

Christian Training Center

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BOOK TEN, PART 1

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Lesson 1: The Apostate Church

Book 10

Rev. 17:1:18

By Dr. Albert Grimes

The church has never been in its entire history absolutely free from error of some kind. This is the evidence of scripture as 2 Corinthians 11:13 states, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."

The church evidently suffered because of these false apostles, and they were a constant threat to the unity of the church. The gospel of grace was also being contested in order to try and bring the saints under bondage of the law as Galatians 2:4 relates, "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage."

There were false prophets and false teachers who would secretly bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them as 2 Peter 2:1 states, "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways."

According to scripture many false prophets are gone out into the world as 1 John 4:1 relates, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

Even the early church suffered from these things, and the early apostles were at constant warfare trying to keep the unity of the faith. But the scriptures predicted that eventually there would come in the latter times a revolt against the truth as 1 Timothy 4:1 records, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." Although this revolt against the truth is predicted to take place in the latter times, yet the seeds of it started very early in church history.

The last days actually began when Jesus came as Hebrews 1:2 relates, "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." This revolt was to come in the last end of the last days as 1 Timothy 4:1 says, "latter times."

For seventy-eight years after Acts 2:4 when the church began, the seeds of this apostasy were sown in the church as Revelation 2:6 reveals, "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans which thing I also hate." The Nicolaitans were a group who were trying to bring the church under the Old Testament order of priesthood although the tabernacle order was already done away with in Hebrews 7:18.

In less than three hundred years this priestly system was established in the church as Revelation 2:15 reveals, "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans which thing I hate."

The Roman system began to dominate in this period of Church History, and for the next twelve hundred years, the system of Rome dominated the church. This is referred to in Revelation 2:20-22, "Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman, Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not. 22 Behold I will cast her into a bed and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation except they repent of their deeds." (Church of Thyatira)

This woman represented the Roman system that overcame the church, which went down into the dark ages, and all doctrine was lost in a maze of tradition. It is also to be noticed that all those who commit adultery with her will go into tribulation. This is a prediction of the last day Apostate church, for it will be destroyed by the Antichrist in the last part of the tribulation.

THE REFORMATION OF THE CHURCH

From the period of the reformation up to the present time there has been a restoring of the teachings which were taught in the early church. Justification by faith revealed through Luther - Lutherans. Holiness and

Sanctification through Wesley - Methodism. Water Baptism through the Baptists. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit through the Pentecostals.

The period of Church history which began with the reformation and has carried on until today has added much doctrinal light to the church. But it is also during this same period that the church became split and divided by doctrinal disputers and so many sects, and denominations came into being.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century God began to pour out His Spirit upon these sects and denominations and from this outpouring came the Full Gospel Movements, or Pentecostals, as they were known. Their doctrine contained all that previously had been revealed.

The teaching concerning the Baptism of the Holy Spirit became the main doctrine, and healing, the second coming of Christ, and signs following. A study of the Pentecostal movement also reveals the fact that in the midst of this revival the teaching concerning the gifts of the Spirit, the laying on of hands, and even church order was also given.

Some of the most outstanding Bible Teachers, Howard Cater, Donald Gee, and Harold Horton, taught all the present day truths, but their teaching was not accepted throughout the Full Gospel Movements. It was through the teaching of these same men that I became interested in these same truths.

The present day moving of the Spirit upon the denominational churches has produced no new doctrine, but the sad fact remains that the Pentecostals received just as much light as is being revealed in this present outpouring, but they rejected it.

Let us be careful that those of us who are receiving from the Spirit what we are today, be careful to move into all that the Holy Spirit reveals. If we do not, we will find ourselves like others who, in the past, have received light, and have rejected it.

THE PRESENT DAY OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT

About 1962 the Spirit of God began to move upon the denominational churches, even the Roman Catholic Church. It has now spread out into most of the nations of the world. As we have said, it is nothing new, but is the truth that the Full Gospel Churches have rejected.

Thousands of denominational people are being filled with the Spirit. Some are leaving their denominational churches. Others are remaining to witness of what God has done for them.

While this is going on in the denominations, the foundation of the Roman Catholic Church is being moved by a reform within the church. The solid foundation which separated the Roman church from every other is being broken down within the church itself.

Now it is beginning to reach out to other religions, through what is known as "Ecumenical Movement", which is now moving towards the organization of a world Church.

This then is a clear picture of what is taking place in our day. A revolt is taking place in denominational systems against the truth of the scriptures. This condition is revealed in 1 Timothy 4:1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils."

The word, "depart", means "to revolt against". Now it is their religious systems which are revolting against the truth, that are in sympathy with this Ecumenical Movement.

It is from this great Ecumenical Movement that the One World Church will emerge, composed of all religions, with Rome at its head. She will become the mother of the harlots as stated in Revelation 17:5, "And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of The Earth."

Because this World Church which will not be spiritual, but religious, it will conform to the world and try to help to solve the political and economical and social problems of the world, without salvation. It will be accepted by the world.

Great prestige and power shall be given unto it. In the near future all who are children of God by the new birth will come out from this apostate Church and come under the influence of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, even those who are now rejecting this outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE TRUE CHURCH?

It is quite possible because of the fact that the True Church, which will not be part, but be separate from this Apostate Church, and will not line up with its principals or doctrines, that we may find ourselves in the same position as the early church with all our privileges taken away, because of the influence of the apostate Church.

We may find ourselves meeting again in the homes of believers because of heavy taxes imposed upon the property which we hold. Conditions may become far different from what we now enjoy.

Although these things may come to pass, yet the True Church will move in the power of the Holy Spirit conforming itself to the early church methods and teaching until the Lord comes in the Rapture.

THE FUTURE OF THIS APOSTATE CHURCH

This church will arise in the earth gaining gleanings from all denominations. A type of broad doctrine will be set up, allowing much religious freedom, but it will be void of any saving power, for it will allow all kinds of religions to fellowship together, based upon the brotherhood of man. It will be a religion that will seek to help the political and economical and social problems of the world.

It will have a religious form and ceremonies that will astound religious people. It will appear as the greatest system of religion that has ever existed in the world. Even the Apostle John when he saw her in vision, wondered with great admiration as Revelation 17:6 relates, "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration."

It is quite possible that this great apostate system will come into power before the true church is raptured from this world.

THE APOSTATE CHURCH AFTER THE TRUE CHURCH IS TAKEN OUT OF THE WORLD

After the restraining power of the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the world in the true church, as stated in 2 Thessalonians 2:6,7 "And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. (Speaking of the Antichrist) 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he (the Holy Spirit in the Church) who now restraineth will restrain until he (the Holy Spirit) be taken out of the way," then the Antichrist as a ruler will arise as the Roman Empire is being revived. The Antichrist, before he is fully revealed as such, will receive this apostate world church, and use it as a means of gaining more prestige and power.

After the Antichrist rules over his ten kingdom empire in the first part of the week, he will make this apostate church the State Church of the revived Rome Empire. This is indicated in Revelations 17:3, "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." The thought here in the words "set upon" means "unmoveable". The apostate church will dominate the revived Roman Empire, and will doubtless regard this position as a permanent thing. She has been deceived, and does not understand the real motive and reason why she now has this exalted position. She is the false religious front to cover up the Antichrist's real intentions. For the Antichrist will just use this apostate church in order to gain more power for himself.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THIS APOSTATE CHURCH

In the middle of the week as Satan is cast out of heaven into the earth as Revelation 12:9 relates, "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth; and his angels were cast out with him." The devil or dragon will give the beast his power, after which he will then rise up in his true light as the Antichrist. Revelation 13:2 states, "...and the dragon gave him his power and his seat, and great authority."

After the Antichrist receives this authority from Satan, he will set himself up in the Jewish temple in

Jerusalem as God, and will demand all to worship him as God for 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4 states, "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

As he exalts himself as God, he will then bring about the destruction of every form of religion. The apostate church will be destroyed by the ten nations of the revived Roman Empire as stated in Revelation 17:16, 17, "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. 17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

The fact that this church shall have world power is to be seen in Revelation 17:18, "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

Thus will come to an end one of the greatest religious systems this world has ever seen.

Let us not be deceived by this church's prestige, or power, or, form, or religious orders. Let us be sure that we belong to the true church and that we are ready to meet Christ when he comes.

FUTURE EVENTS
Book 10
Lesson 1: Questions

1. What did the early church suffer with?
2. What kinds of error were predicted in the scriptures, 2 Peter 2:1,2; 1 John 4:1, 1 Timothy 4:1?
3. What began to take place seventy-eight years after Acts 2:4?
4. In less than three hundred years, what had established itself in the Church?
5. What system dominated the church for the next twelve hundred years, and is referred to in the scripture?
6. From the reformation up to the present time, what has been restored in the church?
7. What happened in the latter part of the eighteenth century?
9. What has the present day revival, called the charismatic revival, produced?
10. What must we be careful to do with the light we receive?
11. Explain what is now happening in the Catholic Church.
12. What will come forth from the Ecumenical Movement.
13. What may happen to the true church?
- L4. Explain the future of the Apostate church.
15. The true church is the Bride of Christ. Who's Bride will the Apostate church become?
16. What will the Antichrist finally do with his bride?

Lesson 2: The Russian Invasion Of The State Of Israel

Book 10

Ezekiel 38:1-13

By Dr. Albert Grimes

In the past, the chapters of Ezekiel 38 and 39 have been placed with the chapters of Revelation 14 and 19. It has been suggested that they all describe the same event, the battle of Armageddon. However a close study of Ezekiel 38 and 39 and Revelation 14 and 19 reveals the fact that two different periods of time are dealt with, and that the events are absolutely different.

For instance in Ezekiel 38:1-6, it distinctly gives details regarding an invasion from the North, and mentions the land of Russia and its dictator. It also gives a list of Russian allies. "Son of Man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." The word "Gog" means "prince or dictator". The word "Magog" means "the Land of the "North". The names "Meshech and Tubal" refer to two provinces which joined together north of the Black Sea.

The list of Russian allies are mentioned in Ezekiel 38:5,6, "Persia, Ethiopia and Libya with them; and all of them with shields and helmets. 6 Gomer and all his bands; the house of Togarmah, of the north quarters and all his bands; and many people with thee."

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

Here we have a battle where the armies of the whole world are involved, and the same thought is brought out in Revelation 19:19, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his armies."

Then the Kings of the East are also mentioned in Revelation 16:12, "... that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared". All these references in Revelation refer to the Battle of Armageddon.

These nations are destroyed by the armies of Christ as stated in Revelation 19:14,15, "...he should smite the nations..." But in Ezekiel 38:22, it states, "And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his lands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone." This is the way God destroys the hosts that come against Israel.

It is quite evident that in the battle of Armageddon, all the nations of the world are involved. But in the invasion upon the State of Israel, only Russia and her allies are involved.

Then a close study of the conditions in regards to the invasion of the northern nations upon the State of Israel reveals conditions that are different from those found in the Battle of Armageddon.

Before the northern invasion takes place, the conditions existing in the State of Israel are, as pointed out in Ezekiel 38:8, "...in the latter years thou shalt come into a land that is brought back from the sword...", referring to the wars which Israel is now having with the Arabs, in order to gain back the State of Israel. "...And they shall dwell safely all of them." After they have taken the land, or brought it back by the sword, Israel will dwell safely in the land.

The building of towns and villages will be so rapid that neither walls nor gates will be built around them as Ezekiel 38:11 states, "And thou shalt say I will go up to the land of unwalled villages, I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely all of then dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates." These are the conditions that will exist in the State of Israel at the time of the invasion.

However when we study the conditions existing in the world just before the Battle of Armageddon, we find from Revelation 13 and 15 that the world is under the domination of the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

In Revelation chapter 16 records the seven vials of the wrath of God being poured upon the earth, and it is while these vials of wrath are being poured out that the Dragon and the Beast and the False Prophet gather the kings of the world to battle, against the Coming Christ. For Revelation 16:13,14 states, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth, unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Thus the

conditions are altogether different.

Then these battles take place in different places as pointed out in scripture. The invasion of Russia upon the State of Israel will take place from the north of Israel as Ezekiel 38:15 relates, "And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army."

This invasion will take place in the northern part of Israel, whereas the Battle of Armageddon will take place in the valley called Armageddon which would be located southeast of Mt. Carmel. As already stated, these armies will come from all over the world as Revelation 16:14 states, "These are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

The evidence from scripture points out that these two events have to do with two different battles. It is also evident that the Battle of Armageddon will take place at the end of the tribulation period, at the Revelation of Christ, for it is the armies of the Satanic Trinity and the armies of Christ that are in conflict.

But the invasion of the State of Israel by the Russians is stated as taking place in the latter years, as Ezekiel 38:8 records, "After many days thou shalt be visited in the latter years..." The term "latter years" is related to the time when Israel will be at rest in their own land as stated in Ezekiel 38:8,11, "...they shall dwell safely all of them...11...I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely..."

This could be referring to conditions existing in the State of Israel in the near future, and it is possible that we might see this invasion before the rapture of the Saints takes place.

RUSSIA AND HER ALLIES WILL INVADE THE STATE OF ISRAEL

All the evidence of scripture points out that Russia will with her allies invade the State of Israel. A careful study of scripture relating to this event produces unmistakable evidence that Russia is involved. In Ezekiel 38:1-6 we read, "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, 3 And say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: 4 And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: 5 Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet: 6 Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee."

Without going into a lot of detail regarding the meaning of these names mentioned, we could state that the word "Gog" means "Prince or Dictator", and he is mentioned as the Prince of the land of the North. The two names of Meshech and Tubal refer to two provinces which joined together north of the Black Sea in Russia.

Then the list of allies is given also. These are as follows: Persia, now called Iran, the country East of the Persian Gulf. Ethiopia, and it is suggested that this is not the Ethiopia relating to the Sudan in Africa, but to a people that dwell near the Arabians as stated in 2 Chronicles 21:16, "Moreover the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistine, and of the Arabians that were near the Ethiopians." Libya was south of the Black Sea. Gomer refers to the German nation. Togarmah no doubt refers to all the Slavick nations in and around the Black Sea. These then are to be the Allies of Russia.

The conditions that will exist are clearly pointed out. The land will have been brought back by the sword. This suggests that the State of Israel will be at rest, and the people shall dwell safely. Towns and villages will be accumulated in the land. All this is suggested by the scriptures as Ezekiel 38:8 states, "...come into a land that is brought back from the sword...and they shall dwell safely all of them;" Then in verse 11, "I will go up to the land of unwallled villages. I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates." Also verse 12 states, "...and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land."

The State of Israel will appear to Russia to be unprotected, and an easy prey, a land filled with much needed materials, and it is quite evident from this section of scripture that no one stands out against Russia to oppose its invasion of the State of Israel.

In Ezekiel 38:9-12 we read, "Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. 10 Thus saith the Lord God; It shall also come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: 11 And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, 12 To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land." Then verse 15, "And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army."

Although the whole plan is the Russians, yet the Word of God declares that in the overall providence of God it is God Himself that brings them into the State of Israel, in order that He might destroy them. This is stated in Ezekiel 38:4,16,17, "And I will turn thee back and put hooks into thy jaw and I will bring thee forth...16...And I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes...17...that I would bring thee against them."

As the Russian hordes move towards the State of Israel there will only be a vocal protest made against them; no one will oppose with arms. These nations that protest are mentioned in Ezekiel 38:13, "Sheba and, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? Hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?"

The name "Sheba" refers to the people who live in the land of Yemen. "Dedan" possibly refers to a people who settled on the borders of the Persian Gulf. No clear insight can be had that would give us understanding of the word Tarshish. It has been stated that it relates to the British Empire and all its allied nations which were colonized by the British. This may be. However, we have established the fact that whoever these nations are they will only offer a vocal opposition against Russia.

HOW THE RUSSIAIN HORDES ARE DESTROYED

With no one to oppose them the Russians will descend like a cloud upon the little State of Israel, and God Himself shall move against them as Ezekiel 38:18 records, "And it shall come to pass at the same time, when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury shall come up in my face."

As to how God destroys them it would suggest to us that as soon as the Russians enter the northern part of the State of Israel, that great earthquakes will take place. Then God will turn them one against another, and He will rain upon them an overflowing rain and great hailstones, fire and brimstone as Ezekiel 38:20-22 relates, "...and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. 21 And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God, every man's sword shall be against his brother. 22 And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood, and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone." It is God Himself that will destroy them without any help from the nations of the world.

There will only be one sixth of their armies left, and those who are slain will be given to the birds of the air to feed upon. For we read in Ezekiel 39:2-5, "And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel: 3 And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. 4 Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. 5 Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God."

It will take those of the State of Israel, after this great destruction, seven years to burn what the Russians leave upon the battlefield; they will use it for fuel, and seven months will it take them, that is the Israelites, to bury the dead.

Ezekiel 39:9,10, states, "And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire, and

burn the weapons, both the shields, and the bucklers, the bows and arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years. 10 So that they shall take no wood out of the field neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire; and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God.”

It is quite evident that after this takes place, that the State of Israel will still be at peace, and rest after this is over, for it does state, that they will be burning the spoil from the field of battle for another seven years.

It is no doubt after these seven years that the Antichrist will rise up to power and Israel will accept him as their leader or protector.

TOURISTS WILL COME FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TO SEE THE DESTRUCTION

News of this great defeat of the Russians will at once be revealed to the world, and people will flock to Israel to see the carnage. This is revealed by the word “passengers” referring to “tourists.” Ezekiel 39:11-15 reveals this, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamongog. 12 And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. 13 Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord God. 14 And they shall sever out men of continual employment, passing through the land to bury with the passengers those that remain upon the face of the earth, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. 15 And the passengers that pass through the land, when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamongog.”

After this destruction of the Russian hordes, the communistic power will be broken. This will make way for the rising of the Revived Roman Empire. It is possible that we may see this event before the Rapture of the Church takes place.

FUTURE EVENTS

Book 10

Lesson 2: Questions

1. Explain the difference between the events spoken of in Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39, and in Revelation 16:14. Explain in short form.
2. Who will be the allies of the Russians, when they invade Israel?
3. What will be the conditions in Israel before this invasion?
4. Although the whole plan seems to be Russia's, who is it that is really bringing them to Israel, and for what purpose?
5. Explain how the Russians are to be destroyed.
6. How much of their armies will be left?
7. How long will Israel be burying the Russian dead?
8. How long will Israel be using the war materials for fuel?
9. What kind of birds will feed upon the slain? Does this happen in another battle? Where?
10. What will the tourists that come to view the battlefield do?
11. Is it possible that this event could take place before the rapture of the Church?

Lesson 3: Preparation For The Understanding Of The Second Coming Of Christ
The Signs of the Coming of Christ
Book 10
By Dr. Albert Grimes

Why should we study the signs concerning the coming of Christ?

These signs as we study them, will help us to discern where we are in regard to the coming of Christ, and these signs are just as sure as the signs that point out to us the coming of the seasons. The scripture points this out to us. Luke 21:29-31, "And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; 30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is nigh at hand. 31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

The idea of setting dates and days is not scriptural.

Many in the past have set dates, and those whom they have deceived have become disappointed after they have waited. The scripture is very plain and should be heeded. Matthew 24:36, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." It is even suggested that the Son of God in earthly ministry, did not know of the day of His coming, as pointed out in Mark 13:32, "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." But Christ in His exalted state after His resurrection understood, for he received this revelation from the Father, Revelation 1:1, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;" The Second Coming of Christ was included in this revelation.

A study of these signs will help us prepare ourselves, and help us to make ourselves ready for His coming.

As these signs will point out to us the nearness of His Coming, this realization should make us prepare ourselves. Matthew 24:32-33, "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. 33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near even at the doors." If then, knowing his return is near, we will prepare ourselves for it. 1 John 3:2-3, "Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

It is a personal return.

We are looking for a return of Christ in person, and the reason we talk of a Second Coming is because he has already been here on this earth. The first time he came he dealt with our sins and redeemed us, as pointed out in Hebrews 9:26, "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." But he will come again the second time to take us out of this world. Hebrews 9:28, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

We are told how He will come.

Christ will come in the same manner as he left this earth. Acts 1:9, "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." He left in a cloud; and he will return the same way as pointed out in Acts 1:11, "this same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." It is also referred to in Matthew 24:30, "and

they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

We are told what He will be like when He comes.

After His resurrection He appeared to his disciples in the upper room. This is described in Luke 24:39, “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.” The resurrected Christ appeared in a body of flesh and bones. This is the way in which He will return, a glorified Christ.

The importance the Bible places on the Doctrine of the Second Coming.

To every mention of the First Coming, the Second Coming is mentioned eight times. 318 references to it are made in 216 chapters. Whole books such as 1 and 2 Thessalonians and Revelation deal with it. Whole Chapters, Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, deal with it. The Old Testament contains more than 1,500 references to this event. The New Testament has over 300. It is also bound up with 19 major doctrines in the Word of God.

The Old Testament Prophets taught it.

It is enough to just write down the scriptures. In this sense we have scriptural proof. Zechariah 14:4, “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives.” Malachi 3:1-2, “Behold I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. 2 But who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth.”

Jesus taught it.

Matthew 16:27, “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”

The Angels spoke of it.

Acts 1:10-11, “And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

The Apostles taught it.

Paul - Philippians 3:20, “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” James - James 5:7-8, “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waited for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” Peter – 2 Peter 1:16, “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” John - 1 John 2:28, “And now, little children, abide in him, that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at His coming.” It is evident from scripture that the second coming of Christ is a well established Doctrine.

The Disciples’ three questions.

A prophetic revelation from Jesus provoked these three questions. Matthew 24:1-3, “And Jesus went out,

and departed from the temple; and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. 3 And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying..."

These are the three questions the disciples asked Jesus:

1. "Tell us, when shall these things be?" (concerning the temple).
2. "And what shall be the sign of thy coming,"
3. "And of the end of the world?" (or age).

Christ's answers to these questions.

Christ first begins to answer these questions by pointing out the general conditions of the age.

False Christs were to come. Luke 21:8, "And he said, take heed that ye be not deceived, for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near; go ye not therefore after them." Then Christ continues by stating that there shall also be:

Wars and rumors of wars, famines, and pestilences, and also earthquakes. Luke 21:9-11 "But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified, for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by." 10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. 11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven."

Christ said that these things must first come to pass before the end came. So in these two statements, Christ is giving a general picture of the conditions that will exist during the time after He left this earth until His return. He is picturing the general conditions of that period of time. The False Christs, the wars, commotions, nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom, earthquakes, famines, pestilences, great signs, are the general conditions and not the signs that point to His Coming. These things should not terrify us, for "all these things must be," as stated in Luke 21:9-11. A study of history will prove the truth of Christ's statement.

After Christ had given them a general picture of the age, after He left them, until His return, He then begins to give them specific signposts. Each of these signs take place one after another, for in some cases one sign makes way for the other. They are definite signs that tell us exactly where we are in regard to the Second Coming of Christ.

The First Sign: Great persecution to take place before these things.

Christ, after giving them a general description of the age, begins to point out to them what they first can expect. Luke 21:12-19, "But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. 13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony. 14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: 15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. 16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. 17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. 18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish. 19 In your patience possess ye your souls." These words were directly made to the disciples. The Book of Acts gives us the details.

For more than two hundred years succeeding the Apostolic Age, the Church was under persecution. During all the second century, the mightiest empire upon the earth invoked all its might to destroy what was then called, "The Christian Superstition." For seven generations a noble army of martyrs by the hundred thousands won their crowns through the axe, the wild beasts, in the arena, and the fiery stake. Yet the followers

of Christ increased in numbers, until they counted in public, or in secret, nearly if not quite half the population of the Roman Empire. (Hurlbut). This is what Christ described as the first specific sign, which is past, and gone into history.

The second sign: Jerusalem compassed about with armies.

Forty years after Christ spoke to His disciples concerning the first sign, this second sign came to pass in 70 A.D. Luke 21:20-24, “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

This second sign took place forty years after Christ predicted it would. Untold thousands of Jews were put to death, and other thousands were enslaved. Few, if any, Christians perished because they remembered Christ’s utterances, received warning, escaped from the doomed city and found refuge in Pella in the Jordan Valley. Christ said that the treading down of the Jews would be “until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

The times of the Gentiles refers to a period of time when Israel as a nation is out of favour with God, and their city and land will be dominated by Gentile nations. The times of the Gentiles started in 606 B.C. when Israel and Judah went into captivity. It will end at the Revelation of Christ when Israel as a nation will be saved after a national repentance, and restored back to favour with God. This second sign brings time, in regard to these signs, up to the present day.

Although the greater portion of the Jews are still scattered among the nations, yet in 1948 Israel became a nation with her own government. Yet the city and land of Palestine are dominated by Gentiles.

The third sign: This Gospel of the Kingdom being preached in all nations for a witness.

Matthew 24:14, “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” It is this sign that concerns us, for we are living in the days of this sign.

Not only is Christ here giving us a sign, but the Word of God also speaks of this same sign as a period of time which is known as the “Dispensation of Grace”, or “The Fullness of the Gentiles”, or “The Church Age”. The sign covers this whole period of time. We are living in the period of these two signs. We see the Jews scattered amongst the nations; then we see the gospel being preached amongst the nations. Could we go further into the Word of God and get a better view as to where we are in this Church Age when the gospel is being preached in the nations?

The History of the Church.

The history of the whole church age, which covers the period of the third sign, is given to us in the Seven Messages to the Churches in Revelation. These churches are given in the order named, because of the peculiar character of that church, which relates to a period of Church History to which it is assigned. These messages are to be found in Revelation, Chapters 2 through 3.

The Church of Ephesus. This church represents a period in Church History from A.D. 70 to A.D. 170. It is a backslidden church. The Nicolaitans were even then trying to bring this period under a Priestly order of ministry.

The Church of Smyrna. This church represents a period of Church History from A.D. 170 to A.D. 312. God brought backslidden Ephesus Church under persecution. Ten persecutions are spoken of, which came upon the

church, and lasted until Constantine took the throne.

The Church of Pergamos. This church represents a period in Church History from A.D. 312 to A.D. 606. This is a licentious church. The Priestly Order of the Nicolaitans is established over the people. The doctrine of Balak, allowing the church to partake of the heathenism in the world. The Roman system began to dominate in this period of Church History.

The Church of Thyatira. This church represents a period in Church History from A.D. 606 to the reformation of A.D. 1520. The woman Jezebel represents a false religious system, and it is during this period in Church History when all the false doctrines of Rome begin to dominate this period and the church went down into darkness, losing all its true doctrine which the early church had founded, completely overcome by the Priestly System of Rome.

The Church of Sardis. This church represents a period in Church History, from A.D. 1520 to A.D. 1750. This period of Church History began with the Reformation and ended with the then known church split, and divided by doctrinal disputes.

The Church of Philadelphia. This church represents a period in Church History from A.D. 1750 to our time. This is the period of Church History in which we live. This is the time in Church History when God is opening the door to true doctrine - a restoration of all that the early church lost.

A restoration to the order of ministry is referred to in Ephesians 4:11. We have not altogether, even in our day, become free from the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, but we will. The promise to this church age is: Revelation 3:7, "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." Christ is the one with the key as pointed out in Isaiah 22:22, "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." No more shall the Priestly System close the things of God to the church, and bring it into darkness. But God will raise up a ministry in this period that will open up the treasure house of David, and restore all that the church has lost. It is in this period when God will do a mighty work.

A large percentage of Jews will be brought into the church, as stated in Revelation 3:9, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

From this church period will come those who are alive and remain, to meet the Lord in the air, for God's promise to them is - Revelation 3:10, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

It is at the end of this church period that Christ will come according to his Word, Revelation 3:11, "Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

The Church of Laodicea. This church represents a period in Church History which even exists in our day. It's the church with Christ outside; two churches are being formed in our day - the true church and the world apostate church - the Laodicea church. This church will gain much power, in a worldly sense; it will form and come to power in our day, but will be left after the true church is taken out, and it will be a power only for three and a half years with the Antichrist after which it will be destroyed.

So we are in the last part of the church age. The third sign is just about to end. The rest of the signs - for there are seven - do not concern the church, but will be fulfilled when the church is gone.

Further conditions that prove the end of the age.

Although the true church during the Philadelphia period will be blessed of God, yet there shall be the other extreme - a departing from the faith. This departing from the true Christianity will end in the Apostate

World Church. 1 Timothy 4:1-3, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits; and doctrines of devils..." There will be a spiritual decline, a separation from the true church.

A great upsurge of lawlessness. These lawless conditions may serve only to finally produce the Antichrist, and prepare conditions for his rulership. But they will also affect the true church, in the sense of bringing pressure and persecution. 2 Timothy 3:1-7, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof..."

These conditions will continue to exist, in the true church in spiritual power and a decline within the Denominational churches; the increasing upheaval of lawlessness which will make way for the next signpost.

The Abomination of the Antichrist.

It is to be noticed that this sign takes place after the gospel of the Kingdom has been preached for a witness unto all nations. Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Speaking of the end of the age the sign spoken of - Matthew 24:15,20, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the Holy Place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)...20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day."

This same event is referred to in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." This refers to the Antichrist as he sets himself up in the temple as God, demanding worship.

The same instructions given to the early church in regard to the second sign in A.D. 70 are given to the saints in the tribulation period. Matthew 24:16-22, "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

This event is referred to in Revelation 12:14, "And to the woman (speaking of Israel) were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent." As the Christians were saved in 70 A.D, from the Romans, so Israel will be saved from the Antichrist during the beginning of the last half of the tribulation. During this period a false Christ and a false prophet will appear, which is the next sign spoken of.

False Christ and a False Prophet.

It is to be noticed that this sign regarding the Antichrist and the False Prophet are taught in the Book of Revelation as well as Matthew 24:24, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." The "elect" in this sense is the elect of Israel during the tribulation period. Now after this false Christ and false prophet have ruled, and their reign draws to its close, then the next sign spoken of will take place.

The Coming of Christ in His Revelation.

This sign is referring to the Revelation of Christ, as he is revealed to this world, when he comes down to

this earth. Matthew 24:29-30, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” His coming makes way for the next and last sign.

The Regathering of Israel.

Matthew 24:31, “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Mark 13:27, “from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.”

It is this last sign that brings the end – “Then shall the end come.” - for it’s after this sign takes place that the kingdom is set up upon the earth.

The Parable of the fig tree.

Luke 21:29-31, “And he spake to them a parable; Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; 30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and knew of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. 31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.”

We are to take heed to ourselves; watch and pray.

Knowing that we are living in the time just before the return of the Lord as the signs indicate, let us take heed. Luke 21:34-36, “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting (excess in anything), and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. 35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

We are not left in the dark. These signposts along the way tell us where we are in regard to the Second Coming of Christ.

FUTURE EVENTS

Book 10

Lesson 3: Questions

1. In being taken up with the signs of Christ's coming, what main principle have we forgotten?
2. Give two scriptures relating to his second coming.
3. What two scriptures relate to two events in the coming of Christ?
4. Explain the purpose of each event.
5. It is evident as we study the Signs relating to Christ's Coming, what must we understand?
6. In what order do the signs appear relating to Christ's revelations.
7. What are the signs relating to the Rapture of the church?

Lesson 4: The First Resurrection

Book 10

Revelation 20:4-6

By Dr. Albert Grimes

There is a general teaching that at the end of the age there will be one resurrection, both of the righteous and the wicked. A close study of the word of God points out the fact that there are two resurrections. The term resurrection is a scriptural term and it also implies the fact that there is a resurrection which is first or foremost.

What Is a Resurrection?

A definition of the word: a rising from the dead. It has only to do with those who die. Just as death separates the soul and the spirit from the body, so the resurrection brings together the spirit and the body.

The Scripture also speaks of a Translation:

Hebrews 11:5, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death. Those who die are resurrected and those who are alive when Christ comes are translated. This is the reason for the words in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, "...And the dead in Christ shall rise first. 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds..." So in the first resurrection there will be two types of people, those who have died and those who are alive.

The Saints of the Old Testament Spoke of a Resurrection:

The Old Testament saints had a perfect understanding of the resurrection truth as seen from Job 19:25-27. All the elements of resurrection truth are to be found in these verses. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. 26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body yet in my flesh shall I see God; 27 Whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." The same could be said about David, who also had an understanding of not only his own resurrection, but he also understood concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 16:10, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." From this verse David understood that at His death he would descend into the lower Paradise in the heart of the earth. But he also understood that he would not stay there, for as Christ was not allowed to see corruption, but was raised the third day, and that Christ would also first descend into the lower parts of the earth, Ephesians 4:9, "But that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth." While there in the underworld He took out those who were in Paradise and transported them with Him into the third heaven. Ephesians 4:8, "When He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men."

"Daniel the Prophet" also makes mention of a resurrection in Daniel 12:2, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Note: This verse coming after makes mention of the tribulation period. Verse 1 brings doubt as to the time of the resurrection. Some teach that it proves that the resurrection does not take place till after the tribulation but a correct view of the proper translation brings more understanding of the verse, suggesting the fact of two distinct resurrections.

Tragelles Translation of Daniel 12:2, "And many from among the sleepers of the dust of the earth shall awake, these shall be unto everlasting life, but the rest of the sleepers shall be unto shame and everlasting contempt."

Nathaniel West Translation of Daniel 12:2 "And at that time many of thy people shall awake or be separated out from among the sleepers in the earth dust. These who awake shall be unto life everlasting but those who do not awake at that time shall be unto shame and contempt everlasting.

Most Hebrew doctors render it in this sense.

There Have Been Resurrections in the Past:

When we speak of resurrections we mean that the soul and spirit returned again to the mortal body as 1 Kings 17:17-22, "And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him... 21 And he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried unto the Lord and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee let the child's soul come into him again. 22 And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah and the soul of the child came into him again and he revived."

Then in the ministry of Jesus Luke 8:53-55, "And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. 54 And He put them all out and took her by the hand and called saying, "Maid arise," 55 and her spirit came again and she arose straightway and he commanded to give her meat." Then in the raising of Lazarus, John 11:43-44, "And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth, 44 and he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave clothes and his face was bound with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, Loose him and let him go."

Although these resurrections were the uniting of the spirit with the mortal body, yet they also demonstrate the possibility of a resurrection in a glorified body, as suggested in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, "And the dead in Christ shall rise first."

There Have Also Been Translations in the Scriptures:

As we have already stated, a translation is being caught up bodily without seeing death. Genesis 5:24, "And Enoch walked with God; and he was not for God took him." Then in Hebrews 11:5, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." Elijah was also translated in the same sense in 2 Kings 2:11, "And it came to pass as they still went on, and talked that behold there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

Note: The scriptures do not in these cases imply that these men were glorified, but it does indicate the possibility of our translation. 1 Thessalonians 4:17, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

Jesus Also Spoke of a Resurrection:

John 5:28, "Marvel not at this for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

The Scriptures Indicate a Difference Between These Resurrections:

Jesus is here speaking concerning the resurrection and He said in Luke 20:35-36, "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. 36 Neither can they die anymore for they are equal unto the angels; and are children of God, being children of the resurrection." Here Jesus speaks of a resurrection out from amongst the dead, pointing out the fact as we have already stated that there is a first resurrection. Then in Luke 14:13-14, "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor and maimed, the lame, the blind. 14 And thou shalt be blessed for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. Jesus then speaks of a resurrection of the just. Paul also brings out the same fact of a first resurrection in Philippians 3:11, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Note: The words of Paul became more striking translated as they should, "If by any means I might attain unto the out resurrection from the dead." This translation clearly brings out the fact of a first or foremost resurrection out from amongst the dead. Hebrews 11:35, "Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection." Note: a more nobler resurrection. So this first or out from amongst the dead resurrection is the resurrection of the just. It is a better resurrection.

When Does The First Resurrection Take Place?

Note: It must be understood that the first resurrection takes place in a period between the resurrection of Christ

and the thousand years reign of Christ.

It is Completed or Finished Before the 1000 years Reign:

This is pointed out in Revelation 20:5-6, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection," or in other words this finishes or completes the first resurrection, "6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power but they shall be as priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years." The first resurrection then is completed before the thousand years begins, for all in this first resurrection reign with Christ in the thousand years reign.

The First Resurrection is Made Up Of Three Groups:

Note: The order of the First Resurrection is given in scripture:

1 Corinthians 15:22-24, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then cometh the end..." The First Resurrection is pictured as a great harvest being gathered with firstfruits, harvest and gleanings.

Christ The Firstfruits:

In order to understand this statement we must go back to the feast of firstfruits in Leviticus 23:10-11, "Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and ye shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the Priest. 11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord to be accepted for you, on the morrow after the Sabbath, the priest shall wave it." Just before the harvest was to be gathered in, one sheaf was taken as the firstfruits and waved before the Lord. It was the first sheaf of the harvest. 1 Corinthians 15:25, "Christ the firstfruits." Just as the sheaf at the feast of firstfruits was the first sheaf of the harvest so the Lord Jesus Christ at his resurrection was the first sheaf taken in the harvest, the first resurrection. This type given to us of the Feast of Firstfruits was fulfilled perfectly. The sheaf was waved on the morrow after the Sabbath, so Christ rose from the dead in Matthew 28:1, 6, "In the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre...6 He is not here, he is risen..." A group of saints all forming the firstfruits were resurrected with Christ at His resurrection in Matthew 27:52-53, "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, 53 and came out of the graves after His resurrection and went into the Holy City and appeared unto many." So the firstfruits of the first resurrection are already in heaven.

There Has Been an Interval of More Than 1000 Years Between the Firstfruits and the Harvest Proper:

1 Corinthians 15:23, "But everyman in his own order, Christ the firstfruits afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming." The term they that are Christ's does not only take in New Testament Saints, but all who have died in the faith. For it is quite evident that the Old Testament saints were in Christ. Job 19:25, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth," is a statement made by Job. It was said of Moses that he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Hebrews 11:27, "By faith he forsook Egypt; not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible," speaking of Christ. David also spoke of Christ in Psalm 15:10, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." But in regards to the Church, they, the Old Testament Saints, were not a part of it, but still they are Christ's and will be at His coming. They will belong to the harvest proper, but not to the church.

The Gathering of the Harvest Proper:

All those who have died in faith will return with the Lord as stated in 1 Thessalonians 4:14, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." The thought here is that all those who have died in Christ are to return with him from heaven in order to receive, on the earth, their glorified bodies. Then the event is further described in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not

prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." So the order of the first resurrection is Christ the firstfruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. As stated, it is not just as some teach just what is called the Rapture of the church, for there is more involved. It is the harvest proper, all of the Old Testament Saints plus the Church.

During the Tribulation Period the Gleanings which Complete the First Resurrection Are Taken Out:

After every Harvest is taken from the field there is always gleanings left that must also be gathered, and so it is with the Harvest of the first resurrection, These gleanings are raised out of the tribulation period and are referred to in Revelation 6:9-11, "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the alter the souls of them that were slain for the word of God and the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice saying, How long O Lord, holy and true, doest thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth. 11 And white robes were given unto them, everyone, and it was said unto them that they should rest yet a little season until their fellow servants also and their brethren that should be killed as they were should be fulfilled." These spoken of were slain during the first part of the tribulation period. Also mention is made of those who would be slain during the last half of the seven years in Revelation 20:4-5, "And I saw thrones and they that sat upon them; and judgment was given unto them and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God; and which had not worshipped the beast neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads; or in their hands and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection."

A careful reading of these verses suggests the fact that these who were slain in the tribulation period complete the first resurrection, and that all the first resurrection saints reign with Christ. Revelation 20:6, "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,"

The Second Resurrection: A Resurrection of the Dead Takes Place 1000 Years After the First Resurrection:

Revelation 20:5, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." This is a reference to the wicked dead. The first resurrection is a resurrection out from among the dead after which one thousand years later the wicked dead are to be raised. Their judgment is described to us in Revelation 20:12-15, "And I saw the dead small and great stand before God; and the books were opened and another book was opened which is the book of life and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works..."

Their resurrection is also described in Revelation 20:13, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works." The sea gave up the dead bodies which were in it, and death speaks of the grave or where else the body of the wicked is, and hell is where the spirit and soul is confined. These were taken out of hell and their spirit and their soul shall again be united with their mortal body.

They Shall Suffer the Second Death:

The second death is being separated eternally from God and confined in the Lake of Fire as stated in Revelation 20:14-15, "And death and hell were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the Lake of Fire."

Will the Wicked Dead Retain Their Bodies?

As the righteous will have a glorified body for all eternity so the Word of God seems to suggest the fact that the wicked shall also retain their bodies. Matthew 5:29-30, "And if thy right eye offend thee pluck it out, and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is

profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.” Matthew 10:28, “...but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” The word destroy in the Greek speaks of “separation from,” destroyed as far as its purpose is concerned. Man was created to glorify God. But in his sin, which separates him from God and finally puts him in the lake of fire and destroys him in regards to being able to glorify God, in no sense does he suggest annihilation or destruction.

Two Resurrections:

So we are resurrected and translated in the first resurrection, and the wicked dead in their former bodies are also raised one thousand years after, and cast into the Lake of Fire. This completes the two resurrections.

FUTURE EVENTS

Book 10

Lesson 4: Questions

1. What do some teach regarding the end of this age; but what does a close study of scripture reveal?
2. Explain the difference between being resurrected and being translated.
3. In what scriptures in the Old Testament was the resurrection spoken of?
4. How must Daniel 12:2 be dealt with?
5. Have there been resurrections in the past? Give scripture.
6. Have there been translations in the past? Give scripture.
7. How did Paul in Philippians 3:11 give us a clearer insight into the principle of the resurrection?
8. When is the first resurrection finished? Give scripture.
9. How many groups is the first resurrection made up of?
10. Explain the second resurrection relating to the wicked.

Lesson 5: The Rapture Of The Saints

Book 10

By Dr. Albert Grimes

We are all acquainted with the term, “The Second Coming of Christ.” When we speak of the Second Coming we mean that Christ has already been upon this earth once before, and that He is coming back to this earth again the second time. The scriptures state this fact. Hebrews 9:25, “so Christ was once offered to bear the sin of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

In order to understand all that takes place at the Second Coming of Christ, we must first understand that the Second Coming of Christ covers a certain period of time. Just as the Lord was thirty-three and a half years upon the earth at His first coming, and three main events took place, His Birth, His Death, His Resurrection, so in His Second Coming, there is a definite period of time covered. It covers a period of seven years, and there are two main events which will take place. The First event is the Rapture of the Saints. The Second event is the Revelation of Christ.

Scripture Explains These Two Events:

The Lord speaks of the first event as, “Receiving us unto Himself.” John 14:3, “I will come again and receive you unto myself.” Paul speaks of it as our gathering together unto Him. 2 Thessalonians 2:1, “Now we beseech you brethren by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him.” Paul also calls it the Redemption of our Bodies. Romans 8:23, “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

Paul also refers to it as the time when the restraining power of the Holy Spirit will be taken away. 2 Thessalonians 2:7, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.” The “He” is the Holy Spirit in the Church. Paul refers also to this event as our being caught up to meet the Lord in the air. 1 Thessalonians 4:17, “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.” It is this first event that is called the “Rapture of the Church.”

The Word, “Rapture”:

The word, “Rapture”, is not found in the Bible, but it comes from the Latin Vulgate Version of the Bible, where the words caught up in 1 Thessalonians 4:1 are translated, “RAPTURO”, in the Latin, which means, “caught up”. Thus the Rapture of the Saints is speaking of the time when the Saints shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

The Revelation of Christ:

This event takes place seven years after the Rapture. Christ Himself describes it as the “Son of Man Coming with Power and Great Glory.” Matthew 24:30, “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Paul speaks of it as the revelation of Christ. 2 Thessalonians 1:7, “And to you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.” Jude speaks of this event as the Lord coming with ten thousands of His saints. Jude 14, “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.” Zechariah the Prophet speaks of it as the day when Christ’s feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives. Zechariah 14:4, “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives.”

A period of time between these two events is pointed out in scripture:

First, the redemption of our bodies takes place at the Rapture. Romans 8:23, “waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Then our manifestation as Sons takes place at the Revelation of Christ.

Romans 8:19, "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." We are Raptured first, then revealed as Sons afterwards at the Revelation. In the Rapture the restraining power of the Holy Spirit is taken out of this world. 2 Thessalonians 2:6,7, "And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time (that "he" is the Antichrist). 7 for the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (restraineth) will let (will continue to restrain) until he be taken out of the way (speaking of the Holy Spirit in the Church)."

So at the Rapture the Holy Spirit is taken out of this world, and the tribulation begins. At the end of the Tribulation, the power of the Antichrist will be destroyed by the Revelation of Christ. 2 Thessalonians 2:8,9, "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan..." The Lord Himself states that His Revelation comes after the Tribulation. Matthew 24:29,30, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days...30...and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

So between the Rapture and the Revelation, the Tribulation will take place on the earth.

What will take place in the heavens during the seven years in which the Tribulation is taking place on earth?

At the time of the Rapture, the saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. 1 Thessalonians 4:17, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." After this event in heaven we will receive our rewards for service. Luke 14:13,14, "But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: 14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the Just," states the time of the rewarding. Then the event spoken of in 2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

After this rewarding for service, we will have been made ready for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, which will also take place in heaven. Revelation 19:7, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." After this marriage is completed in heaven, the Bride with Christ will come down to earth in the Revelation. The word, "Revelation" means the unveiling of Christ to the world.

So the time period of seven years between these two events, the Rapture and the Revelation, is taken up with the tribulation upon the earth, and the Judgment Seat, and Marriage Supper in heaven.

What takes Place at the Rapture?

The Rapture, and what takes place at this event, is described in detail in the scriptures in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, "But I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are asleep (speaking of those who have died) that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Speaking of those who have died and are already in heaven as this event begins, God will first bring these souls from heaven with him, in order that they may receive their glorified bodies on the earth. 1 Thessalonians 4:15, "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (or precede) them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: And the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The swiftness of this event is further described to us in 1 Corinthians 15:51,52, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." We are to meet Christ in the air, as stated in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, "...to meet the Lord in the air..." We are caught

up to meet him. So in the Rapture we meet Christ in the air atmosphere, or first heaven. The word, “meet” means to meet and return with. So we meet him in the air and return back to heaven with him.

Who will go in the Rapture?

Two groups of people are mentioned. First: those who sleep in Jesus. This statement not only takes in New Testament saints but also Old Testament saints. For in the Old Testament there were those who were redeemed, as stated in Job 19:25, “For I know that my redeemer liveth.” Job knew Christ as Savior. David knew of the resurrection of Christ and his own redemption. Psalm 16:10, “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.” All the Old Testament saints will be Raptured, but they will not be in the church. The church started at Pentecost, so it must be understood that at the Rapture we have Old Testament and New Testament saints who have died in Christ. All will be raised and Raptured.

Second: those who are alive and remain. 1 Thessalonians 4:15, “then we which are alive and remain.” This is speaking of those who will be alive when Jesus comes. Some speak of the Rapture as a time when Christ shall come for his Church, but we must understand that 75% of the Church is already in heaven. Saints have been dying since the Church began. What will be on the earth when Jesus comes will only be a very small percentage of the true Church. This is a scriptural fact that some people overlook as they try to point out to us the standards of those who are to go in the Rapture.

As Saints of God and Children of Light we should not be taken unawares.

With the teaching on the Signs of the Times fully understood, the conditions existing in the world, and the inner witness of the Spirit, we should be ready when Jesus comes. If we die before that day, we shall be in heaven awaiting the Rapture. If we are alive, we will meet him, being changed and caught up to meet him. 1 Thessalonians 5:2,4, “For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night...4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light.”

But regardless of the warning, some will not be ready.

Some no doubt will be taken unawares, and be ashamed before him at his coming, as pointed out in scripture. Luke 21:34, “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.” 1 John 2:28, “And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.” Thus we should be preparing ourselves for that day. 1 John 3:3, “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

The Result of the Rapture and its relationship to the world.

It is evident as an event, that the world will not actually see it, for the meeting is in heaven. It is also related to the thief in the night, something that one does not see. But though they may not see the actual event, they will be left with the results of that event. Christians will be taken from every walk of life. It will not be hard to picture the confusion that will exist at that time.

The Result of the Raising of the Dead in Christ.

The graveyards, the country churchyards where the dead have been buried, will be filled with open graves. The monuments and grave slabs shall be overturned by the exodus of those who were buried there. This is stated in the scripture. Matthew 27:52, “And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose.”

This happened at Christ's resurrection and can happen again.

Those who are alive and remain.

The large department stores, banks and manufacturing plants, and other places of business will find their working staff depleted by the loss of Christian employees. People on the streets will find their companions gone. Cars and buses will block the streets because of absent drivers. Railroad and steamship lines, airlines, will be crippled, and confusion will reign everywhere. In many homes servants will be missing. Members of families will come home to find their loved ones gone. At first, the whole thing will be a mystery, until someone who has heard or read about the "Rapture of the Saints," realizing what has happened, will begin to explain the reason for the missing people. One of the surprises of that day will be that so many professing Christians will be left. And ministers will also be left, and will have to explain to those whom they have led into believing their lies. The next day the newspapers will be filled with what has happened, and many of them will be swelled to twice their ordinary size by the pressure of their advertising columns, for information as to missing loved ones, and for help to fill positions and vacancies of every sort.

For a few weeks the excitement will be intense. Then people will settle down to the inevitable. Some will repent, and turn to God, but the mass of people will soon become hardened, and wicked. Those who have lost loved ones will become bitter. The Church, The Body of Christ, will be gone. The salt of the earth will have been taken out. There will be nothing to prevent the rapid degeneration and moral putrefaction of those who are left. Sin and iniquity, and all manner of crime, and worldliness, will increase and pave the way for the Antichrist, who will already be in the world starting his wars upon the ten kingdoms.

Are you ready for this Rapture of the Saints?

FUTURE EVENTS

Book 10

Lesson 5: Questions

1. What time period takes place between the two events relating to the second coming?
2. What names are given to these events?
3. What takes place at the Rapture and at the Revelation?
4. What will take place between the Rapture and the Revelation on this earth?
5. What events take place at the Rapture, and who will go in the Rapture?

Lesson 6: The Revived Roman Empire

Book 10

By Dr. Albert Grimes

It is clearly indicated in scripture that towards the end of this age, that the Roman Empire will again be revived in the earth as it formerly was.

The Roman Empire at its greatest extent, 117 A.D., held all of England to the Scottish border, all of Europe from Spain to Holland, southeast through Germany, all of the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus Mountains north, and the southern border of Armenia, down to the Persian Gulf, halfway down the Red Sea, all of Egypt, and all across Northern Africa.

In 395 A.D. the Empire was divided into separate parts, the Eastern and Western Empire taking in the whole of the Mediterranean Sea. The European Common Market was possibly the beginning of this Empire, nations joining together for the reasons of trade.

The scriptures also point out that this Revived Roman Empire will come forth in the form of ten nations. These ten nations are referred to in about six sections of scripture. The first and foremost of these sections is to be found in Daniel 7:7-24. In this section of Scripture, these ten nations are directly spoken of. In order to fully understand the teaching, we must also study Daniel 2, where the whole history of the Times of the Gentiles is given to us.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

This period of history relates to the time when Israel is out of favour with God as a nation, and Gentile kingdoms are in rulership in the world.

This whole period of time is revealed to us in Daniel 2 in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Daniel 2:1 relates, "And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep break from him."

Daniel revealed to the king his dream in Daniel 2:31-33, "Thou, O King, sawest and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. 32 This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, 33 his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay."

After revealing this dream, Daniel also gave the interpretation of the dream in Daniel 2:28-42. "...38 Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth...40 And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. 41 And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of a potters' clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry-clay. 42 And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken."

If Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold (representing the kingdom of Babylon) and the other portions were to represent kingdoms to follow, (verses 39 and 40, "...another kingdom inferior...another third kingdom." "And the fourth kingdom...") then, according to history, the four succeeding kingdoms represented in the image were Babylon, Media Persia, Greece and Rome.

The Roman Empire is seen divided in the two Legs of iron. This was fulfilled in the dividing of the Empire into its Eastern and Western Divisions. This last and fourth empire has passed away.

From another vision given to Daniel himself we are made to understand that this fourth kingdom will be revived in the form of ten kingdoms corresponding to the ten toes of the image. This vision is given in another form in Daniel 7:3-8, "And four great beasts came up from the sea...4 The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. 5 And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it

raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. 6 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. 7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and break in pieces and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns..."

These beasts represent the four kingdoms of Daniel 2:31-33. The king saw these kingdoms in man's form, a deified man. But Daniel saw them in their true nature, as beasts devouring one another. As we look at the fourth beast, which represents the Roman Empire, we notice that it has ten horns. These horns represent the ten toes of the image of Daniel 2:31-33.

Just as pictured by the image, after these four kingdoms have passed away, the image in its last form will be a confederation of ten nations. So the fourth beast, after it has passed away, ten horns will come forth, and as we have already pointed out, these ten nations will come from the fourth kingdom of Rome that has already passed away.

In the light of the scriptures, we expect to see ten nations come together in the reign of the Old Roman Empire. It is the Roman Empire revived.

These ten nations cannot come to power until American influence in Europe comes to an end, and the Russians are destroyed in their invasions of the State of Israel in Ezekiel 38 and 39.

These same ten nations are spoken of in Revelation 17:12, "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast." And in verse 16, "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast...." It is a well established fact in the Word of God.

THE ANTICHRIST SHALL ARISE OUT OF ONE OF THESE TEN KINGDOMS

As these ten nations form in the last days to produce the Revived Roman Empire, from one of these kingdoms shall come the Antichrist, rising first as a dictator. In Daniel 7:8 it states, "I considered the horns, and behold there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots; and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things."

It is evident from this verse that a dictator is to arise from the ten kingdoms, and he is to make war with the ten kings, and in that war, three of these kingdoms will be utterly destroyed.

Is it possible for us to find out from the scriptures, from which nations will come this dictator? There is a suggestion that he might rise out of Assyria and that God will use him to come against Israel in the last days, as stated in Isaiah 10:5 and 24, "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation...24 Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, O my people that dwellest in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian; he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of Egypt."

Then also in Isaiah 14:25, "That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot; then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders." These scriptures may refer to this dictator that shall come out of the ten kingdoms.

His going forth to overcome these ten nations is pointed out and described in Revelation 5:22, "And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." As he goes forth to overcome these ten kings, peace is taken away from that part of the earth, as verse 4 states, "And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword."

With war there comes famine and death. These are described in verses 5-8. These are the conditions that will exist when the Antichrist makes his war upon the ten kingdoms.

This war will perhaps last about three and a half years, and towards the end of it, this dictator will be wounded and die, as recorded in Revelation 13:3,12,14 "...And one of his heads as it were wounded to death and his deadly wound was healed...12...whose deadly wound was healed. 14...that they should make an image to

the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.”

As the Lord was killed and rose from the dead, it would suggest from these scriptures that the Antichrist will also be slain in battle, but will be raised to life again, after which he will completely dominate the ten kingdoms.

THE LAST FORM OF THE TEN KINGDOM CONFEDERACY

After Antichrist overcomes the ten nations, his kingdom shall arise in another form. This is pointed out in Revelation 13:1-2, “And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne and great authority”.

As Satan, the dragon, is cast out of the heavens in Revelation 12:7-12, into the earth, he incarnates himself in the antichrist and gives him his power and authority.

The kingdom of the beast, the revived Roman Empire, in its last form will arise in the earth with the combined power of the former kingdoms of Babylon, represented by the lion, and Media Persia, represented by the bear, and the Grecian, represented by the leopard.

This Revived Roman Empire will reign in full power and will influence the whole world for a period of three and a half years as stated in Revelation 13:5, “And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given him to continue forty and two months.” Also in Revelation 13:7, “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.”

THE FINAL DESTRUCTION OF THE REVIVED ROMAN EMPIRE

After a reign over the reign of the Old Roman Empire, with an influence over the whole world for three and a half years, this Revived Roman Empire will finally come to an end as the dragon and the beast and the false prophets (who will be the rulers in this kingdom) will make one last desperate attempt to make war with Christ Himself.

In this war, this Revived Roman Empire will enlist the nations of the earth in their war against Christ. Revelation 16:13-14 reads, “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

As they gather this great army, the Lord will return in the Revelation and with His armies shall smite these nations. Revelation 19:19-21 relates: “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”

Thus the Revived Roman Empire which will rise up in its last form in a confederacy of ten kingdoms (which will be the last form of Gentile world power) will be destroyed by Christ, after which Christ will set up His Kingdom as stated in Daniel 2:44, “And in the days of these kings (the Revived Roman Empire in its ten kingdom form) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.”

The kingdom that Christ will set up upon the earth will last a thousand years as stated in Revelation 20:4 and 6, “...and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand year...6...and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

World Empires will then cease and Christ's Kingdom will reign after the thousand years forever.

FUTURE EVENTS

Book 10

Lesson 6: Questions

1. What great empire is again to be revived; and in what form will it come forth?
2. What two sections of scripture must be studied in order to understand this event?
3. What does the term “the times of the Gentiles” refer to?
4. In what scriptures is this whole period related to as a great image?
5. What nations relating to the times of the Gentiles did this image represent?
6. In what scripture does it speak of the Antichrist coming forth from these ten kingdoms?
7. Explain when this empire shall finally be destroyed.

Lesson 7: The Antichrist
Book Ten
2 Thessalonians 2:3-8, 1 John 4:1-8
By Dr. Albert Grimes

When we speak of the Antichrist we are speaking about a person whom Satan himself will set up in a kingdom in this earth (the Revived Roman Empire of Lesson 6).

It has been Satan's ambition to rule instead of God. In the beginning he tried to do this very thing as Isaiah 14:12-17 records. He failed and was cast out of heaven. Then in the temptation of Jesus he offered to him the kingdoms of this world if only Jesus would worship Him. Luke 4:5-7, "And the devil, taking Him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world, in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

Jesus refused Satan's offer and from that period on, Satan has himself been preparing the world for a man whom he will raise up, and he will give him all he promised Jesus. This is the Person called the Antichrist.

The word, "antichrist", means "against Christ". Everything that Christ came to do, everything He has done, everything He still intends to do, Antichrist will be against it. He will hate with Satanic hatred everything that has anything to do with God. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:4, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God..."

He will destroy every religion and every person that acknowledges any higher power than his. He will seek to establish his throne in the earth, and set himself up as God. 2 Thessalonians 2:4, "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." And he will demand that all worship him as such.

The Lord Himself spoke of the time in which this person would reign upon the earth in this sense in Matthew 24:21-22, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of time no nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Satan has all down through the ages raised up false prophets, and these prophets have had in them the spirit of Antichrist. They are seeking to prepare the world for his coming as stated in 1 John 4:1-3, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

A spirit that is against Christ is already in the world, denying everything that has anything to do with Christ. His work can be seen in two distinct ways. First, in a religious sense, mentioned in 1 Timothy 4:1-3, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the Latter times some shall depart from the faith..." In other words, there will be some who will instigate a revolt against the faith, the revealed body of truth, and depart from it. They will withdraw themselves from it, desert it.

After they have turned against the truth, "...giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils," and after they have given themselves over to these spirits, they will be 1 Timothy 4:2, "speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." They will teach and preach the lies of these spirits while still pretending to be ministers of God. They will have no standard of judgment between right and wrong, for they will have no conscience at all.

Amongst them there will come a moral degeneracy and two demon doctrines will become prominent, 1 Timothy 4:3, "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats..." This no doubt refers to the doctrines taught by the Church of Rome (that great apostate system that controlled the church for centuries) which Church will again, towards the end of the Church Age, be revived and form a World Church. This apostate church of the Laodiceans will be as the scripture describes it to be in Revelation 3:17, "Because thou

sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked..." Then in verse 16, "so then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

Christ has been put outside of this apostate church, Revelation 3:20. This departing from the faith has something to do with the revealing of the Antichrist as stated 2 Thessalonians 2:3, "let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

The term "falling away" refers to 1 Timothy 4:1 where we find the Greek word "apostasia", which means "a defection from the truth". So this departing from the faith, which we are now seeing in the denominational churches is preparing the religious world for the coming of the Antichrist.

It is out of this apostate church that the Antichrist will take his Bride. This is described in Revelation 17:3, "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns..." This woman, as the apostate church, sits upon the beast, the ruler over the ten kingdoms. She is the State Church of the Revived Roman Empire.

So we see the work of the Antichrist in the world today, first in the religious sense, and secondly, in another sense as described in 2 Timothy 3:1-5, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

These dangerous lawless conditions that shall begin to control the people of this world will also prepare the way for the coming of the Antichrist. These conditions are brought about by the Antichrist spirit working in the world, as stated in 1 Thessalonians 2:7, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work..." and in 1 John 4:3, "...and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

The religious world will become more and more dangerous and lawless. Then the restraining power of the Holy Spirit in the Church will be taken out of the world, and then this Antichrist will be revealed.

THE REVEALING OF THE ANTICHRIST

As an imitation of Christ, he will be revealed as Christ was. First, there is his birth into this world. It must be understood that this Antichrist is a dual person, human and Satanic, and so his birth will be in a sense a supernatural birth. This is suggested in scripture as John describes him in Revelation 17:8, "The beast that thou sawest WAS..." (John is trying to tell us that the beast, the Antichrist, had been on this earth before.) "...and IS NOT..." (and at the time of writing, was not on the earth) "...and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit..." (and he shall be revealed upon the earth as he comes out of the bottomless pit) "...and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was (upon the earth) and is not (now upon the earth) and yet is (and is yet to come upon the earth)."

This person then who has already been on the earth before, and who evidently is now in the bottomless pit, shall come forth and be revealed upon the earth as the Antichrist. Who could this person be? Who has already been upon the earth? It is possible that the person referred to is Judas, the disciple of the Lord.

It is to be noticed that the Antichrist is called by two names in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." He is then called, a "man of sin" and "the son of perdition." Judas is also a "son of perdition" in John 17:12, "...and none of them is lost but the son of perdition." By all the laws of English grammar or of the Greek, the use of the definite article here points to one "son of perdition."

Judas is also spoken of as going to "his own place" in Acts 1:25, "...Judas by transgression fell that he might go to his own place." The Greek word translated "own" is "idios", referring to one's own private unique possession. Since Judas went to his own place, which is doubtless the bottomless pit, Judas will be the future

Antichrist who is to come from the bottomless pit, as described in Revelation 11:7, "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them..."

In order for this to take place, his birth will have to be an unnatural birth, and this could be accomplished, for as we study scripture, we find the possibility, for fallen angels such as the devil is, have already cohabited with humans and produced offspring. This is pointed out in Genesis 6:1-4, 2 Peter 2:4-5, and Jude 6 and 7.

There will possibly be some outstanding kind of birth take place in the region of the Revived Roman Empire and the child of this birth will be hailed as some outstanding personage, so there will be such a happening when he, the Antichrist, is born.

He will grow up to become a religious dictator, but his full revealing as the Antichrist will not come until the Church will be taken out of the world, as stated in 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

The Antichrist will be revealed in two different ways. At the beginning of the seven years, or the seventieth week of Daniel's seventy weeks, he will be revealed as a dictator warring against the ten kings. But in the middle of the seven years, he will be revealed as he is, the Antichrist. This second revealing will come after he has been assassinated and raised from the dead, as pointed out in Revelation 13:3,12, and 14, "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 12...to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed... 14...that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword and did live."

In this full revelation, the Antichrist will be incarnate, or indwelt, by Satan himself, as Satan did when he entered into Judas when he betrayed Christ, Luke 22:3, "Then entered Satan into Judas...", and Revelation 13:2, 4, "...and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority", "...the dragon, which gave power unto the beast..." Thus he will be empowered by Satan himself to reign as king over the earth for three and a half years, as stated in Revelation 13:5, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months (or three and a half years)." He will be Satan's counterfeit setting up a false kingdom on the earth.

HE WILL REIGN DURING THE LAST WEEK (OR SEVEN YEARS) OF DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS

These seventy weeks of seven years, for one week, were determined upon Israel after their seventy years of captivity was over. Sixty-nine of these weeks are already fulfilled at the scattering of Israel in 70 A.D. when God left off dealing with Israel as a nation, after which, the Church Age came in. After the Church is taken out of this world, God will again deal with Israel, and the last week, or seven years, will begin.

The Antichrist will enter into the prophetic picture in the beginning of the week, or seven years, which is described in detail in Revelation, chapters 6 through 19. This seven year period of Revelation will be divided into two periods of three and a half years each.

In the first period, Antichrist will ride forth to overcome the ten nations which are to comprise the Revived Roman Empire. This going forth to overcome these kings is spoken of in Revelation 6:1-2, "And I saw when the lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. 2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bowl and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

After he has overcome these ten kingdoms, he will become the Emperor of the Revived Roman Empire. This Empire is the completion of Daniel's image in Daniel 2:33-44. The king, Nebuchadnezzar, saw it as a deified man in his dream, Daniel 2:31-33, but later, Daniel himself saw it as it really was, as beasts devouring one another, Daniel 7:2-8.

The fourth beast in Daniel's vision is the Revived Roman Empire, Daniel 7:7-8, "After this I saw in the night-visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and break in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the

beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. 8 I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn, there were eyes, like the eyes of a man speaking great things."

This little horn that comes up from the ten, which has eyes and a mouth, is the Antichrist, who destroys three horns completely and overcomes the ten. These are the Revived Roman Empire, made up of a federation of ten kings under the beast. Thus, the Antichrist overcomes these kings and rules over them.

He will then present himself, not so much as a Messiah, but as the world's saviour, giving them the full enjoyment of a present material world instead of some distant heaven or future eternal life, presenting himself to the world as the true center of its hopes.

HOW HE COMES TO HIS THRONE

As we have already stated, the power of the United States will wane in Europe, and the Russians will be destroyed as a power in the world in their attack upon the State of Israel, Ezekiel 38 and 39.

The Antichrist will then rise up and become the Emperor of the Revived Roman Empire, and he will provide a Roman peace by force of arms. The conditions in those days are described in Revelation 6:1-8. These scriptures point out that in his wars upon the ten kingdoms, peace in the world is taken away and war, famine, and death come. After this, these kings shall give their power to the beast, as we read in Revelation 17:13, "These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast."

As Emperor of the Revived Roman Empire, his rule will be felt worldwide, and he shall rule for three and a half years. In this first three and a half years he will grant religious toleration, and even make a covenant with the nation of Israel, as stated in Daniel 9:27, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week."

Not only will this first three and a half years be a time of religious tolerance, but the Antichrist himself will accept the apostate church as the State Church of his Roman Empire. Then the apostate church will help him in his rulership in his kingdom. Revelation 17:3 and 7 states, "And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns...7...I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns."

This woman is Rome, the mother of harlots, as Revelation 17:5 records, "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Rome will be the head of all apostate religions that have departed from the faith as stated in 1 Timothy 4:1. She shall be the State Church of the Revived Roman Empire for three and a half years.

The capital city of this empire and of this State Church will be Rome, as stated in Revelation 17:29, "And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." This refers to the city of Rome which is built upon seven hills.

Regardless of this religious tolerance towards Israel, there will be saints who will be killed by this apostate church. We read in Revelation 6:9, "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held."

It must also be understood that the 144,000 of Israel will have a special ministry of preaching the coming kingdom, witnessing throughout the entire world. In Revelation 7:4 we read, "And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."

A great number of people will be saved through their witness, as stated in Revelation 7:9 and 14, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. 14...and he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb." All this shall take place in the earth during the reign of the Antichrist in the first three and a half years.

THE SECOND HALF OF THE WEEK

The middle of the seven years is mentioned in scripture in Daniel 9:27, "...and in the midst of the week...".

What makes the difference in the reign of the Antichrist, who during the first part of the seven years has hidden his real identity?

It must be understood that in the first half of the week, Antichrist is rising to power and using the great apostate church to help him, but in the midst of the week, Satan himself is cast out of the heavens into the earth, Revelation 12:7-9, "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

After Satan is cast out of the heavens into the earth, he then gives his power and authority unto the Antichrist, as stated in Revelation 13:2 and 4, "And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority... 4...and they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast..."

The character of the Antichrist changes from this time on. He will have a mouth speaking great things. This change is described to us in Daniel 7:8, "...and a mouth speaking great things." He will make war against the saints, as Daniel 7:21 relates, "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them."

His power is further described in Daniel 8:24,25, "And his power shall be mighty but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. 25 And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many..."

It is evident that he will be an apostate Jew, but he will disregard God absolutely and honour other gods, referring to Satan. We read this in Daniel 11:37,38, "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all..."

His first possible act will be to break the covenant with Israel, and begin his persecution against them. This is suggested in Daniel 9:27, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease..." After he has caused the temple worship to cease, he will set himself up in the same temple, declaring himself to be God. We read in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

Thus in the middle of the week, he will declare himself for what he is, the Antichrist.

THE BEGINNING OF THE GREAT TRIBULATION

After Antichrist has declared himself, the kingdom over which he rules will arise in the earth in another, the greatest empire that has ever been upon the earth. This is described in Revelation 13:1-4, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. 2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority..."

Going back to Daniel 7, we find these same beasts as in Revelation 13:1-4. The leopard representing the empire of Greece, the bear representing Media-Persia, and the lion representing the Babylonian Empire. So this last form of the Revived Roman Empire, ruled over by the Antichrist, will rise with the combined power of all three of these kingdoms. It will be the greatest kingdom to have ever ruled in this earth.

As soon as this kingdom comes into power and Antichrist sets himself up as God in the temple, under his instructions, the beast (or the Revived Roman Empire) will cause the ten kingdoms under his rule to destroy every form of religion in his kingdom. It will be a war against religion, Revelation 13:1-4.

They will then turn upon the apostate church and absolutely destroy her as Revelation 17:16 relates, "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

This destruction of the apostate church was predicted by the Lord Himself as He spoke in the messages to the churches regarding Rome in Revelation 2:21-22, "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation except they repent of their deeds."

This is relating to all these other religions or denominations that join themselves with Rome in the one World Church. They are committing adultery with her and with her they will be destroyed in the tribulation period.

This war against all religions will even bring about the martyrdom of the 144,000 sealed ones of Israel who have witnessed during the first part of the seven years period.

God will protect Israel from the Antichrist and take them into the wilderness, as stated in Revelation 12:6 and 14, "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days...14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

When the Antichrist finds it impossible to further persecute Israel, he will turn his wrath upon the 144,000 as stated in Revelation 12:17, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

The 144,000 are seen resurrected before the throne after they have been slain by the Antichrist, Revelation 14:1,3, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads...3 And they sang as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."

This destruction of all religions will even cause those who were brought to know the Lord by the 144,000 to be slain also. We read in Revelation 7:9, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands." Then in verse 14, "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." These are seen in heaven before the throne.

Antichrist will then deify himself as all Roman emperors have done and he will rule in the earth with absolute power and no one will be able to make war with him. Revelation 13:4 relates, "And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"

He will reign with absolute power in the region of the Old Roman Empire for a period of three and a half years, as stated in Revelation 13:5, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great, things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months (or three and a half years)."

THE FALSE PROPHET

It is to be understood that there are three personages in the Satanic trinity, which is an imitation of the Godhead.

We find this Satanic trinity spoken of in Revelation 16:13, I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the False prophet."

After the Antichrist has established himself as world ruler, another beast comes forth, which is known in scripture as the false prophet. This false prophet is an imitation of the Holy Spirit. He brings forth signs and wonders and glorifies the Antichrist and causes all to worship him. He will bring persecution and death upon all who will not worship the Antichrist as God.

In order to carry out his purposes, he will cause all to receive the mark of the beast in their right hand or in their foreheads, in order that they may be able to buy or sell. This is explained in much detail in Revelation 13:11-18, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and

them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13 And he doeth great wonders so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on earth in the sight of men, 14 and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. 16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17 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. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."

After understanding just what is to take place during this period of time while the Antichrist rules, the words of Jesus can be understood more plainly. Matthew 24:22, "And except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved."

Yet, in the midst of this Great Tribulation, when the whole world will be influenced by this Antichrist, God will not be without witnesses in the earth. God will raise up two prophetic witnesses and they will witness in the city of Jerusalem, as stated in Revelation 11:3,5, "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth...5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed."

They will have this power given to them for a period of three and a half years, and none will be able to destroy them during this time. This will be the last witness on the earth before Christ's coming in the Revelation.

Elijah could be one of these witnesses, as stated in Malachi 4:5, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." It is possible that these two witnesses are Moses and Elias, as these two have appeared together in ministry before, as in Matthew 17:3, "And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with them." This took place on the mount of transfiguration.

The power of these two prophets is further described in Revelation 11:6, "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will."

With such power it is easy to understand how much trouble they could bring upon the empire of the Antichrist, and how many attempts must have been made to rid the earth of these witnesses, but no one can harm them until their time comes. This is stated in Revelation 11:7, "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them."

The people of the world who are worshipping the beast and have received his mark, shall hate these two witnesses so much that when they are finally able to kill them, they will not allow their bodies to be buried, and they will rejoice over their death. This is recorded in Revelation 11:8-12, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. 9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. 10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11 And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. 12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."

THOSE WHO RECEIVE THE MARK OF THE BEAST

The scripture points out that many will not receive the mark of the beast, and as it has already been stated,

they die. Revelation 13:15, "...and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

The method of death is also brought out in scripture in Revelation 20:4, "...and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands."

Thus the whole earth will be made to suffer under the rule of the Antichrist, the false prophet, and the dragon. This rule will continue for three and a half years, and when the three and a half years are coming to a close, the Antichrist, realizing that Christ is to come again to set up His kingdom on the earth, will gather an army from all over the world to prevent Christ's kingdom from being set up. We read this in Revelation 16:13, 14, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. 14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

These armies are gathered together in a place called Armageddon as recorded in Revelation 16:16, "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

As these armies come from all over the world and gather together under the Antichrist, the false prophet, and the dragon, Christ will then descend from heaven with the armies of heaven to set up His kingdom. Revelation 19:11,14 records, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war...14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean."

The outcome of such a battle is seen in the fact that the Antichrist and his armies are overcome and the beast and false prophet are cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 19:19, 20, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a Lake of fire burning with brimstone."

This will bring an end to one of the most diabolical persons that has ever been upon this earth, Satan's "counterfeit Christ", who tried to set up a "counterfeit kingdom" that brought the world under the worst conditions it has ever seen.

May God help us to make people understand what is coming upon the earth.

FUTURE EVENTS

Book 10

Lesson 7: Questions

1. Who is this Antichrist?
2. What is Satan's purpose in raising up this Antichrist?
3. What will this Antichrist do against every other religion?
4. What did Jesus say about the period of time that this Antichrist would reign in Matthew 24:21,22?
5. What is the spirit of Antichrist doing in our day?
6. What will the spirit of Antichrist finally produce that will become the Bride of the Antichrist?
7. What will be the conditions in this world as the spirit of Antichrist takes more control?
8. What kind of person is this Antichrist, where will he come from, who could he really be?
9. Is a supernatural birth possible in regard to this Antichrist?
10. From a child, what will he grow up to become?
11. When the Antichrist is resurrected after his death, who will incarnate himself in him?
12. In the first part of his reign what will the Antichrist ride forth to accomplish?
13. What will he become after he has overcome the ten kingdoms?
14. Who will rule with him during the first three and a half years of his reign?
15. During this same period, will the Apostate church slay true believers? Give scripture.
16. What will be the work of the 144,000 Jews during that same period?
17. Explain what will take place during the second half of the seven years.
18. Explain what will happen to all religious groups during this same period.
19. Explain the power of the False Prophet. Who is he?
20. Who will prophecy during this same period?
21. What will happen to all who refuse the mark of the beast?
22. What will Christ finally do to this false Christ?

