

The Book of Revelation

“I Make All Things New”

Lesson #13 for March 30, 2019

Scriptures: Revelation 19:6-9,11-16; 20:1-6; 21:2-8; John 14:1-3; Jeremiah 4:23-26.

1. We have now come to the end of our study of the book of Revelation—and the end of the Bible. We will see that there are interesting relationships between the end of Revelation and the beginning of Genesis. We will also see that there are interesting parallels between Revelation 1 and Revelation 21&22.
2. In Revelation 17&18, we discussed *Babylon* and what it means. Now, we will see what happens to Babylon. As Babylon is destroyed, it is terrible news for those who have cooperated with her; however, it means deliverance and salvation for God’s faithful people. (See Revelation 19:1-7.) Babylon is now identified as the “prostitute” or “harlot.”
3. In these final chapters in Revelation, we will see not only God rescuing and taking to heaven His faithful people, but also the final destruction of sin and sinners including Satan’s evil trinity.
4. Read John 14:1-3 and Revelation 19:6-9. In these two passages, we see, first of all, the promise of Jesus that He is preparing places for us and, then, the final fulfillment of that promise in Revelation.
5. Read Matthew 22:1-14. Two thousand years ago, Christ came to this earth, leaving His heavenly home. Near the end of His life on this earth, He talked about a wedding supper. Who are/were the guests who refused to come? At that supper, the king provided the wedding garments for all who attended. But, one man tried to attend wearing his own garments. When the king saw him, he threw him out. Thus is represented the pre-advent judgment which takes place “before the marriage.” (*Great Controversy* 426-428)
6. Revelation 19:8 states that God’s people will be wearing the fine, clean linen given to them by Christ. Revelation 3:18 implies that Laodiceans are to buy those gifts from Him. We must be willing to give up our self-sufficiency, our trust in ourselves, and our determination to go our own way; we must be willing to exchange it for obedience to Christ and trust in Him as our only hope of salvation. So, how is Christ’s righteousness to be acquired? How do we “buy” it? What difference does it make in our lives when we have it? Will others be able to see it in our lives? What is implied by John 13:34-35 and Colossians 2:20?
7. At the end of the plagues described in Revelation 16, it describes a battle called ***Armageddon***. **That will be Satan’s final attempt to try to rule as king and god of this world.** Read Revelation 19:11-16. Jesus will ride forth with His army and defeat the Devil using a “sword” described as the Word of God; this is a description of His second coming.
8. The New Testament talks a great deal about the second coming of Jesus. But, in almost all cases, very few details are given.

Not now a “Man of Sorrows,” to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. “Faithful and True,” “in righteousness He doth judge and make war.” And “the armies which were in heaven” (Revelation 19:11, 14) follow Him. With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. **The firmament seems filled with radiant forms—“ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” No human pen can**

portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendor.—Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy** 640.3-641.0.

And, furthermore, **Satan is not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ's advent.** The Saviour has warned His people against deception upon this point, and has clearly foretold the manner of His second coming.—*Ibid.** 625.2. [Bold type is added.]

9. Many people have discussed how we can know whether or not it is the real Christ who has come. When Satan appears as Christ or, perhaps, even some of his surrogates trying to claim to be Christ before Satan comes, how will we know they are not the true Christ? **When the real Jesus comes, the entire sky will be full of bright, shining angels. Satan will never be allowed to duplicate the manner of Christ's coming.**
10. Read Revelation 19:9,17-18. In these verses it should be very clear which feast you would like to be a part of. At one feast, people eat; at the other, people are eaten!
11. Read Revelation 20:1-3a about the millennium.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key of the abyss and a heavy chain. ²He **seized** the dragon, **that ancient serpent**—that is, the Devil, or Satan—and **chained** him up for a thousand years. ³The angel **threw** him into the abyss, **locked** it, and **sealed** it, so that he could not deceive the nations any more until the thousand years were over.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Revelation 20:1–3a). New York: American Bible Society. [Bold type is added.]
12. Notice several very important points in this passage. What was John talking about when he mentioned “that ancient serpent”? Isn't that clearly referring to Genesis 3? And what is the bottomless pit—or *abussos* in Greek—the condition of this world before creation?
13. Read Isaiah 14:13-15. This passage tells us that Lucifer, pictured in this passage as the King of Babylon, will end up “falling into” *abussos*, the world of the dead.
14. And why is it that after the second coming of Jesus, the Devil will not be able to deceive the nations? Clearly, it is because they are all dead.
15. Very few of our Christian friends understand the millennium as we do. There are three basic views about the millennium: (1) *Premillennialism*: The second coming of Jesus is before the 1,000 years; (2) *Postmillennialism*: The second coming of Jesus is after the 1,000 years; and (3) *Amillennialism*: The 1,000 years are simply a metaphor for the entire Christian age; there are no literal 1,000 years. The third view requires that the first resurrection discussed in Revelation 20:4-5 at the beginning of the millennium be a “spiritual” one, that is, a new creation that comes with accepting the gospel. (John 5:22-25; 2 Corinthians 5:17)
16. Read Revelation 20:4-5; **John 5:28-29**; and 2 Corinthians 5:17. These verses do not portray a time when Jesus will come down to this earth and rule for a thousand years as everyone on earth becomes righteous. John 14:1-3 tells us that Jesus Himself promised that He will take us back with Himself to a place He has prepared for us in heaven. Even the words in Greek used for *death* and *resurrection* are talking about physical death and resurrection. See John 11:25; Romans 14:9; and Revelation 2:8.
17. So, what will the righteous be doing during the millennium? See Revelation 20:4-6. Once again, our understanding of the great controversy should make it clear why it is necessary for God's faithful people to judge during the thousand years. God's righteous friends will have that opportunity to go over all the records and determine that God's judgment has been completely fair, transparent, and righteous, and that there are reasons why those who are lost have been lost and those who are saved have been saved. It will be clear that God has always been right; He has always told the truth. Satan, by contrast, is the father of lies. (John

8:44)

18. And how do we explain Revelation 20:3b? “After that he [Satan] **must** be set loose for a little while.” [Content in brackets, bold type, and italic type are added.] Why is that little word **must** there? In Revelation 1, we learn about things which **must** take place—using the same Greek word. In Revelation 4:1, we are told, “I will show you what **must** take place.” [Bold type and italic type are added.] This word talks about something which is absolutely necessary. But, for those who do not understand the great controversy over God’s character and government and take into consideration the charges Satan has made, it makes no sense at all.
19. With our contemporary notions of justice and jurisprudence, does it make any sense to let the worst criminal in the universe’s history out after he has been imprisoned for quite a while? What should be done with such a chief villain? He should be executed or serve “life without parole.” Or, has somebody “paid his bail”? Do you think such a villain should be allowed bail? Shouldn’t such a villain be locked up without bail?
20. Look at what some experts have said about this passage.
21. Austin Farrer stated: “But why is Satan merely bound and why is he ever to be loosed again?”—A. Farrar, *Revelation** 202.
22. Another Revelation scholar said: “Why, once Satan had been securely sealed in the abyss, must he be let loose to wreak further havoc? And what claim does he have on God, that God is bound to give the Devil his due?”—G. B. Caird, *The Revelation of Saint John** 249.
23. J. P. M. Swete from the United Kingdom asked: “But why, theologically, must he be *loosed to deceive the nations*? Why did he have to come down to the earth with great wrath? [Revelation 12:12] Why could he not be liquidated from the beginning?”—J. P. M. Swete, *Revelation*.* [Italic type and content in brackets are added.]
24. This is especially true since action (“imprisoning” Satan) will have been taken. If God can do it at that time, why not sooner?
25. Resseguie from the United States wrote: “Why not simply destroy Satan at the beginning of the thousand-year period? Why is it important that Satan is *not* destroyed during the millennial period?”—Resseguie, *Revelation Unsealed** 25. [Italic type is added.]
26. “Once Satan is bound and the earth enjoys a millennium of un-demonized celebration, why ‘must’ he be released again?”—M. Eugene Boring, *Revelation** 208.
27. Charles H. Talbot summarized things very succinctly. “What is the point?”—Charles H. Talbot, *The Apocalypse** 95.
28. R. H. Charles in his commentary on the book of Revelation, found that the text beginning with Revelation 20:3b was so confusing to him that the only explanation that he could come up with was:

John died either as a martyr or by a natural death, when he had completed Revelation i-xx:3 of his work, and ... the materials for its completion, which were for the most part ready in a series of independent documents, were put together by a faithful but unintelligent disciple in the order which he thought right.—R. H. Charles, *Revelation*,* vol. 2, 147. [Italic type is in the source.]
29. Dr. Charles is recognized as one of the greatest Revelation scholars who ever lived. His commentary on the book of Revelation is one of the most important commentaries ever written. It has survived and has been used extensively for more than 100 years. What was R. H. Charles trying to say? Is there something wrong with the text in Revelation? It just does not seem to make sense without a view of the great controversy.
30. A German author wrote: “Something is wrong with the *author!* After the capture of ‘the beast’ the seer has lost interest in the story.”—Ernst Lohmeyer, *Offenbarung** 116.
31. Another approach by William Barclay says something is wrong with the source. “Here is our key. The origin of this doctrine is not specifically Christian but is to be found in certain Jewish

beliefs about the Messianic age which were common in the time after 100 B.C.”—William Barclay, *Revelation*,* vol. 2, 186-187.

32. Caird again suggested something is wrong with the script: “John found this event prophesied in Ezekiel xxxviii-xxxix, and prophecies must have their fulfillment.”—G. B. Caird, *Revelation** 256.
33. Are these the best explanations we can give for this passage of Scripture?
34. There was a clear question raised back in Genesis, “Has God said...?” (Genesis 3:1) Has that question been fully answered? (See Romans 3:1-4.) What claims has Satan made against God’s character and government?
35. As Seventh-day Adventists who understand something about the great controversy over God’s character and government and the charges Satan has made, we recognize that Satan will be “chained” by circumstances beyond his control. He will be confined to this world because he will not be welcome anywhere else in the universe. All the people that he has tempted and led into destruction will be dead. He will have the 1000 years of the millennium to think about the results of his actions.
36. Is it clear to those of us who believe in the great controversy why Satan must be released? Every being who has ever lived—not only the righteous but also the wicked including Satan—must finally see that everything that God has done was/is right, fair, and transparent. That will become clear when the panorama is shown at the third coming. (GC 666.2-3) Then, even Satan will be down on his knees, admitting that what God did was right. (Romans 14:11; Philippians 2:10-11) What will it take to get Satan to bow down?
37. Will God at the end of the millennium finally exercise His “justice” by killing His enemies? What does *justice* mean in that setting? **If God lashes out at His enemies, is that justice? If God exercises His justice at that time by taking forcible action against His enemies, why didn’t He do it sooner? Why didn’t God just destroy Lucifer when he first rebelled in heaven at the beginning of the great controversy? Surely, anyone who has thought through these issues carefully must have questions.**
38. God cannot bring the whole great controversy to an end until everyone’s mind is satisfied that God has done everything possible to save as many as possible.
39. So, what will the home of the righteous be like? For the 1000 years of the millennium, the righteous will be taken to God’s home in heaven. But, at the end of those thousand years, God says He will give us a new heaven and a new earth.
40. What will we do for the rest of eternity? Will things become boring? Not at all! We will be eternally busy with activities of a heavenly nature. We will be serving as kings, priests, and students. We will rule over the universe. (Revelation 3:21; 7:50-17) We will serve as priests. (Revelation 5:9-13; 14:3) And more than that, there will be constantly new and exciting things to study and to learn about.
41. The Bible talks about three heavens: (1) The sky, (2) the starry universe, and (3) the place where God dwells. (See 2 Corinthians 12:2.) Certainly, in Revelation 21:1, the earth’s atmosphere is what John was talking about. Read 2 Peter 3:10-13. What does it mean to say: “The heavenly bodies will burn up and be destroyed, and the earth with everything in it will vanish”? (Compare Revelation 20:11; 20:1.) The first thing John mentioned was *the* sea—with the definite article, *the*—which means he was talking about the sea which had already been discussed. Surely, John was hoping for a day when the Adriatic Sea that separated him on the lonely Isle of Patmos from his friends in Ephesus and the other churches will no longer be there.
42. We have very few descriptions of the new earth. Isaiah 11; 35; and 65-66 give us a few clues. But, these last two chapters of Revelation are the clearest and most comprehensive description of the new earth available in the Bible.

43. Read Revelation 21:1-8. The most important words in this passage are: “Now God’s home is with human beings! He will live with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them and he will be their God.”—*Good News Bible*.*
44. God’s presence with us will guarantee that there will be no problems in the future. Sin will be eradicated along with fatigue, disease, death, sorrow, crying, and pain.
45. While it is fascinating to think about our future home, we must ever keep in mind 1 Corinthians 2:9: “What no one ever saw or heard, what no one ever thought could happen, is the very thing God prepared for those who love him.”—*Good News Bible*.*
46. Read Revelation 21:9-21. There are a number of puzzling and challenging ideas presented in this passage. Could the New Jerusalem be actually cubic in shape? Will it really be as high as it is wide and long? And why would the New Jerusalem need a wall? If everyone can fly, what is the point of a wall? Will there be any gravity in the new earth? Or, will gravity not affect us? If the New Jerusalem is actually a cube, where would you like to dwell in that cube? It is interesting to notice that there are only two perfect cubes described in the Bible: 1) The most holy place in the sanctuary, and 2) The New Jerusalem. Is this trying to tell us something?
47. Read Revelation 21:21-22:5. In the city there is a tree of life, there is a river of life; however, there is no temple. God Himself serves as its Temple. However, Ellen White described the temple as being outside the city. (*A Word to the Little Flock* 17.1) And nearly everything will be transparent.
48. Isaiah 66:23 implies that we will go to the New Jerusalem once a month to celebrate. Is that because the tree of life is about to yield a new fruit? We will also, of course, go weekly to celebrate the Sabbath.
49. Why is it that there are no statements in the Old Testament or the New Testament about a third coming until the very end of John’s life at a time when John was the only disciple left alive? Paul did not know; Luke did not know; Matthew did not know; Peter did not know. Why is that? Are there any hints in these other writings about a millennium and a third coming? See 1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Isaiah 26:19-21; and especially John 5:28-29. These passages make it clear that everyone who has died will be raised to life. Some will be raised at the third coming just to die again after realizing the truth about the great controversy; others will be raised at the second coming to live forever. Of which group do you want to be a part?
50. Will God transform our heavens and our earth? Or, will He make a brand-new one? Arguments can be presented in Scripture for both sides. For example, see Revelation 20:11; 21:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17; and Mark 2:21. Different words are used to describe *new* in Greek. Some words mean completely new; others simply mean new in time or nature.
51. It is interesting to note that Satan has always lost in direct conflicts with Jesus Christ. He lost in heaven, being cast out; (Revelation 12:7-10) he was defeated in the wilderness; (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13) he was defeated at the cross; and he will be defeated when Christ comes again. And, finally, he will be destroyed when Christ comes the third time.
52. Read Revelation 6:10. We have talked about this passage in the past. This is the cry symbolically coming from the blood of those martyrs through the generations who have died faithful to God’s cause. Like the cry of the blood of Abel in Genesis 4:10, the blood of all these saints is crying for God to *judge* and *avenge* their deaths. (Compare Psalm 79:5; Habakkuk 21:2; and Daniel 12:6-7.)

“With the destruction of Babylon, the prayer of God’s people in the scene of the fifth seal is ultimately answered.” How so? Revelation 19:1, 2 makes a strong allusion to Revelation 6:10. In that verse, the souls under the altar cry out to God: “How long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood . . . ?” (*Rev. 6:10, NRSV*). What the Greek literally says is: “How long . . . not judging

[Greek: *krineis*] and not avenging [Greek: *ekdikeis*]?" The verb "is" or "will be" is understood in the original and can be appropriately inserted into a translation. From the perspective of the metaphorical souls under the altar, there is no evidence that God is judging or avenging their cases.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 172. [Italic type and content in brackets are in the source.]

Revelation 19:1-2: ¹ After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God;

² BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged [*krineis*] the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED [*ekdikeis*] THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER."—*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*.* (1995). (Revelation 19:1–2). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation. [Content in brackets is added; words in all capital letters are in the source.]

53. Notice that the same two words for *judging* and *avenging* which were used in Revelation 6:10 are also used in Revelation 19:1-2. Thus, the prayers of the martyrs will finally be answered.
54. Do all of these thoughts make you wish for the coming of Jesus? Do you look forward to living in the city of God? What are we supposed to be doing while we wait? This is not a time to wait in idleness! We have been given the three angels' messages to tell to the world! Are we doing that? Can we clearly describe the three angels' messages in ways that make God look good and at the same time attractive to those we are trying to win to God's side?
55. The final message of John to us in Revelation 22:17 is to turn to the world and say, "Come." That is, "Come out of Babylon." Are we doing that?
56. Do we understand clearly why the millennium is necessary followed by a third coming? The millennium will be a time for the righteous to review the "records" of everything that God has done and conclude correctly that God is perfectly transparent in His actions and always fair to everyone, open, trustworthy, and righteous.
57. Do we clearly understand the nature of the great controversy? Do we realize that the great controversy has happened because of the accusations and questions that Satan has raised about God, starting in heaven next to God's throne and continuing on this earth as recorded in Genesis 3:1? The great controversy is about God; it is not about us. Of course, it has and will impact us; but, the great controversy is about who we believe and trust: God or the Devil.
58. God cannot bring all things to a conclusion until all the questions in the great controversy have been dealt with. God could have instantly eliminated all of His enemies at any time in the past if He had chosen to do so. However, God does not work in that way. His government is completely transparent; He will be completely fair to everyone.
59. If we are going to be among those who will be saying, "Even so come, Lord Jesus," (Revelation 22:20) our lives must represent the fact that we are doing everything we can to warn people to get out of Babylon. (Revelation 14:8; 18:4-5)
60. So, what have you learned from this study of the book of Revelation? Are you convinced that God can be trusted? Or, are you worried that God is going to zap His enemies?

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Last Modified: January 11, 2019

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