it is for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world are come. It should be studied with reverential awe. We are privileged in knowing what is for our learning.' *Second Advent Review & Sabbath Herald*, August 31, 1897.

3. What solemn warning does God give concerning this book? Revelation 22:18-19.

NOTE: 'Those who, by their human construction, shall make the Scripture to utter that which Christ has never placed upon it, weaken its force, making the voice of God in instruction and warnings to testify falsehood, to avoid the inconvenience incurred by obedience to God's requirements, have become signboards, pointing in the wrong direction, into false paths, which lead to transgression and death. The testimony of the Alpha and Omega in regard to the punishment for making nonessential one word spoken by the mouth of God, is the fearful denunciation that they shall receive of the plagues that are written in the book; their names shall be taken out of the book of life, and from the holy city.' *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, pages 386-387.

'Worship God'

4. What was John's response to the vision he had seen? Revelation 22:8. Compare Revelation 19:10 & Matthew 4:10.

NOTE: 'The angel from heaven came to John in majesty, his countenance beaming with the excellent glory of God. He revealed to John scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the history of the church of God and brought before him the perilous conflicts which Christ's followers were to endure. John saw them passing through fiery trials, made white and tried, and, finally, victorious overcomers, gloriously saved in the kingdom of God. The countenance of the angel grew radiant with joy and was exceeding glorious, as he showed John the final triumph of the church of God. As the apostle beheld the final deliverance of the church, he was carried away with the glory of the scene and with deep reverence and awe fell at the feet of the angel to worship him.' *Early Writings*, page 230.

5. What was the angel's immediate response? Revelation 22:9. Compare Revelation 14:6-7 & Revelation 13:8.

NOTE: 'The angel then showed John the heavenly city with all its splendour and dazzling glory, and he, enraptured and overwhelmed, and forgetful of the former reproof of the angel, again fell to worship at his feet. Again the gentle reproof was given, "See thou do it not for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.'" *Early Writings*, page 231.

'According as his work shall be'

6. What verdict concludes the judgement? Revelation 22:11. Compare Revelation 14:6.

NOTE: 'It will soon be said in heaven, "It is done." "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:11, 12. When this fiat goes forth, every case will have been decided.' *Counsels to Teachers, Parents & Students*, page 418.

'When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honour, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.' *The Faith I Live By*, page 218.

7. What event quickly follows this announcement? Revelation 22:12.

NOTE: 'When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:11, 12. The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state, men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above. Before the Flood, after Noah entered the ark, God shut him

in and shut the ungodly out; but for seven days the people, knowing not that their doom was fixed, continued their careless, pleasure-loving life and mocked the warnings of impending judgment. "So," says the Saviour, "shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:39. Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man's destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy's offer to guilty men. "Watch ye therefore: . . . lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping." Mark 13:35, 36.' *Great Controversy*, pages 490-491.

'Blessed are they'

8. Which people will be entitled to enter the city of God? Revelation 22:14.

NOTE: The majority of modern versions follow Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandrinus and Codex Ephraemi in rendering this verse as 'wash their robes'. In the Greek, this change is easy to make, 'entolas' (commandments) changed to 'stolas' (robes) and 'poiountes' (keeping) changed to 'plunontes' (washing). The reading found in the King James Bible is that of the majority of surviving Greek manuscripts. The Lamsa version, based on the early Peshitta translation into Syriac before the year AD 200, also reads 'do His commandments.' Two early Christian writers, Tertullian (AD 145-220) and Cyprian (AD 200-258) both quote the verse as keeping the commandments. Elsewhere in John's writings, the apostle stresses the importance of obedience to God's commandments. See 1 John 2:3-4, 1 John 5:2-3, Revelation 12:17, Revelation 14:12.

'He who is the fountain of all knowledge has stated the condition of our fitness to enter the heaven of bliss, in the words, "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Obedience to God's commandments is the price of heaven.' *Child Guidance*, page 224.

9. Which people will be excluded from the city of God? Revelation 22:15. Compare Revelation 21:27.

NOTE: 'From the stern punishment meted out to those perjurers [Ananias and Sapphira], God would have us learn also how deep is His hatred and contempt for all hypocrisy and deception. In pretending that they had given all, Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit, and, as a result, they lost this life and the life that is to come. The same God who punished them, today condemns all falsehood. Lying lips are an abomination to Him. He declares that into the Holy City "there shall in no wise enter . . . anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." Revelation 21:27. Let truth telling be held with no loose hand or uncertain grasp. Let it become a part of the life. Playing fast and loose with truth, and dissembling to suit one's own selfish plans, means shipwreck of faith. "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth." Ephesians 6:14. He who utters untruths sells his soul in a cheap market. His falsehoods may seem to serve in emergencies; he may thus seem to make business advancement that he could not gain by fair dealing; but he finally reaches the place where he can trust no one. Himself a falsifier, he has no confidence in the word of others.' *Acts of the Apostles*, page 75.

'Come; for all things are now ready'

10. What gracious invitation is extended to all? Revelation 22:17, first part.

NOTE: 'Everyone who hears is to repeat the invitation. Whatever one's calling in life, his first interest should be to win souls for Christ. He may not be able to speak to congregations, but he can work for individuals. To them he can communicate the instruction received from his Lord. Ministry does not consist alone in preaching. Those minister who relieve the sick and suffering, helping the needy, speaking words of comfort to the desponding and those of little faith. Nigh and afar off are souls weighed down by a sense of guilt. It is not hardship, toil, or poverty that degrades humanity. It is guilt, wrongdoing. This brings unrest and dissatisfaction. Christ would have His servants minister to sin-sick souls.' *Desire of Ages*, page 822.

11. What is promised to those who heed this invitation? Revelation 22:17, last part. Compare John 4:10-14.

NOTE: "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me." The rich, the poor, the high, the low, are alike welcome. He promises to relieve the burdened mind, to comfort the sorrowing, and to give hope to the despondent. Many of those who heard Jesus were mourners over disappointed hopes, many were nourishing a secret grief, many were seeking to satisfy their restless longing with the things of the world and the praise of men; but when all was gained, they found that they had toiled only to reach a broken cistern, from which they could not quench their thirst. Amid the glitter of the joyous scene they stood, dissatisfied and sad. That sudden cry, "If any man thirst," startled them from their sorrowful meditation, and as they listened to the words that followed, their minds kindled with a new hope. The Holy Spirit presented the symbol before them until they saw in it the offer of the priceless gift of salvation. The cry of Christ to the thirsty soul is still going forth, and it appeals to us with even greater power than to those who heard it in the temple on that last day of the feast. The fountain is open for all. The weary and exhausted ones are offered the refreshing draught of eternal life. Jesus is still crying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink.'" *Desire of Ages*, page 454.

'Surely I come quickly'

12. With what urgent words does the Lord conclude His revelation? Revelation 22:20, first part. Compare Revelation 3:11, Revelation 22:7, 10.

NOTE: 'One of the most solemn and yet most glorious truths revealed in the Bible is that of Christ's second coming to complete the great work of redemption. The doctrine of the Second Advent is the very keynote of the Sacred Scriptures. The coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of His true followers. The patriarch Job in the night of his affliction exclaimed with unshaken trust: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: . . . in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." Job 19:25-27. The Saviour's parting promise upon Olivet, that He would come again, lighted up the future for His disciples, filling their hearts

with joy and hope that sorrow could not quench nor trials dim. Amid suffering and persecution, the “appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” was the “blessed hope.” “This aged world is not far from its end,” said Melancthon. Calvin bids Christians “not to hesitate, ardently desiring the day of Christ’s coming as of all events most auspicious.” “The thoughts of the coming of the Lord,” said Baxter, “are most sweet and joyful to me.” “It is the work of faith and the character of His saints to love His appearing.” “This is the day that all believers should long, and hope, and wait for, as being the accomplishment of all the work of their redemption, and all the desires and endeavours of their souls.” “Hasten, O Lord, this blessed day!” *The Faith I Live By*, page 348.

13. What earnest prayer does John add to the words of His Lord? Revelation 22:20, last part-21.

NOTE: ‘On rocky Patmos the beloved disciple hears the promise, “Surely I come quickly,” and his longing response voices the prayer of the church in all her pilgrimage, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” Revelation 22:20.’ *Maranatha*, page 12.