

gives a brief authoritative account of the Jewish marriage customs in the first century. This information will provide better understanding of the imagery of Bridegroom and Bride in this verse. Jewish wedding customs contained the following elements; (1) *the betrothal* was of much graver significance than engagements in our culture; (2) *the interval* is the specified period of time between the betrothal and the wedding feast. Sometime during this time the bridegroom pays a dowry to the girl's father; (3) *the procession* at the conclusion of the interval. Both parties dress in their finest and prepare themselves for the wedding feast. This *feast* was the fourth major element in Jewish marriage custom.

Wm Hendriksen has an excellent summation in his *More Than Conquerors*, *op cit.*, pp. 216-217) of the marriage imagery.

God announced the great wedding feast in the O.T. The betrothal took place when God sent Jesus Christ to be heaven's missionary to sinful man. The dowry was paid by the atoning work of our Lord! Are we slighting God's invitation?

John uses the metaphor of a woman three times in *The Revelation* - the mother in chp. 12; the harlot in chps. 17 to 19; and the Bride of Christ from this verse to the end of the Book of Revelation.

Verse 8

The wife or the bride of Christ is His Church. She has been given bright, clean, fine linen in order that (*hina* - purpose clause - for the purpose that she be clothed) she might be clothed; for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints." The imagery of a guiltless, guileless bride makes crystal clear that God's wife is pure and undefiled.

SECTION 62

Text 19:9-10

9 And he saith unto me, Write. Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are true words of God. 10 And I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Initial Questions 19:9-10

1. Why are those bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb blessed - vs. 1?
2. What does the refusal by the heavenly messenger to accept John's worship imply - vs. 10? Does John ever describe a situation in *The Revelation* when Jesus is worshipped and He accepts that worship?
3. Does the messenger claim any special status in the kingdom - vs. 10?

Verse 9

John is commanded - "Write thou; blessed (*are* - not in text) the ones having been called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." The source of this truth is God Himself. The implication of this verse is that if one is not invited to the marriage supper, or if invited and he refuses to attend, then he will not be blessed. Our Lord uttered a parable (Matt. 22:1-14) in which He used this imagery. Jesus said that "the kingdom of heaven is like unto". . . then saith he to his servants, the wedding is ready, but they that were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore unto the partings of the highways and as many as ye shall find, bid them to the marriage feast." God will not overlook the slighted invitation on the great day of His wrath. The Bride of Christ can never be destroyed but she has often been purified. Christ said - "I will build my Church and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

Verse 10

John was emotionally overcome by the tremendous revelation which he had received from the heavenly messenger. He says, "And I fell down before his feet to worship him." The object worshipped here was an angel. The Jehovah Witnesses persist in their heretical assertions that our Lord is a creature of God. What was the response of this messenger? Immediately he told John; "See thou do it not; I am your fellow-slave and of your brothers having the witness of Jesus; worship God." There is never a command given by any messenger of God in either the O.T. or N.T. to worship anyone other than the living God. In fact, it was categorized as idolatry if anyone worshipped anything, or anyone other than the God of the Prophets and Apostles. Yet our Lord repeatedly accepted worship from men! Angel worship flourished in Asia Minor at this time. The Colossian and Hebrew Epistles specifically condemn this prac-

tice. The last sentence in vs. 10 is a very difficult one. "For the witness of Jesus (There is no way to determine whether or not this is an objective or subjective genitive. This means there is no way to absolutely determine whether John is speaking of the witness given *by* Christ Himself or whether the witness is *about* Christ.) is the spirit of prophecy." I Peter 1:11 provides us with a very good (possible) commentary. "Searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the suffering of Christ, and the glories that should follow them."

SECTION 63

Text 19:11-16

11 And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his head are many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. 13 And he is arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and pure. 15 And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fireceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. 16 And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Initial Questions 19:11-16

1. What do the names of the rider of the white horse (Faithful and True) signify about His character - vs. 11?
2. Discuss the imagery of righteous judgment and war in vs. 11.
3. What is a diadem - vs. 12?
4. Where, besides vs. 13, is the name word of God or just Word (in reference to Christ) found?
5. Who makes up the army following the rider upon the white horse - vs. 14?
6. Where else do we find the descriptive phrases "clothed in fine linen, white and pure" - vs. 14? To whom do these descriptions refer?

7. Where else do we read of a "sharp sword" in the N.T. - vs. 15? What is the function of this "sharp sword"?
8. Who is this victor leading the victorious according to vs. 16?

Verse 11

Beginning in this verse and continuing to the final shout - "Come Lord Jesus," John is led by the spirit to speak to the triumph of Christ. We have passed through the sections of gloom and despair; now we turn to hope and victory. We have now passed through the valley of darkness. The triumphant warrior leads the great host of the redeemed. The imagery comes from Isaiah 63:1-3 and Psalm 2, etc. The action is taking place in heaven and not on the earth. The rider of the white horse is going to "judge and make war." (Vs. 11-16 reveal the Conquering Christ.)

Verse 12

Some of the imagery in this verse is also used in 1:14. He wears many crowns implying his vast rule.

Verse 13

The rider of the white horse is identified by His name - "the Word of God" (see *Special Study on The Titles for Christ in The Revelation* - of the Word of God). John has already declared in his Gospel record that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word. . . (the Greek text has the last clause instead of "the Word was God."). . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we behold his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." (John 1:1, 14) In the Gospel record, Christ is the absolute Word, and here the title is qualified - *Word of God!*

Verse 14

The followers of The Word of God are now mentioned. They are pure and holy, because He is the source and cause of their righteousness. The army of Christ followed (*ekolouthei* - imperfect tense - signifying progressive following or following Him where soever He goes) Him." Their purpose and power were obtained from Him.

Verse 15

John uses descriptive imagery which is also found in Hebrews 4:12-13. Out of the mouth of the Word of God "proceeds (con-

tinually proceeds) a sharp sword in order that (*hina* - purpose) he may smite the nations with it; and he will shepherd (or over-see them. This is one of the N.T. terms for Elder;) them with an iron staff;". . . This is a paradoxical symbol - an iron staff! The last clause of this verse is one of the sources for some of the imagery in *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

Verse 16

Christ has one name which is known only to Himself; He is known as the Word of God by His followers; and He has this third name which is recorded on His "garment and on his thigh—King of kings and Lord of lords." (See *Special Study on Titles for Christ* under this name.) This name is descriptive of His sovereign control in the universe. He is King (Ruler) over all the rulers of the earth; and His lordship extends in order to encompass the demands of every human lordship. We have here the cosmic King and Lord! (See Acts 10:36—"He is Lord of all." All is neuter, meaning all things or a Cosmic Lordship.)

Note: The Revelation of Christ 19:11-16

1. Christ's description, 19:11-13, 15, 16
2. Christ's followers, 19:14
3. Christ's Acts, 19:11, 15, 16.

SECTION 64

Text 19:17-21

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come and be gathered together unto the great supper of God; 18 that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, and small and great.

19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image: they two were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone 21 and the rest were killed with the sword of him that sat upon the

horse, even the sword which came forth out of his mouth: and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Initial Questions 19:17-21

1. Discuss the imagery of the angel standing in the sun - vs. 17. Note the glory of the angel which would be necessary in order to identify the angel standing in the midst of the suns radiant brilliance.
2. Why does the angel call all of the scavenger birds to the great supper - vs. 17.
3. Discuss the various categories and statutes of the men mentioned in vs. 18.
4. Discuss the relevance of the imagery of war in vs. 19 in view of contemporary man's fear of the war to end war. (Optimistic men have spoken of past war as wars to end war, now pessimistic man is speaking of the war to end war).
5. What did God do to the beast and the false prophet - vs. 20?
6. Why did John use such sickening imagery to describe the horrors of God's judgment upon the unrighteous - vs. 21?

Overthrow and End of the Beast and the False Prophet Chapter 19:17-21

Verse 17

"One angel standing in the sun"----cried "to all the birds flying in mid-heaven, come, assemble to the great supper of God,"----Birds were omens of evil and destruction in the biblical world. These flying scavengers were looking for food. They were to find it in heaps of slain men.

Verse 18

All classes of men have fallen in the destruction of the great city. None escaped! The strongest men were not strong enough; the wealthiest were not rich enough to purchase their own safety. Kings and councilmen were powerless before the great god Thanatos. The scavenger birds knew nothing of their wealth or power, or prestige; all human flesh tasted the same to them. How humiliating to arrogant man! (See Ezekiel 39:17-20.)

Verse 19

John's vision included the beast, kings, and their armies. They had marshalled these armies to wage a final war with the

rider of the white horse. This will not be a local battle, but cosmic conflict. We encounter John's message of confident triumph.

Verse 20

All of the enemies of Christ receive God's just, righteous, and eternal punishment. The beast and the false prophet "were cast alive (*zontes* - literally living - into burning lake of fire with sulphur."

Verse 21

The sharp sword which proceeds from the mouth of the rider of the white horse slays "the rest." The hideous imagery reveals the extent of God's judgment. Note that God employs only the spiritual weapon of His word in this conflict. He has declared that all men will be judged according to His Word. The judgment which we receive will be "according to our works."

Discussion Questions
Chapter 19:1-21

1. What Psalms make up The Great Hallel - vs. 1?
2. What are the reasons for praising God mentioned in vs. 2?
3. Is anyone exempted from the command to praise God in vs. 5?
4. Where in the O.T. is God spoken of as the Bridegroom? Where in the Gospel records is Christ called the Bridegroom? Where in the N.T. is the imagery of the Bridegroom applied to Christ - vs. 7?
5. Where are three metaphors of a woman used in The Revelation - vs. 7? Discuss them.
6. With what has the bride of Christ been clothed in according to vs. 8?
7. Where in the Gospel records does Jesus speak a parable based on the imagery of the marriage supper - vs. 9?
8. Why was John rebuked in vs. 10?
9. What is the O.T. source of the imagery used in vs. 11?
10. What is the name of the rider in vs. 13?
11. What did the imagery of the birds signify in vs. 17?
12. Are all of Christ's enemies finally overcome according to vs. 20-21?

Special Study

Handel's Messiah

(This is just a part of an article that appeared in the June 22, 1963 Christian Standard by J. D. Strauss)

The language of human praise, so much enriched by the musical works of George Frederick Handel - especially in such passages as "The Hallelujah Chorus" from *The Messiah* - may find an occasional word of thanks for the evidently providential circumstances that gave the great writer's music to the world.

Redemption in Prophecy and Praise

George F. Handel's was the first artistic effort to portray the gospel in great music.

Often people think that *The Messiah* is composed of scenes from the Gospel records, but this is only partly true. Its central theme is the fulfillment of redemption through the Redeemer-Messiah. Contemporary authors have much to say about the use of drama in religious education - in *The Messiah* we have the great presursor to these efforts.

The Messiah has many intricate parts, but it can be nearly divided into three broad sections: (1) The prophecy and realization of God's will and purpose through the coming of the Messiah; (2) The accomplishment of redemption by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and hence the rejection and utter defeat of mankind when it opposes the living God; (3) Hymn of thanksgiving for the final overthrow of death.

The Messiah was performed first in London, England, but it had to overcome many adversaries before the public finally heard the dramatic truths of the Christian gospel set to music. *The Messiah* was forbidden production under that name. The critics claimed that it would be sacrilegious!

The entire first part of Handel's work is a majestic echo of the great prophetic pronouncements concerning the Messiah of God. The vivid, picturesque portrayal of mankind anxiously waiting in hope of God's redemption is a musical and linguistic marvel. As though led by the Spirit, Handel chose the highest phrases uttered by the prophets to declare that the prophetic hope was realized in the coming of the Messiah.

Isaiah, Joel, Malachi, Daniel, *et al.*, had given grave warning and powerful promises, that if all mankind were to assemble

against Jehovah their efforts would be futile. Men shall be utterly defeated when they strive against God or seek to salve their conscience by pious neutrality.

Now, in an age when human genius is seen in feats such as hurling massive steel structures through space on a split-second schedule, men need again the reminders that redemption still depends on God's Messiah.

The third section of *The Messiah* is the hymn of thanksgiving for the final overthrow of death. This Christian belief stands in radical contrast with the contemporary ideology which strives to face death without the God of the Christian hope.

Throughout the whole of Handel's work two themes predominate - suffering and the work of redemption. The latter theme is merged into the triumphal hymn of the last two choruses.

The brilliant "Hallelujah Chorus" (the Hebrew word *hallelujah* means "praise Jehovah") is grounded in the finished work of Christ—the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. The experience of listening to a competent rendering of *The Messiah* is abundant proof that the gospel can be expressed in more than the usual, verbal form. The tradition by which audiences rise to their feet at hearing this chorus is singularly appropriate.

The Messiah was written in about three weeks. If it were the only work Handel ever produced he would merit the endearing words of his fellow musicians. Beethoven declared, "Handel is the greatest composer who ever lived." Franz Liszt said that the "genius of Handel is as great as the world itself."

In light of the fact that more advancement has been made in the physical sciences during the past forth years of civilization than in the preceding four hundred years, it is to be noted that little or no great Christian music has been produced in our day. We pray God that the great Christian themes of redemption may kindle once more the creative fires, one that our Lord may be magnified by one of many great channels of expressing the work of God in Christ - music!

George F. Handel died April 14, 1759, appreciated by England as no composer had been before or after. Our concern is that men shall know *The Messiah*, not as a work of art composed, but rather as the Redeemer of the souls of men. Then shall the whole body of Christianity sing the new song—"Hallelujah—praise Jehovah!"—for He has touched fallen man with eternal healing in Christ.

*Special Study*Some Contemporary Attitudes Toward the Biblical
Doctrine of the Word of God

I recently heard a lecture by J. V. Langmead Casserley in which he raised the four fundamental problems in the contemporary analytic attack on the possibility of a rational religious discourse (since Kant, Hume, the Vienna Circle, Wittgenstein, Austin, Ayer, and all the creative spirits in contemporary Logic of Science). The four questions were—(1) What is Revelation?; (2) Is God knowable?; (3) What is the relation of the knowledge of God to knowledge in the sciences and other academic disciplines?; (4) Does religious language express truth? This line of thought has had many progenitors and many set backs but it is now the predominate Anglo-Saxon Philosophical position. In order to better appreciate the issues involved, let us provide a brief historical perspective.

Nathan Söderblom took the initial steps in his *Gifford Lectures, The Living God* which blazed the trail for those who thought that propositional-revelation had become an untenable thesis. He laid the ground work for the contemporary attitude that extra-biblical revelation exists and continues to this hour. Söderblom did this by developing Justin Martyr's *logos spermatikos* idea. William Temple, in his *Nature, Man, and God*, develops the lethal distinction between Revelation and the proposition which speaks of revelation. Martin Buber's emphatic epistemology is utilized by practically every protestant theologian who has written on the subject of revelation. John Baillie, Emil Brunner, *et al.*, recognize their debt to the Jewish Existentialist - Buber. Dr. Austin Farrer declares in his *The Glass of Vision* - "We now recognize that the propositions on the Scriptural page expresses the response of human witnesses to divine events, not a miraculous divine dictation." (p. 36f).

The profound and prodigious efforts of Barth, Tillich, Berdyaev, *et al.*, are efforts to work out a theory of revelation, once propositional revelation is repudiated in the name of scientific logic and the supposed demonstrations by way of a scientific study, that the Bible is a fallible record of human response to the original revelation which came in the person of Christ, and is therefore personal encounter of subject to subject, and not propositional information about God. But the revelation is God himself, not information about Him mediated through the words

and sentences of a book—the Bible (which provides true affirmation about the will and purpose of God in Christ). God is therefore not available to discursive reason! This contemporary attitude would not be too difficult to handle, if it were not for the persistent assertions by contemporary theologians, that this is the biblical view of revelation.¹

We hear and read much of the thesis that God reveals Himself in *acts* and *events* and not by *words* and *propositions*.

We must pass by any discussion of the Hebrew and Greek vocabulary for truth, knowledge, faith (e.g., or as in the case of the Hebrew *ēmana* which means truth, faith, and trust). Martin Buber's *Two Types of Faith* tries to show that the Old Testament understanding of Faith was trust and that the New Testament presents a Christianized Greek-view. The most serious flaw in Buber's thesis is that it is not correct, either for the Hebrew or New Testament views. The biblical view does entail trust, but trust based on evidence which is the ground of the faith and not merely an irrational trust. Under this circumstance, there would be no justification for trusting in God any more than in man or some non-Christian religious object, etc.

Any adequate analysis of the biblical doctrine of revelation would necessitate that we understand the nature of Language (Linguistics and Semantics) and its relationship to *thought* and *reality*, if there is to be any extensive impact made on our generation on behalf of Christ. The very best Evangelical Literature (Henry, Carnell, Ramm, *et.al.*) is seriously deficient in light of the problems raised by rejection of the total Christian perspective, which alone makes sense of *The Restoration Movement* and *The Plea* to restore biblical Christianity. Many misunderstand the relationship of words and propositions to the content of revelation. Even well meaning N.T. Christians and others of Evangelical persuasions believe that this line of reasoning makes the Bible and not Jesus, etc., the revelation of God. We cannot state too often that all we know of Christ and the will and purpose of God for time and eternity depends on the nature of the record which bears witness to Him. The New Testament does declare that Jesus is the final revelation, but

1. Martin Buber's "Emphatic Epistemology" has revolutionized contemporary Protestant Theology, which is not built upon propositional revelation but rather upon an uncognitive ineffable person to person encounter. The thesis maintains that we know "persons" differently than we know "things." Buber's classic statement is found in his *I-Thou* and *Two Types of Faith* (Jewish and Greek).

we would not have access to this information unless spirit filled men also inscribed the Word of God. The biblical doctrine of the "Word of God" is *not* exhausted in the Incarnation of the Living Word! The biblical doctrine of the Word entails the Word Incarnate, the Word Inscribed, and the Word Proclaimed, and only if we possess a propositional revelation can we correlate this trichotomy.²

There are several Hebrew terms which are translated word in our English Bibles, but the primary term is "*Dabar* means matter or affair in the sense of the thing about which one speaks. It is not true that Hebrew thought subordinates words to events. The reverse is more nearly true, particularly in the case of the Word of the Lord, for his Word determines all events, and no Word of God is void of power. Cf. Genesis 18:14; Jer. 32:17-27, in Hebrew and Septuagint with Luke 1:37. The use of *rhemata* in Luke and Acts furnishes interesting examples of the colorlessness of translating "things" where "sayings" is required by the contextual reference to the spoken word. See Luke 1:65; 2:17-19, 50, 51; Acts 5:32, 13:42."³

The Word

Jesus is the *Logos* of God in the New Testament Scriptures. The same effort to manipulate the records into saying that "Jesus" is the revelatory word and the New Testament scriptures are merely fallible-human reports about the original revelation. We must not lose sight of the fact that all we really know of Jesus Christ is contained in the biblical records. Many are still searching for the historical Christ. But he has never been lost by those of us who accept the Bible as the Word of God. If we possess only a fallible human response to original revelation which did not come in propositional form, then we have no authoritative message from God. If we have no authoritative message, then the Restoration Plea is absurd, and we are of all men most miserable.

The modern theologian speaks quite extensively of communicating the gospel, but he must first have something to convey. The church of the first century had "the Word." "The

2. Barth makes these distinctions, but cannot correlate them, because he will not permit the Bible to have the status of propositional revelation - see his *Dogmatics* and for beginners, G. C. Berkouwer's, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth*, Eerdmans, 1956. Now in paperback.

3. Edmund P. Clowney, *Preaching and Biblical Theology*; Eerdmans Publishing Company: Grand Rapids, Michigan; 1961, p. 26

Word was made flesh" (John 1:1-18) is the one force which can stabilize the souls of men. A vast amount has been written about the term *word* in philosophical literature. A thorough examination would find us comparing its use of Heraclitus, the Stoics, and Philo Judaeus, with the application we find made only by John. We are not concerned with its repeated use, but with the implications of its meaning as it is used by these various authors.

The term has significantly different connotations in Hebrew and Greek and Latin. This should make it plain that there is no single term adequate for an English translation. The Greek word *logos* contains two elements—"speech" and "reason." The vocal utterance plus the thought content of the utterance is synthesized into the term *logos*. As the term is used in the New Testament, it does not imply one or the other, but both. The Word made flesh is unique in context.

The Latin Christians debated over the use of three words in translating this one Greek term. They were *verbum*, *sermo*, or *ratio*; but when the Latins selected *verbum*, they deprived *logos* of half of its implications.

Philo did use the term in both senses. And he maintained this conception as he linked it with "The Word of the Lord" of the Old Testament, but the stoic implication was also present. The distinctive features of John's use imply eternal, personal, divine, and transcendent existence. John's phraseology is not found in the other gospel records. (Hebrew 4:13 where "in his sight" (*autou* - his) identified the Word of vs. 12 as personal.)

It is this "Word" that we must communicate by proclamation and dedicated lives. It must go forth in the power of the Spirit with no uncertain sound.

But thanks be to God we need not succumb to the contemporary mind nor its satanic attacks upon the Scriptures. There are no easy answers to the most serious threats to biblical Christianity in the history of the Church, but we pray that many will take up the challenge and labor in the highly technical and specialized areas of contemporary science, philosophy, and theology so that our message can be placed on the offensive instead of the defensive. The coming generation to whom many of us will preach "Christ and Him Crucified" must be challenged at the academic level where the contemporary mind and its animosity to Biblical Christianity is being forged. I pray God that we rally to the challenge - now beginning with you!

Some of the above points were delineated in the author's
1962 Missouri Christian Lectureship on the *Origin and De-*

*velopment of the Contemporary Mind and Its Significance
for Biblical Christianity.*

See the present author's very superficial treatment of the problem of Revelation in the Popular presentation—*What is Revelation*, parts 1 and 2, *The Christian Standard*, April 22 and 29, 1961; and the keen insights which are evident in the article by H. Daniel Friberg, *The Bible and Propositional Truth*, *Christianity Today*, July 5, 1963. His remarks are even more appropriate in view of the various theories of the Proposition and how they differ from the types of sentences which are under scrutiny in contemporary Logic. The following works will also be of great benefit to the serious student of this problem.

G. H. Clark, *Religion, Reason, and Revelation*; Presbyterian Reformed Publishing Company, Nutley, New Jersey,

G. H. Clark, *Karl Barth's Theological Method*; Presbyterian Reformed Publishing Company, Nutley, New Jersey, 1963.

H. D. MacDonald - *Ideas of Revelation: A Historical Study*, A.D. 1700 - to A.D. 1860, MacMillan Pub. Co., New York.

Note: *Problem of Education and Evangelism!*

We are not winning the world! The attitude outlined above is not merely an academic affair; it is an attitude which is rapidly permeating the mind of mass-man.

The kind of preparation we provide in our Bible Colleges should be determined by the mind of the age in which it lives. All Bible and nothing else - precludes winning the world!

Is it possible that we are preparing a ministry for a past generation? How shall we defend our Faith in view of the comprehensive, satanic attack on biblical revelation? The areas which call for immediate attention by all concerned N.T. Christians are: 1. *A Philosophy of Language* which sustains the theistic view of language which is necessary for a defense of propositional revelation. The dominate thrust in the rapidly developing field of Linguistic is naturalistic. If this view of the nature and origin of Language is correct a special revelation from God to man is impossible (we need a thorough understanding of *Semantics* - problem of meaning); 2. *A Christian View of History* (A Christian Theology of History) which understands and answers all species of naturalistic, humanistic views of history, the articulation of a Christian-theistic view of a historical fact, historical causation, problem of verifying or falsifying any given assertion about historical reality; 3. *Philosophy of science* (concepts of cause, explanation, fact, etc.) Courses in these three areas should replace the traditional apologetic materials still being taught in our Bible Colleges. The traditional courses are powerless before the contemporary mind, and do not prepare the student to defend the faith against the barrage of attacks, verbal and inscribed, coming from the pens of the contemporary critics of biblical Christianity, and its claim to a special revelation.

SECTION 65

Text 20:1-3

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished: after this he must be loosed for a little time.

Initial Questions 20:1-3

1. If Christ's work on the cross actually defeated Satan and his powers of darkness, why do we read in vs. 1 that Satan is being bound for "a thousand years" (a limited period of time)?
2. Is Satan to be found with finality according to vs. 3?

The Thousand Years of Satan's Captivity
and the Martyr's Reign
Chapter 20:1-6

In this chapter men have supposedly found the biblical justification for millennial theories (see the *Special Study* after this chapter). We have just finished the section in Revelation 19:19-21 in which John's vision carried us to the end of sin dominated human history and the day of the wrath of God. It cannot be shown by merely examining the text (or any other way) that the material in the Seer of Patmos' visions are chronological. In fact, if we were entering a technical discussion, we would assert that most of the material in *The Revelation* is repetition which develops in intensity of judgment, i.e., the three series of the seals, the trumpets, and the bowls of wrath. Chapter 20 is a more detailed description of the final judgment than was given in the last verses of chapter 19. We must not be led astray by the chapter and verse divisions. Basically their purpose is to show a change in the content of what is being discussed; but John wrote *The Revelation* under the direction of the Holy Spirit, and he used no such divisions. We must therefore be most careful in our evaluation of the materials. Millennial theorists assume that the materials in *The Revelation* are also chronological and this assumption enables them to claim that the imagery of chapter 20 does not reveal the same final judgment as does Rev. 19:19-21. (If available, always consult

Lenski's work on *The Revelation*, see bibliography.) Since Rev. 20:3 is the only place in the N.T. where the word millennium (the Greek word is *chilia ete* - a thousand years; *Millennium* comes from Latin and also means a thousand years) occurs, we must be very careful in our analysis of this section of scripture.

The relationship between chapters 19 and 20 are similar to those of chapters 11 and 12. In chapter 11 the end had come (see especially 11:15-19), but in chapter 12 we return to the human situation. The man-child is born and immediately Satan seeks to kill Him. Satan continues to overcome the man-child, until Satan and all forces are completely destroyed by the victorious Lord (Rev. 19:11-16). The host of the saved follow their regnant redeemer. (See Marcellus J. Kik, *Revelation Twenty*, an exposition, The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Box 185, Nutley, N.J. This work is a very good basic study by a conservative Calvinist.

Note: Do not be disturbed by our frequent citation of Catholic and Calvinistic works. No one else is producing any serious studies of the Bible and biblical problems (except of course those who deny that The Bible is The Word of God).

The coming again of our Lord, and the signs which will precede His return are two of the most discussed and written about topics among people who accept the Bible as the Word of God. Even the Ecumenical world is producing an almost endless supply of literature on Christian Hope. In this body of literature the great coming events such as the coming again of Christ, the resurrection, of the just and the unjust, the day of judgment, and hell and heaven are reinterpreted (or really interpreted away) according to contemporary Existential hermeneutics. (See the brief, popular presentation of some of the problems in Prof. Lewis Foster's *Basis for Historical Jesus*, The Christian Standard, July 13, 20, 27, 1963.)

What is the thousand year period of which we read in 20:3? Is Christ's coming again connected with this period?

Verse 1

John saw "an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain on (*epi* - hanging down from his hand. The chain was not contained "in" his hand) his hand." In our study we will emphasize only two factors in this section of scripture (vss. 1-3); (1) The binding of Satan and its relationship to the Millennium; and (2) the reign of the Christians with Christ in the Millennium.

Verse 2

The angel laid hold of (*ekratēsen* - 1st aor. ind. active - expresses the actual, complete act of binding) the dragon, the old serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound (*edēsen* - 1st aor. ind. active, expresses the fact that Satan is bound) him for a thousand years." (See II Peter 3:8 - But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."—). What can this binding of Satan mean? Are there any other passages of scripture which speak of the binding of Satan? If the work of Christ on the cross completely and once-for-all overcame Satan, why is his power and influence still very evident in our own lives, the Church, and most assuredly the world?

Peter tells us in his second epistle that—"If God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, (Greek is tartarus), and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;"----(II Peter 2:4). Is it possible that Satan is bound in a limited sense, but never-the-less, still bound? Satan was permitted to test Job. Yet, in specific sense he was bound (i.e., limited as to what he was allowed to do). Paul tells us all (I Cor. 10:13) "there hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it." Paul here claims that Satan is really limited or bound. (Note that the imagery of chains binding Satan is a metaphor, therefore figurative). Our Lord gives us an illustration of the binding of Satan. One day Christ was casting out demons, and His opponents accused Him of doing it by the power of the prince of devils, Beelzebub. (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15.) Christ's reply was in the form of a parable. Matthew 12:29----"Or how can one enter into a strong man's house, and seize his vessels, if not first he binds the strong man? and then he will plunder his house." We must keep two facts in mind; (1) Christ's work has already defeated Satan; and (2) Satan's influence seems to increase rather than diminish. Paul makes this point very clearly in II Thess. 2:1-3----"Touching the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto him; to the end that ye be not quickly shaken from your mind, nor yet be troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by epistle as from us, as that the day of the Lord is just at hand; let no man beguile you in any way: for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition"----

The above brief discussion enables us to claim that Satan is actually bound, but his limitations respect only certain activity. What reason does the text give for the binding of Satan?

Verse 3

The answer to the above question is given in this verse. Satan is shut up in the abyss in order that (*hina* clause - the purpose clause again) he should not deceive (*planēse* - 1st aor. act. subjunctive - the aor. subj. with the negative *me*, as here, is to be understood as an imperative) any longer the nations, until (*achri* - clearly asserts that the time will come again when Satan shall deceive the nations) the thousand years are finished; after these things he must (*dei* - absolutely necessary) be loosed (*luthēnai* - 1st aor. infinitive, passive voice - signifies that Satan will be loosed by someone else (God), and not because he is powerful enough to break his binding chains) a little while. Satan was bound in order that he could not deceive the nations any longer, but in vs. 8 we note that he "shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth,"---. The dragon and his angels were cast down into the earth (Rev. 12:7ff), and he knew then his time was short. What is implied in Satan's deceiving of the nations? The Bible (it is opposed to universalism in every form) never asserts that the whole earth will be saved. What is the possible relationship of the missionary enterprise and the "deceiving of the nations"? The original language of both Old and New Testaments have specific words for the people of God and the nations of the world. Examine the Roman Epistle for a possible commentary on these matters. Paul's argument in Romans 1:18 - 2:16 is that the Gentiles are lost. He states that God "gave them up" three times (1:24, 26, 28). This passage in *The Revelation* does not claim that the people of God are deceived; but rather, "the nations which are in the four corners of the earth." Only the Church shall be impowered to avoid the deception! Satan deceives the nations so thoroughly, that they refuse "the Gospel" which is the "power of God unto salvation." John is speaking only of the nations as a whole; he is not declaring that there might not be individuals who escape deception. Our's is an age when individualism is all but dead. Mass-man has replaced the individual. Depersonalized, dehumanized man is being prepared (via Madison Avenue techniques of manipulation) to be deceived at the international level. The masters of cybernetics (the Greek word for a steersman - on a ship) can sway unnumbered multitudes. Are we being prepared in our day for the fulfillment of 20:8? Paul said in II

Thess. 2:11 that God will send a "strong delusion, that (*hina* or purpose clause) they should believe a lie." Christ commissioned His Church to preach the saving Gospel to all nations. Christ went on to say that when this was done - then the end would come.

Remember that John introduced five enemies of Christ's church in chapter 12. *The Revelation* clearly tells us of their ultimate doom, but the information about their defeat is contained in more than one vision. The visions before this chapter have revealed the destruction of four of the five enemies introduced in chapter 12; only one remains - Satan. Christ's victory over every enemy is the binding thread of the entire book. When Satan is cast into the lake of fire and sulphur in Rev. 20:10 - that is the end of all of Christ's enemies.

SECTION 66

Text 20:4-6

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Initial Questions 20:4-6

1. John saw two groups of persons in vs. 4 - who were they?
2. How long was Satan to be bound according to vs. 2? How long were the martyrs to reign with Christ according to vs. 4?
3. What group composed those that reigned with Christ in vs. 4? Who, then are "the rest of the dead" of vs. 5?
4. John says that "they shall be priests of God and of Christ." Where, in the N.T., are all Christians called Priests? (I Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10).

Verse 4

On the central throne of the universe God alone sits. In this verse we note that there are other thrones. God has delegated

some of His judgmental authority. To whom did God give the power to judge?---" I saw (there is no verb here in the text) the souls of the ones having been beheaded because of (or on account of) the witness of Jesus, and because of Word of God, and who did not worship the beast, nor the image of it, and did not receive the mark on the forehead or on their hands; and they lived again (literally they lived) and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Who are these souls who lived again and reign with Christ a thousand years? The text is very plain - they are "the ones having been beheaded (*pepelekismenōn* - perfect, passive, participle, the word comes from *pelekus*, the word for an axe) because of the witness of Jesus, and because of the Word of God,"----. Clearly, this is a special group of martyrs. Many died for the reasons mentioned above but decapitation was the fate of souls that John saw. John himself was banned to Patmos for the same two reasons—witness and word.

Verse 5

John then says that "the rest of the dead did not live (again) until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." (Who are the rest of the dead?) The rest (*hoi loipoi*) included everyone else that was dead except the beheaded martyrs. (See I Thess. 4:16; John 5:29; Acts 24:15 on the resurrection). Does this verse teach two chronologically separate resurrections? We must admonish Bible students to be very careful about building up theological positions on very ambiguous language. The general biblical teaching about the resurrection and judgment are clear, but passages such as this one present insoluble exegetical problems. We should be absolutely certain on any matter, before we claim that it is a doctrine of the Word of God.

Verse 6

What are the characteristics of those involved in the first resurrection? John says that they are—"Blessed and Holy"; but these are not special blessings which only members of this unique class of martyrs will receive, because *all Christians* are holy (both in *The Revelation* and all other N.T. books), and those that are invited to the marriage feast are also called "Blessed" (Rev. 19:9). "The second death has not authority over these, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with him the thousand years." According to the N.T. scriptures all

Christians are priests of God and Christ. (See I Peter 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10). The characteristics of the reigning ones are the characteristics of all followers of Christ; therefore, if these are a special group who receive a special favor from God besides redemption, we cannot learn this from this verse. The reason is simply - that the characteristics - holy, blessed, shall escape death, priests of God are all specifically applied by inspired men of the N.T. to all Christians. Much of what we have said will depend upon whether or not one interprets the thousand years literally or symbolically. Though we cannot enter a debate with all of the millennial groups who take the millennium literally; we do not interpret it as literally one thousand calendar years. (See *Special Study* on Millennial Theories.) Verses 4-6 tells us (1) where the reign takes place, (2) what its nature is, (3) and who participates. It takes place in heaven; it has a spiritual nature, and it involves judging with Christ, living with Christ, and sharing with Christ.

SECTION 67

Text 20:7-10

7 And when the thousand years are finished, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Initial Questions 20:7-10

1. Discuss some of the necessary features of sinful man which make deception possible - vs. 7.
2. How extensive is Satan's deception according to vs. 8?
3. What O.T. event is similar to the imagery of vs. 9? (A clue: a mighty Empire sent a besieging army to Jerusalem).
4. How long is the torment of Satan, the beast and the false prophet - vs. 10?

Verse 7

Whenever the appointed time (1000 years) has been fulfilled "Satan will be loosed out of his prison." Notice that Satan does not break out of prison, but he "will be loosed" (*luthesetai* - future tense, passive voice, indicative mood—at some specific time in the future someone (God) will set Satan free again in order to enable him to continue his deceiving.)

Verse 8

The great battle between Christ and Satan ensues after the evil one is released from his prison. John uses the names of Gog and Magog which come from Ezekiel 38f. They will ultimately be defeated and be cast into the company of the two beasts (see 19:20). The Millennium is not a time of bliss and perfection because Satan still has followers. John says that "the number of them is as the sand of the sea." Evil still had its followers even during the 1000 years reign (vss. 4-5) as multitudes respond to his marshalling war trumpet.

Verse 9

The imagery of this verse is similar in content to the event of the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib's army (II Kings 19:20ff). The Assyrian hordes had circled the city of David. God sent a sign to the embattered league of defenders. The Assyrian army shall not "shoot an arrow there, or cast up a mound against it." In the night "the angel of the Lord went forth, and slew a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the camp of Assyrians." (II Kings 19:32-37.) John declares that the enemy of God's people "went up over the breadth of the land, and encircled the camp of the saints and the having been loved city; and fire came down out of heaven and devoured them." Certainly this imagery fits the imagery of besieged Jerusalem in the days of Hezekiah and God's judgment upon all evil.

Verse 10

"The Devil was cast (*eblēthē* - 1st aor. passive voice - was cast finally and forever - by God) into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet (were not in text), and they will be tormented day and night unto the ages of the ages." The last enemy of Christ and His servants is forever cast from the presence of God and His saints.

SECTION 68

Text 20:11-15

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. 15 And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire.

Initial Questions 20:11-15

1. Is it possible to escape God's judgment - vs. 11?
2. Does vs. 12 show that there will be a resurrection of the dead, whether righteous or unrighteous?
3. What does vs. 12 say against the false denominational doctrine of "Faith Only"?
4. What is the book of life - vs. 15?
5. Is it important to have one's name written in this book - vs. 15?

Verse 11

The final judgment scene is terrifying to the lost and causes the redeemed to give thanks to God in Christ. Evil dominates the hearts of the dwellers on the earth. This is clear from John's descriptive imagery that "the earth and the heaven fled; and no place was found for them." The whole earth was trying to escape the wrath of the Lamb, but no escape will be found.

Verse 12

Who is called before God in the valley of judgment? John saw "the dead, the great, the small, standing (*hestōtas* - perfect participle - their stance was fixed before God) before the throne; and the scrolls (*biblia* - is literally scrolls. Our English word *book* connotes something different than this word) were opened, and another scroll was opened, which is the scroll of

life; the dead were judged" on the basis of the things that God had recorded there. The record in the scrolls were "according to their works." This passage is just another of many (in Romans, Galatians, James, etc.) which declare that the doctrine of "Faith Only" is foreign to biblical revelation. This passage of scripture categorically declares that we are all going to be judged according to our works. James, most appropriately compliments when he declares that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:14f.)

Verse 13

No one will avoid the hour of the wrath of God - merely because they have died. God will call the dead to life again! Death is here personified. The realm of the unseen (for brief statement on *hades* see *Special Study on Major Themes in The Revelation*) surrendered its dead. The cemetery will not be a safe place to hide from God on the day that He shall vindicate holiness, righteousness, and justice in His moral universe.

Verse 14

The day God casts death and *hades* into the lake of fire will cause the sceptic, the scoffer, and the unrepentant to cry for the rocks and the mountains to hide them. But God's sovereign sway encompasses even the realm of the dead.

Verse 15

This is the final vs. of the great judgment scene. The curtain falls on the drama. The universe has acted out the will and purpose of its Creator. Now God stands before man, the marvel of His creative word either as judge or redeemer. "If anyone was not found in the scroll of life, . . . he was cast into the lake of fire" with the devil, the beast, and the false prophet and their cohorts of evil. This verse makes it very plain that God's word has no countenance for a second chance, annihilationism, or for soul sleeping.

Discussion Questions Chapter 20

1. What two important factors are mentioned in vs. 1?
2. Discuss the binding of Satan - vs. 2.
3. Does vs. 3 imply that Satan will break his binding chains by his own might?

4. What special type of persecution and death had those in John's vision of vs. 4 gone through?
5. Discuss the characteristics of the martyrs - vs. 6?
6. What three things does the 1000 years reign involve - vs. 6?
7. Where can we find the names Gog and Magog in the O.T. - vs. 8?
8. How is Faith and Works related according to vs. 12?
9. What does vs. 15 have to say about the cultic and denominational doctrines of foul sleeping, annihilationism, second chancism?

Special Study

A Sketch of the History of Millennial Theories With Chart and Bibliography

If we were attempting to provide a comprehensive survey of Millennial theories, it would be necessary to give extended attention to Old Testament and Intertestamental literature, and their doctrine of Last Things. The following works will provide a good basis for such a study. The old, but still very valuable work of Emil Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Scribner's and Son, New York, chapter 29 of volume two - *The Messianic Hope*, pp. 126-189; George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the Age of the Tannaim* (New Testament Period) volume two, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1950, part 7, *The Hereafter*, pp. 279-395. This is the standard work in English; W. O. E. Oosterley, *An Introduction to the Books of The Apocrypha*, London, SPCK, 1953 printing, chapter 7 - *The Doctrinal Teaching of the Apocrypha*, pp. 74-110; and the now seriously dated, but valuable work for an initial encounter with the issues involved see D. F. Salmond, *Christian Doctrine of Immortality*, 4th edition, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1901, Books 2 through 5 for biblical Eschatology.

Chronological Method of Interpretation

Before we launch out into our brief survey we believe that it is important to point out that the chronological method of interpreting *The Revelation* must not be confused with the Millennial Theories under examination. There are four basic chronological interpretations, which are—(1) *The Historicist Perspective*; (2) *The Preterist Perspective*; (3) *The Futurist*

Perspective; and *The Idealist Viewpoint*. The first view maintains that *The Revelation* is a symbolic presentation of the entire history of The Church, from Pentecost to the consummation of The Kingdom of God. The second view asserts that *The Revelation* covers only the first century. This view repudiates predictive prophecy. This view is simply impossible, if we take the actual declarations of John seriously. The third view claims that Revelation 4:1 through the conclusion will be fulfilled sometime before and following the coming again of Jesus. The fourth view affirms that the symbolic imagery of *The Revelation* has no particular social or political milieu in mind. Each one of these chronological schemas fail to do justice to *The Revelation* in that their over emphasis on given issues does not enable them to consider features that are just as clear exegetically as the ones they arbitrarily choose to emphasize.

Eschatological Interpretations of the Revelation

The English word Millennium (1000 years) comes from two Latin words - *Mille* - a thousand - and *annum* - a year. Millennialism was derived from Jewish belief in the temporal kingdom of the Messiah. The New Testament is very clear that Jesus repudiated this crast, materialistic view of The Kingdom. (All *The Revelation*, chapter 20:1ff. This serious error found extensive dissemination in the early centuries of The Church. Augustine was largely responsible for destroying the impact of this form of Millennialism, when he interpreted Revelation 20 spiritually - in *The City of God*, Book 20.

A CHART showing the relationship of *Millennial Theories*. (our English comes directly from the Latin word which means one thousand. The Greek word found in Revelation 20:3 is *chilia* or thousand) - and is related to the coming again of Christ. The three general theories are: (1) *Postmillennialism*, which holds that Christ will come again at the close of the millennium. (2) *Premillennialism* holds that chapter 19 reveals the end of the present age, when Christ returns to overcome *The Anti-Christ*. The saints are supposed to reign with Christ for one thousand years on the earth (chapter 20:1-8). (3) *Amillennialism* maintains that Revelation 20:1-8 does not teach a literal thousand year period either *before* or *after* Christ's coming again.

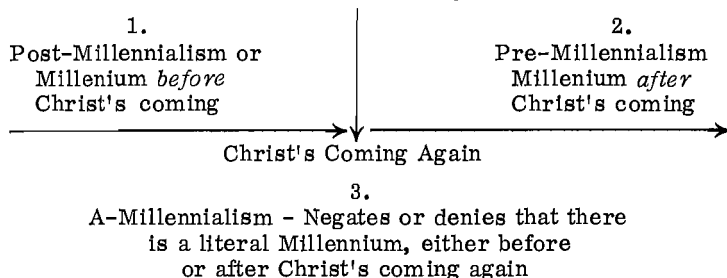
Each of the eschatological schemes mentioned above are

post, *pre*, or *a* - millennial with respect to the coming again of Christ.

CHART

Revelation 20:1-8 is the only place in the New Testament where the term "tachila" or "the thousand years" appears

The Three Theories Compared



Note: The following reasons are generally offered for claiming that the Millennium mentioned in verse four is literally a physical kingdom on earth through which God rules the world.

(1) The O.T. Kingdom promises cannot be fulfilled in *The Church*. Why not? If the Millennialists (and especially The Dispensationalists) would study the N.T. interpretation of many of these O.T. kingdom prophecies, they would notice immediately that inspired N.T. authors do not interpret the O.T. prophecies in the literal manner in which they interpret them. (See the readable account of James Bales', a non-instrumental brother, listed in our bibliography.

(2) The O.T. teaches a period of universal peace (Isaiah 2:4) and universal righteousness (Isaiah 11:45). These inspired truths hardly prove the thesis of a literal Millennium. The ultimate fulfillment of the prophecies about peace and righteousness will become a reality only in the *City of God*.

(3) The early Church was pre-millennial. Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Papias all held some form of a materialistic interpretation of the millennium. The fact that these early Church fathers held a pre-millennial theology in no wise proves that this is the N.T. doctrine. In these same patristic fathers we find the clear departure from N.T. teaching concerning the nature of grace, the nature of the ministry, etc.

We are most grateful to The William B. Eerdmann Publishing Company of Grand Rapids, Michigan for granting us permission (free of all cost to us) to print chapter 22, pp. 267-279, Kromminga's work *The Millennium in The Church*, 1945. This is the best survey of millennial theories readily available in English today.

A HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Having now completed our more detailed historical sketch of the course of Christian chiliasm, we are in a position to bring the more important phenomena and representatives together in a birdseye view of the whole field. This will also afford us an opportunity to stress some of the more serious defects which have marred the course of Christian chiliasm. Reserving the critical remarks for the next chapter, we shall devote the present one to a catalogue of representative men and groups. We begin with a list of the chiliastic writers of the *Ancient Church* and some opponents.

1. Barnabas is the oldest Amillennialist, though he worked with the idea of a world-sabbath and with Daniel's ten kings. His antijudaism went to the length of denying the Covenant to the Jews ever since Sinai; a feature which puts him in touch with so modern a Premillenarian as Scofield. But Barnabas applies the promises to Israel unhesitatingly to the Christian Church.
2. Justin Martyr is the first definitely premillenarian writer. He posits a restoration of Jerusalem and a thousand year reign of Christ with both the Old and New Testament believers on earth with that city as the capital; all on the basis of the chiliastic proof text of Rev. 20 and some other biblical material.
3. Ireneus was both premillenarian and covenantal. To him, antichrist was the beast of the Apocalypse. His antignostic polemics threw the emphasis on the beginning of the millennium and neglected its close. He introduced extracanonical proof in the tradition of Papias concerning a future wonderful productivity of the earth. He tried to give rationality to the idea of the millennium, but found it in its significance for the resurrected saints rather than for continuing earthly society.
4. Montanus combined with the idea of a future earthly reign of Christ the novel idea of a preparatory age of the Holy Spirit. This was a slighting of Pentecost and an exaltation of Montanist prophecy to the level of canonicity. His

expectation of the New Jerusalem in Phrygia marks him as nonjudaistic and as confused on the relation between the millennium and the eternal state.

5. Tertullian became an adherent of Montanism in spite of the fact that events had disproved the new prophecy. He reverted, however, to the traditional connection of the millennial Jerusalem with Palestine, saw a fulfilment of Montanist prediction in a natural phenomenon, and developed a theory of successive educational dispensations. In him and Montanus both a kind of trinitarian division of history appears.
6. Nepos, an Egyptian opponent of Origen, was premillenarian, emphasized the physical to the obscuration of the spiritual, and was esteemed by his followers as practically on a level with, if not superior to, Scripture as to authoritativeness.
7. Commodianus was a Premillenarian who held that Nero would return as antichrist and that the seven years of tribulation would be divided between him and Elias. He spoke of the whore Babylon and of a Latin conqueror who would pose as the Christ, and of a liberation of Jerusalem by Christ in His return. The New Jerusalem he placed before the thousand years, and the judgment after them. In the millennium the saints were to have offspring and to be served by the resurrected nobler pagans.
8. Hippolytus, whether an Amillenarian or a Premillenarian, was explicit on the precursory signs of Christ's second advent. The toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image and the horns of Daniel's fourth beast he identified with ten kings of the end-time belonging to the Roman Empire and with ten democracies. Antichrist he expected from the tribe of Dan, and the number 666 he found in the name Lateinos.
9. Methodius, the opponent of Origen, spoke of two resurrections and of the resurrection of the righteous at the beginning of the 'Feast of the Ten Virgins.' To him, the thousand years were at the same time the day of judgment; first of all, of professing Christians. Due to our lack of sources, his chiliasm remains somewhat obscure.
10. Victorinus of Petau was premillenarian, seeing the true Sabbath in the millennium, when Christ and His saints shall reign. However, a commentary on the Apocalypse which

goes by his name is Augustinian in its understanding of the millennium-passage and thus presents a puzzle.

11. Lactantius was premillenarian. He accepted the creation-week-history-periods theory, expected two resurrections, and expected procreation to continue in the millennium, in which Christ will rule from Jerusalem and the living nations will be slave-laborers. The transition to it will be made when ten militaristic kings rule; three of them in Asia, whom the eleventh, the antichrist, will overthrow. The millennium will see some glorification of nature, and at its end the devil will be permitted to make war on the saints. The sixth millennium he expected to end in the near future.
12. Apollinaris, who tried his hand at constructing a doctrine of the two natures of Christ, was a Premillenarian, according to the testimony of Jerome.
13. Origen had opposed some crass chiliasm, but had explained the physical away from the eschatological hope. In his anti-materialism he was not followed by Augustine, but in his opposition to a carnal millennialism he was.
14. Augustine changed from Premillennialism to Amillennialism, repulsed by the carnality of the premillenarian expectations that were then current. He would, however, not condemn a spiritual understanding of the millennium, which would see its joys in the fellowship with God. He became the father, at least in general thought, of the amillenarian exegesis of the millennium-passage of Rev. 20. The reign of the saints with Christ he distributed over the saints in heaven, the believers' victory over lusts, and the rule of the millennium, the end of which he deemed to be near. Then would come the resurrection of the body, the first resurrection of Rev. 20 being the spiritual resurrection which consists in regeneration by the water of baptism.

Thus we see, that the Ancient Church witnessed the emergency of Amillennialism, of starters for Postmillenarianism, and of practically all the material with which historical Premillenarians work to this day. The fact that Premillenarianism subsided instead of winning out is connected with the three names of Origen, the father of Christian Gnosticism; Constantine, who changed the social and political status of the Christian religion; and Augustine, who furnished the interpretation of Rev.

20 which eliminates from it the conception of a distinct millennial period at the close of earthly history. This was the eschatological heritage which the Middle Ages took over; and we have to review next, what the *Medieval Church* made of it.

1. While the continuing dominance of the Church in Western Europe assured the continued prevalence of the amillenarian position, the passing of the year 1000 A.D., made Augustine's expectations as to the nearness of the end of history untenable. The date for the return of Christ was therefore shifted by some from the year 1000 after the birth of Christ to the year 1000 after His passion and, as a last possibility of thus stretching the period, to the year 1065, in which year Good Friday and the Day of the Annunciation coincided.
2. Thereafter modifications of the Augustinian scheme became necessary for taking care of the years beyond the end of the first Christian millennium. This need stimulated the re-editing of the Sibylline Oracles, which Lactantius had already quoted to Constantine the Great in support of his pre-millenarian views. The new visions of those oracles predicted in various forms a universal Christian rule of some duration before the end. They manifest a tendency to transpose Gog and Magog from the end of the millennium to the place where antichrist appears before its beginning.
3. A third step in this process of altering the Augustinian tradition was taken when such predictions lost their apocryphal character and came forward as undisguised contemporary prophecy in such persons as Hildegard of St. Rupert's near Bingen. In her they concentrated on the need of a reform of the Church in criticism of existing ecclesiastical conditions; and thenceforth the hope of a perfection of the Church overshadows the missionary and political hopes in the complex of Christian ideals for the earthly future.
4. Joachim of Floris became the great formulator of this new millennial ideal of the Pure Church. The scriptural basis on which the hope rested was shifted from the millennium-passage to Christ's promise of the Comforter after Montanist example, and Joachim constructed a scheme of periods in the history of redemption and revelation which utilized scriptural elements to arrive at the year 1260, A.D., as the

date for the initiation of the Age of the Spirit, which Age was expected to bring a deeper understanding of Holy Writ under monastic guidance.

5. Amalrich of Bena was a contemporary of Joachim, but his teachings fell under the suspicion of pantheism. Pantheistic chiliasm was further developed by David of Dinant, who taught a trinity of God, spirit, and matter; and by William the Goldsmith. The coming of the Spirit was interpreted in an antinomian sense as releasing believers from the obligations imposed by the New Testament. This dangerous heresy was quickly condemned by the hierarchy and was driven underground.
6. Meanwhile, the Franciscan Spirituals came on the scene and in their conflict with the papacy they laid hold on Joachim's chiliastic teachings in the person of Gerardino di Borgo San Donnino, who gave them a heretical twist by seeing the fulfilment of Joachim's predictions in the Mendicant Orders, his own Order especially, and by elevating Joachim's writings, as they promised Eternal Gospel of Rev. 14: 6, to a rank equal with and superseding the Bible.
7. This new heresy was attacked by William of St. Amour in an attempt to bar the Mendicants from teaching positions in the university of Paris and in general. He adopted, nevertheless, the idea of a final period of peace before the end. The defender of the Dominicans and the lax Franciscans was Thomas Aquinas, who expected a universal dominance of the Roman Catholic Church before the end.
8. The Franciscan Spiritual understanding of Joachim was continued, in the face of its disproof by the events and of its condemnation by the Church, by Peter John Olivi, who identified the hierarchical Church with the apocalyptic Babylon, and by Ubertino de Casale, who identified the papacy with the apocalyptic Beast. Also Segarelli and Dolcino are related to this tradition, who expected the reform of the Church to come about through the medium of some Perfect Pope.
9. Roger Bacon shared in these postmillenarian expectations of a reform of the Church; but in him all the definiteness of the Franciscan Spiritual interpretation of the Joachite views and of these views themselves was stripped off.

10. Arnaldus of Villanova, like Bacon interested in nature study and, as medic, in a study of the human body, expanded the chiliastic speculations so as to include social and physical changes. He saw the hoped-for reform predicted in the Apocalypse under the sixth seal, expected the reform to be accomplished by an angelic pope, and paved the way for the combination of chiliasm with theosophy. He also developed the suggestion of communism, which lies in the community of goods practiced at first by the Jerusalem Church, and the medieval ideal of apostolic poverty, in the communistic di-reaction. John Pupper of Goch later echoed these notes.
11. Peter Aureoli, a theologian, thought his age was the sixth age, the time of the first resurrection, of which he conceived as a renovation of the whole world, freeing it from error and atrocities, and which age had begun with the labors of Dominic and Francis.
12. Milicz of Kremsier viewed heretics, Beghards, etc., as Gog and Magog, from whom the Church must and will be purged before the consummation. He also had a suspicion that the emperor might be antichrist.

While virtually all these medieval chiliasts were of the Pure Church and the postmillennial type, they expected or saw the appearance and overthrow of antichrist before the initiation of the millennium, and in so far they kept the millennium in its proper place as indicated in the order of John's visions. It is only in modern Postmillennialism, as it seems, that the figure of antichrist is either toned down or else transposed from its position preceding the millennium to a position at its end. As in the case of Premillennialism and the Ancient Church, so in the case of Postmillennialism and the Medieval Church, the development of the central idea and ideal was rather complete, and the *Modern Church* fell heir to both, the ancient political ideal and the medieval ecclesiastical ideal. A brief review of what it did with these two ideals completes our short historical survey. Naturally the picture becomes far more complex than it ever was before. We follow the chronological order in listing the more prominent names.

1. The early Anabaptists combined both premillenarian and postmillenarian elements. Hans Hut and Melchior Hoffmann were premillenarian, expecting the initiation of the

millennial reign by Christ in His return. But at Muenster the revolutionary activism of Jan Mathijs and Jan Buckelsen, trying to establish the kingdom by force, implied post-millenarian assumptions. Their revolutionism goes back to Thomas Muenzer. The Huterian Brethren, who practiced community of goods, never shared it. The Muenster anti-nomianism was continued by David Joris and Henry Nicholas in a pantheistic sense. The early Anabaptists cherished both the Pure Church and the Kingdom ideal, since they viewed themselves as the former and tried to establish the latter by force.

2. The English Congregationalists adopted and incorporated a postmillenarian article in their modification of the Westminster Confession, the Savoy Declaration, in 1658.
3. At about the same time the Fifth Monarchy Men appeared in England, who were laboring for the establishment of the reign of Christ or the Fifth Monarchy of Daniel. A trifle later their insurrection under Venner compromised Independency with Charles II.
4. Meanwhile, Valentine Weigel had made the combination of chiliasm with theosophy in continental Lutheranism. He conceived of the Age of the Spirit, which is Christ's rule in us, as imminent and as bringing the end of commerce and of procreation.
5. Jacob Boehme continued the combination of chiliasm with theosophy. On the one hand he extended salvation beyond the sphere of the knowledge of the Gospel to that of the Inner Light, but on the other his theosophy was dualistic, holding no hope for the final restitution of all creatures. The nature of the saved he expected to be androgynous.
6. The Behmenists of England were monistic, teaching the restitution of all things, the devil included. Jane Leade and John Pordage were leaders among them. Pantheism and mysticism outweighed their Christianity. Jane Leade had visions of the divine virgin Sophia. They were contemporaries of the Fifth Monarchy Men.
7. In the Netherlands, Jodocus van Lodensteyn thought of a monastic reform of the National Church, and Jean de Labadie took such a reform in hand, trying to establish the Pure Church of the Regenerate only.

8. Johannes Cocceius became the father of dispensationalism, cutting the difference between the Mosaic and the New Testament dispensation so deep as to impair the unity of the Covenant of Grace, though he expected the reign of Christ and the conversion of Jews and Gentiles to come about swiftly at the end without a millennium.
9. Philip Jacob Spener, the father of Lutheran Pietism, was chiliastic, expecting a period of the Pure Church, toward the end of which period there will be a lack of faith.
10. J. W. Petersen, Lutheran superintendent, and his wife, E. von Merlau, passed from Pietism to chiliasm and from that to theosophy, receiving verification of the doctrine of the restitution of all things by direct revelation. He began the list of dispensations with a first one at the creation of the angels and closed the list with a last one for the salvation of the devil.
11. Wm. A. Brakel placed a millennium between the antichrist and Gog and Magog, but expected no physical return of Christ for its initiation. He taught three New Testament periods preceding it: one of the apocalyptic seals, covering the period of the early persecutions of the Church by the pagan Roman Empire; one of the apocalyptic trumpets, covering the period from Constantine the Great till the close of the Reformation about 1560, during which time the antichrist became dominant; and one of the apocalyptic vials, covering the period after 1560 and bringing the judgment on antichrist and the gradual destruction of his rule. To Brakel the beast was antichrist in his political aspect and the false prophet was antichrist in his ecclesiastical aspect, and antichrist was the pope. Brakel's millennium was of the Pure Church type but had also Reign-of-Christ elements.
12. The sufferings of the Huguenots under Louis XIV gave rise to the French Prophets, who appeared first among the Camisards in the Cevennes, but spread to other countries in the flood of refugees. In England they made rather a stir for a short season, and in Germany they communicated prophetism indirectly to groups in the Wetterau.
13. F. A. Lampe was postmillenarian and expected the destruction of the pope and the Turk at the beginning of the millennium and the final judgment at its end. He gave a great impulse to experientialism.

14. Among the Reformed of Germany chiliasm became premillenarian in the person of Jung-Stilling, whose millennial expectations embraced both the Pure Church and the Reign of Christ.
15. J. A. Bengel was the first Lutheran chiliast who succeeded in giving chiliasm scholarly dignity. On the basis of intricate calculations he expected the second advent of Christ to come in 1836.
16. Among the followers of Bengel. F. C. Oetinger combined chiliasm with Swedenborgian speculations. He believed in communication with the dead; that is, spiritism; as did Swedenborg.
17. Swedenborg himself interpreted the second coming of Christ as an inward experience which to his mind constituted the establishment of the Church of the New Jerusalem. He identified angels with dead men in happiness and devils with such in despair.
18. F. Flattich, among continental Lutherans, identified the religiously indifferent civil governments of the time of the enlightenment with Babel.
19. The Holy Alliance, entered into by Alexander I of Russia, Francis I of Austria, and Frederick William III of Prussia, had a post-millennarian coloring traceable to the influence of Madame de Kruedener, a pietistic friend of the Tzar. Its hollowness contributed to the antipathy of political liberals to Christianity.
20. Among chiliastic organizations the Catholic Apostolic Church is prominent. It became fully organized with twelve modern apostles in 1835. It enjoyed, according to the brief of its members, the revival of the charismatic gifts of prophetism and the speaking in tongues. Its apostolate it conceived of as a restoration of Christ's second apostolate, originally represented only by Paul and serving the conversion of the gentiles, and postponed because of corruption. But the corrupt Church, Babylon, is now ripe for judgment. The great tribulation will intervene between the resurrection and rapture of the saints and the overthrow of Satan. Then the millennial reign of Christ and His saints will come. For the escape of believers from the great tribulation they invented a ceremony of sealing.

21. Of about the same time dates the other important chiliastic church organization, the Plymouth Brethren. They have no apostolate, but have the guidance of the Spirit. They distinguish an initial second coming of Christ to reward His people according to their conduct and a further coming of Christ with His people for the judgment of the living nations. While the Irvingians believed sealing was necessary for escape from the great tribulation, the Darbyites held that no Christian shall pass through it. The teachings of the Catholic Apostolic group and the Plymouth Brethren have greatly influenced recent Premillennialism.
22. In America, Wm. Miller became the father of Second Adventism from 1831 onward. His date-setting failed and was abandoned, but his followers organized in several groups, including the Seventh-day Adventists.
23. Sabbatarian were also the followers of Johanna Southcote.
24. A number of chiliastic organizations arose which practised communism, and the United States became their refuge. In themselves too small to count for much, their oddities attract much attention and thus give occasion for much indirect influence of some of their ideas.
25. Joseph Smith, the father of Mormonism, incorporated in his parody of Christianity chiliastic elements, as appears in the name of the Latter Day Saints.
26. Christian Science is akin to theosophy, and the question may be asked, in how far modern theosophy has been fed by the theosophic strains which have appeared again and again in modern chiliasm.
27. The followers of Charles Taze Russell and his successor, 'Judge' Rutherford, recently posing as Jehovah's Witnesses, must be mentioned. Mathematical calculations connected with the measurements of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh are combined with superficial and misleading scriptural exegesis in support of views which include such heresies as the denial of the deity of our Lord.
28. The Princeton theologian Dr. Charles Hodge must be mentioned as a Calvinistic Postmillenarian who expected the universal preaching of the Gospel to result in the conversion of Jews and gentiles and a final period of great prosperity

of Christianity before the appearance of antichrist and his overthrow by the Lord.

This diversity and complexity of the modern chiliastic chart reflects the diversity and complexity of modern Christianity, from which all outward controls have effectually disappeared. This situation makes it difficult to put into a few words any further brief characterization of these views. It is, however, possible to disentangle certain definite strands from the web; such as communistic chiliasm, sectarian chiliasm, political chiliasm, theosophical chiliasm, and dispensational chiliasm. These strains run parallel to the old distinct types of premillenarian and postmillenarian chiliasm and combine with either the one or the other in varying measure, and they embody in a greater or lesser degree either one or both of the old ideals of the Pure Church and of the Reign of Christ. At the same time they furnish the categories into which our criticisms of the historical course of Christian chiliasm must fall.

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SECTION 69

Text 21:1-27

And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away; and the sea is no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: 4 and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away. 5 And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true. 6 And he said unto me, they are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is a thirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. 7 He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 8 But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorveres, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.

9 And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, and were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb. 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountaingreat and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God her light was like unto a stone most precious as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal: 12 having a wall great and high; having twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13 on the east were three gates; and on the north three gates; and on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he that spake with me had for a measure a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. 16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve

thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal. 17 And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. 18 And the building of the wall thereof was jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto pure glass. 19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the several gates was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. 22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof. 23 And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb. 24 And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof: and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. 25 And the gates thereof shall in no wise be shut by day (for there shall be no night there): 26 and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it: 27 and there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that maketh an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Initial Questions 21:1-27

1. What did John see - vs. 1?
2. What is the source of the new Jerusalem according to vs. 2?
3. What does vs. 3 tell us about God's ultimate relationship to man?
4. Discuss the things that God will take away - vs. 4? Is this a vital part of the Christian's hope?
5. What is the source of newness in the universe - God or man - vs. 5?
6. Read John 7:37f, and then discuss the last part of vs. 6.
7. To whom does God promise Eternal Life according to vs. 7?
8. Does vs. 8 imply that there are going to be people that are lost?
9. What did the angel show John according to vs. 10?
10. Why is there no Temple in the City of God - vs. 22?

The Vision of the New Heaven and a New Earth
Chapter 21:1-8

After the overthrow of the last enemy of righteousness, Satan, we are provided with a vision of the heavenly city of God. Here we have vouched safe to us the eternal and glorified state of God's elect. The language comes from the glorified imagery of Isaiah 65:17, etc. John's basic source throughout *The Revelation* is the O.T. He uses the prophetic concepts of restoration as a new creation, a new Palestine, a new Jerusalem, a new Temple, and a new earth. But John is never describing a materialistic kingdom; he always has in view "the Jerusalem above, our mother" (Gal. 4:26). The persecuted Church is now the glorified bride of Christ! John has already received three basic visions: "(1) The Seven Churches (1:9-3:22); (2) Process of world judgment (4:1-16:21). (3) Climax of Judgment 17:1-21:8." and now the last one (4) "The Eternal City (21:9-22:5)." The obstinately sinful have all been cast into hell. Jerusalem the city of the great King is the symbol of the translated Church. The kingdom of God is complete.

Verse 1

"I saw a new heaven and a new earth." All old things are gone. In the new earth dwell only new men in Christ. "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things are passed away; behold they are become new." (II Cor. 5:17). Paul and John are in agreement about new creatures and the passing away of the old order.

Verse 2

"The holy city, new Jerusalem" was descending from its heavenly origin. Men did not design nor build this city whose foundations were not laid by human hands. We have heard the call to the marriage supper of the Lamb in Revelation 19:9. The new Jerusalem "coming down out of heaven from God, having been prepared as (*hōs* - like - a bride) a bride having been adorned for her husband." Jerusalem is compared to the bride of Christ in this verse (see Ephesians 5:32; Isaiah 54:1).

Verse 3

John had previously stated that "the Word tabernacled among us" (John 1:14) now, "the tabernacle of God is with men." In the city where God dwells, there are the redeemed inhabitants, fellowship with God and man, security, peace, safety, and the beauty of paradise. Sin, death, and tears of pain are forever barred from the new Jerusalem.

Verse 4

"God will wipe off every tear out of their eyes." Why? Because death, (*penthos* - means outwardly expressed grief) grief and pain are no longer threats to man. He and all creation has been redeemed and "the first things are passed away."

Verse 5

God alone can make things new! The united nations, human legislation, disarmament conferences, International law, one-world government will all fail to bring about the desired end of a new world wherein dwelleth righteousness. This message is a hard blow to proud, humanistic, naturalistic man who believes that he is capable of building a better tomorrow through research, applied technology and subliminal research, etc.

God created the church of Jesus Christ to fulfill "the ministry of reconciliation" by proclaiming the "word of reconciliation" as ambassadors of Christ (II Cor. 5:17-21). ("The unwanted walls"—the present author is presently preparing a volume, with this title, dealing with the problem of the nature of the Church and its implications for contemporary Ecumenical and Roman Catholic discussions about the unity of the Church). Paul's Ephesian Epistle speaks of the "constituency of the church," "the construction of the Church," "the purpose of the Church," "the unity of the Church," and "the practical implications of its God given unity." Mankind is divided as never before! The purpose of the Church is to unify mankind through the word and ministry of reconciliation. How effective have we been?

Verse 6

The great heavenly voice said to John "It has occurred." What has occurred? The purpose of God has been fulfilled! The true and faithful words mentioned in vs. 5 have now come to pass. Our Lord said "he that hungereth and thirsteth after

righteousness - shall be filled." In the city where there is no night, either physical or spiritual, "the fountain of the water of life" has been opened. God invited all inhabitants to partake.

Verse 7

Here we learn of God's demand for victorious Christian living. Can a man once saved ever be lost? The exhortation found in this verse would have no relevance whatsoever if it is impossible for a Christian pilgrim to become lost in his journey to new Jerusalem. Who shall inherit all things according to John? "The overcoming one (the one who continually overcomes) shall inherit these things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son."

Verse 8

What are some of the characteristics of those who shall not inherit sonship and citizenship in the heavenly city?—The cowardly and unbelieving and having become foul, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars" shall be cast into hell. Paul tells the Churches of Galatians the same thing in Gal. 5:16-26. Paul says, "that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (vs. 21). These practices are in diametrical opposition to the spiritual conditions of the dwellers in the new Eden.

The Vision of the New Jerusalem Chapter 21:9-27

Verse 9

The heavenly messenger who bore the seven bowls of anger appeared again. John was invited to see "the bride, the wife of the Lamb." Keep in mind that John saw "the new Jerusalem coming down—as a bride having been adorned for her husband." Now, John is commanded to "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

This verse through 22:5 gives us the description of the city.

Verse 10

What did the angel show John on "the great and high mountain?" Here we have a clear identification of the Church of

Jesus Christ as being object of the imagery of New Jerusalem (also the bride). New Jerusalem is no utopia where men live in peace which they have created by intelligent planning, and rational discussion; it is rather the body of Christ His triumphant Church. (See 17:7 where John speaks of his vision of the great harlot city).

Verse 11

The city of the redeemer has a permanent quality which all mortal cities lack. "Having (permanent possession) the glory (this is the very presence of the living God - Exodus 40:34) of God; the light of it was like. . .jasper." The jasper was the last stone on the breastplate of the High Priest. It was used in the walls of New Jerusalem 21:8; and also the foundation of the city where new men dwell.

Verses 12-27

The following block of scripture, in which we find the figurative description of the house of the holy, is largely self-interpreting. All of the things which men value are used in the construction of the city. (See Ezekial 48:31ff.) The number twelve appears repeatedly throughout this section. It was probably a symbol of perfection. The measurements given are unfamiliar to most of us. Verse 16 mentions 12,000 furlongs. This distance would be approximately 1238 miles. Verse 17 speaks of 44 cubits. Originally a cubit was represented by the distance between the elbow and the tip of the middle finger (approximately 18 inches).

Only "the ones having been written in the Lamb's scroll of life" shall inhabit the holy city.

We shall provide a skeleton outline of the chapter.

- I. The Description of the Spiritual Conditions which exists in the City 21:2-8.
 1. From God, not man; 21:2.
 2. Tabernacle of God among men, 21:3.
 3. No Pain nor sorrow, 21:4.
 4. New 2:5.
 5. Eternal Life, 2:6.
 6. For those who are more than conquerors, 2:7,8.
- II. Physical Description of the City, 21:9-22:5.
 1. The Bride, the wife of the Lamb, 22:5.

2. Perfect Cube of 1500 miles, 22:16,17.
3. 12 Gates represents 12 tribes of Israel, 22:12,13.
4. 12 Foundations, 12 Apostles, 22:14.
5. No physical Temple, 21:22.
6. Glory of God lights the city, 21:23; 22:5.

III. The Unique Marks of Identification of the City.

1. The City of God, place where the saved dwell.
2. The Body of Christ.

Discussion Questions Chapter 21

1. What is the origin of the holy city according to vs. 2?
2. What other N.T. book uses the metaphor of the church as the bride - see vs. 2?
3. Discuss the relationship of human efforts to create a better world and the fact that only God can make things new - vs. 5.
4. What does vs. 7 say for or against the denominational doctrine of "once in grace always in grace?"
5. Are the bride and the new Jerusalem the same - vs. 9?
6. What other city did John see in a vision - vs. 10?
7. Discuss the physical imagery John used to describe the spiritual city of God in chap. 21.
8. What hope would chp. 21 have given the persecuted Church in the 1st century? What hope does it give us today?

Special Study

Jerusalem in History and Imagery

Jeremiah cried out—"Is it nothing to you all ye who pass by" (Lam. 1:12) as he observed the city of Jerusalem in ruin. The greatest events in human history have occurred in that city.

The twentieth century man's eyes are filled full of slain cities. The city of Jerusalem has been slain often. God chose to erect the throne of His kingdom outside the walls of that city. Jerusalem (in fact all of Palestine) is strategically (geographical) located - (see F. M. Abel, *Géographie de la Palestine*, 2 volumes, Paris, Librairie Lecoq, and his *Histoire de la Palestine depuis la conquête d'Alexandre jusqu'à l'invasion Arabe*, 2 vols, Paris, 1952. The religious significance of Salem

of the Jebusites is of the utmost importance in biblical history. The Archaeological and topographical importance of the city of David is beyond dispute. Contemporary Jerusalem is symbolic of divided mankind. The city of the great king is now dominated by those who reject Him as Lord.

Jerusalem is mentioned six hundred and forty four times in the O.T. alone. It is, without question, the most important city in both the O.T. and N.T. Before Jerusalem became the biblical symbol of the City of God (Rev. 21:1ff) it was populated by the Jebusites (see Joshua 15:36; Judges 19.10,11; I Chronicles 11:4). The Jebusites either retook the fortification, or else had never lost it, because David took the strong hold (II Samuel 5:6,7). Solomon made bond servants out of the Jebusites (I Kings 9:20).

The Hebrew etymology of *Yerushalaim* is impossible to determine with certainty. But it is clear that part of the word is composed of *shalem*, peace.

Ancient Jerusalem stood on four different hills. Contemporary topographical research has necessitated that many traditional terms and identification be corrected. There are three valleys which surround Jerusalem. The Kidron (or the valley of Jehoshaphat—see Joel 3:1ff—this valley is the valley of God's judgment) is three miles long and divides Jerusalem from the mount of Olives. The valley of the cheesemakers (The Tyropoean valley) separates the western and eastern hills. The Hinnom valley was the western and southern boundaries of Jerusalem. It is called the valley of the sons of Hinnom (Ge-Hinnom). This valley was the central location of Molech worship; and later it became the place where the city refuse was burned. (Note this imagery in order to better understand why it was one of the N.T. words for Hell!)

Archaeological excavation has enabled scholars to basically reconstruct the pre-Israelite period of the city. The Israelite period can be reconstructed both from the biblical records and the illumination which archaeology provides. The major excavations have been carried on by Wilson-Warner (1867-70), Schick-Guthe (1880-81), Bliss-Dickie (1894-97), Parker (1909-11), Weill (1913-14, 1923), Macalister-Duncan (1923-25), and Cranfoot (1927-28).

Archaeology and exegesis of the biblical text are complementary in asserting that ancient Jerusalem was on Ophel. The writer of Chronicles states that Ophel was strongly fortified (II Chron. 27:3). "Manasseh built an outer wall to the city of

David—and compassed Ophel about with it and raised it up to a very great height" (II Chron. 33:14). Excavators have uncovered long stretches of the walls of the city. Josephus (*Antiquities*, chp. 7, iii, 2) states that David surrounded this city with walls, and named the city after himself ("the city of David"). Some of the unearthed walls run the length of Ophel, and are twenty four feet thick in some places. (We cannot here consider the more complicated problem of the range of application of the term *Zion*, but see the bibliography below.)

Jerusalem was rebuilt on the old location after the exile (Nehemiah 2:11-15, and chp. 5-7). After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by Titus, the Roman general—Jerusalem has a new history which is not our concern in this brief appendix.

The city of the great King provides a vantage point for looking eastward and westward. This is the point at which God chose to enter human history "in the fullness of time" (Gal. 4:4). It was the point of origin of the church, the place where the Gospel was first preached. Christ told His disciples to begin at Jerusalem and go to the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8). The way of the witnesses began at Jerusalem!

Both the city of Jerusalem and The Temple play a great part in the imagery of etchings, great music, and for our special concern, *The Revelation*. (For excellent introductions to *The Temple* see Parrot's work listed in the bibliography and G. Ernest Wright's *The Temple in Palestine - Syria*, pp. 169 - reprinted in *The Biblical Archaeologist Reader*, edited by G. Ernest Wright and David Noel Freedman, N.Y. Doubleday and Co., Inc., (paperback).

Jerusalem is called The Holy City in Matt. 4:5 and 27:53. This secondary name was utilized by the author of beautiful song, *The Holy City*. Note the imagery in the words!

Last nite I lay asleeping, there came a dream so fair,
I stood in old Jerusalem, beside the Temple there,
I heard the children singing, and ever as they sang
Methought the voice of angels in heaven in answer rang,
Methought the voice of angels in heaven in answer rang,
Jerusalem! Jerusalem, Hark, how the angels sing,
Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna to the King!

And then me thought my dream was changed,
The streets no longer rang,
Hushed were the glad hosannas the little children sang.

The sun grew dark with mystery, the morn was cold and chill,
 As the shadow of a cross arose upon a lonely hill,
 As the shadow of a cross arose upon a lonely hill,
 Jerusalem! Jerusalem, Lift up your gates and sing,
 Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna to your King.

And once again my dream was changed,
 New earth there seemed to be,
 I saw the Holy City, beside the tideless sea,
 The light of God was on its streets, its gates were open wide,
 And all who would might enter in, and no one was denied,
 No need for moon or stars my night, nor sun to shine by day,
 It was the New Jerusalem that would not pass away,
 It was the New Jerusalem, that would not pass away,
 Jerusalem! Jerusalem, Sing for the night is o'er,
 Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna for evermore,
 Hosanna in the highest, Hosanna to your King!

The words of our Lord show His compassion, yet stern judgment of "the Holy City." "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent unto her."--- Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:37f). The Holy Spirit directed John to use the imagery of the holy city or the new Jerusalem in Revelation 21:1ff). It was in Jerusalem that The Temple, as place of worship, existed; the place of sacrifice was established; the Sanhedrin, Priests, Prophets, Apostles, and our Lord walked. God chose this point as the center from which biblical Christianity was to be taken into all the world. Jerusalem, thus began as a Jebusite fortification and ended up as the symbol of the *City of God*. In this city there is no sin present. The great victory of God in Christ has enabled the conquerors through Christ to dwell in the city where there is no death, tears, nor fears. *Paradise Lost* (Genesis, chp. 3f) has now become *Paradise Regained* through the atoning power of the blood of the Lamb. "Only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life" shall inhabit the new Jerusalem!

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Note: Sermon Suggestions

The Seven Matchless Marvels of The City of God

(See Edward A. McDowell, *The Meaning and Message of the Book of Revelation*, Broadman, pp. 212).

These seven characteristics can be developed individually or as a theme sermon discussing all seven features.

1. "The New Jerusalem is perfect in her glory." One could study the O.T. and N.T. doctrine of the glory of God, the dwelling place of God, etc.
2. "The New Jerusalem is a city of perfect worship." (See the *Special Study* on Worship). Study the O.T. and N.T. teaching about God's revealed form and content of worship which is acceptable to him. Study also non-biblical forms of worship and non-Christian religions and their forms of worship.
3. "The New Jerusalem is perfect in its universality." All you who accept Jesus as Lord shall dwell here regardless of nationality, education, degree of wealth, or color.
4. "The New Jerusalem is perfect in its holiness." The inhabitants are all pure because Christ has presented His spotless bride to the Father. This city is not a utopia which has been created by social engineering, but rather is the city of God. God has eliminated all traces of sin, both in man and the whole of creation (see Romans 8:18-25---"the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." More than man was effected by the Fall, the whole creation was involved).
5. "The New Jerusalem is the city of perfect life." What would a perfect life be like? What do we think would be involved in a

perfect life in Christ? List both positive (things that would be) and negative (things that would not be) characteristics.

6. "The New Jerusalem is the city of perfect light." The metaphor of light is used in non-Christian religions, in the literature of the Qumran Community (Dead Sea Scrolls), and in the Word of God. John said in him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness---Verse 9 - There was the true light - even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world." (John 1:4,5,9.) Jesus Christ said, "I am the light of the World"---(See also the theme of *Light* in I John).
7. "The New Jerusalem is the city of perfect dominion." Originally God gave man dominion over all creation. Sin came and marred this God given right to reign over the things of creation. Now, in the city of God, sin has been cast out. Perfection is regained. Man now serves and worships the Lord God of creation and redemption. "They shall reign forever and ever."

Note: An excellent study of the Biblical Theology of Newness can be found in Roy A. Harrisville, *The Concept of Newness in the New Testament*, an Augsburg Publishing House Theological Monograph, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1960.

Concerning the biblical vocabulary for newness there has been propagated some erroneous lexicographical information through R. C. Trench, *Synonyms of The New Testament*, 9th edition, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1953, pp. 219-225; Hermann Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*, T. T. Clark, Edinburgh. This lexicon gives the Hebrew (O.T.) Word and the Greek Word used to translate it. It is now dated by Kittel's *Wörterbuch*, but is an excellent beginning study in vital Biblical Theology Vocabulary, as it enables one to begin tracing biblical terms from Hebrew O.T. through Septuagint to the New Testament.

Johannes Behm wrote the article covering the vocabulary *kainos* and *neos* in Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum neuen Testament*, Stuttgart, Germany and its deficiencies demanded further investigation. Dr. Harrisville's work fulfills that need. The Following data shows the content of the monograph. There is much excellent preaching and teaching data in this work.

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SECTION 70

Text 22:1-5

And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb, 2 in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him; 4 and they shall see his face; and his name shall be on their foreheads. 5 And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

Initial Questions 22:1-5

1. Jesus identified the "rivers of living water" as the Spirit in John 7:38. What possible significance can the river of water of life have in vs. 1?
2. What was the purpose of the fruit of the tree of life - vs. 2?
3. What will God's servants do in the New Jerusalem - vs. 3?
4. Discuss the paradox of reigning (see vs. 5) servants (see vs. 3). Servants are not generally spoken of as reigning.

Epilogue: The Last Words of the Angel,
the Seer, and the Savior
Chapter 22:1-21

The great drama is over and righteousness has prevailed! God is sovereign; His Lordship is universal. The Seven Churches of Asia Minor have been warned and exhorted. These warnings and exhortations need to be heard afresh in our own day. We have seen the performances of *The Seer*, *The Savior*, and *The Saved* in the drama which depicted the struggle between good and evil, truth and falsehood, light and darkness.

We have spanned the years from the tragedy of *Genesis*, chapter 3, *Paradise Lost* to *Revelation* - chp. 22. *Paradise Regained* (study and compare the biblical themes and imagery used by Dante and Milton).

Verse 1

The refreshing waters of eternal life can come from only one source, "out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Man's primitive innocence has been regained at the expense of "the Lamb slain before the foundations of the world." The imagery John employs reveals the rich abundance of our salvation. The symbolism of the garden paradise points to a perfect environment for perfect man (the new man in Christ). Man was banished from his garden paradise because of his sin (Gen. 3; He has been restored by God in—Christ). Compare this with the city (the great harlot) which was destroyed in chp. 18:21ff. The light, joy, fellowship are gone forever!

Verse 2

In God's city there is the tree of life and the river of life. The tree bears fruit each month (abundance). Even the leaves of the trees are for "healing (*therapeian* - is one of the N.T. words for worship. It is also a medical term found in the medical papyrus of the period. Sinful Man is sick. Only God's work through Christ can make man well again!) of the nations."

Note: God's Holiness is Man's Wholeness!

Contemporary man is seeking therapy for his malady. There is more counseling, psycho-therapy, etc., being done in our age, both in and out of the Church, than ever before in the history of western civilization. Men are trying to find out what life is all about. What is the

significance of our lives? Can we ever *be* what God made us unless we possess the holiness of God? How is *your* spiritual life? Do *you* actually find healing in your worship (the word *therapein* is one of the many N.T. words translated worship) of the living God on the Lord's Day?

The nations of the earth are seeking wholeness through the medium of councils and discussion groups. John says that God alone can provide the means whereby sinful, fallen man can be whole again. Only "eternal life heals the scars of sin and misery."

Verse 3

In the city of God nothing is accursed. The assertion of equal sovereign is most clearly declared by the Spirit guided John. "And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it (the garden paradise); and his slaves will serve him (*latreusousin* - originally means to serve for pay. In both O.T. and N.T. the word in its various forms are used with reference to the public worship of God in Christ. (See Acts 26:7; Romans 9:4; Hebrews 9:1,6).

Verse 4

God withheld His face from Moses (Exodus 33:20,23). Our Lord said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). Paul said, "Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord:"----(Hebrews 12:14). He also declared to the congregation at Corinth that - "Seeing it is God, that said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" - (II Cor. 4:6). "For now we see in a mirror darkly; but then face to face:"----(I Cor. 13:12). All of us who strive to serve Christ are anxiously awaiting that hour when we shall see Him face to face. Praise God - for His coming again!

Verse 5

"The light that lighteth everyman that cometh into the world" is the sole source of light in the paradise of God. Those who are citizens" will reign unto the ages of the ages." John has mentioned the glorious eternal reign with our Lord Jesus Christ already in 1:6, 3:21, 5:10. We reign with Him because we have been made into children of the King of kings; therefore, we are in the royal lineage.

SECTION 71

Text 22:6-7

6 And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass. 7 And behold I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.

Initial Questions 22:6-7

1. What must shortly come to pass - vs. 6?
2. Does it make any difference to God whether or not we obey the words of the prophecy - vs. 7?
3. Does "this book" refer to the entire New Testament, The Book of Revelation, or both - vs. 7?

Verse 6

What is the source of the message which John has received while banned on Patmos? Is the message authentic? Is the man who was "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day" writing down the *Word of God* or the *Words of a Man*? "The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets" is the ultimate source of John's *Revelation*. God had "sent His angel to show (to show openly or make public) to his slaves the things which must (*dei* - all degrees of necessity) occur quickly" (*tachei* - shortly when time is the emphasis or quickly when suddenness of the action of the verb is involved). The adverb modifies the verb occur, thus it tells us how it is to occur - suddenly).

Verse 7

Listen! "I am coming quickly." Jesus is coming again - thanks be to God! His coming will be certain, sudden, and silent. Will *you* be ready? In this verse John uses the last of the Beatitudes of *The Revelation*. "Blessed is (not in text) the one keeping (the one who constantly keeps). The person who only keeps God's word when he feels like it or on special occasions will be condemned.) the words of the prophecy of this scroll." We must point out that often we hear people quote this verse and apply it to the entire Bible. Note that John is led by God's spirit to say—"the words of the prophecy of this scroll;" therefore, John's warning actually applies only to *The Revelation*.

(Though in principle it applies to all of God's Word). The only way for us to be ready when He comes as a thief in the night is to be "hearers and doers of the Word." We can "constantly keep the words of prophecy of this scroll, only by doing the truth.

SECTION 72

Text 22:8-9

8 And I John am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel that showed me these things. 9 And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God.

Initial Questions 22:8-9

1. Should not John know that Christians are not supposed to worship angels - vs. 8?
2. Does the angel accept John's worship - vs. 9?
3. What does the angel command that John do - vs. 9?

Verse 8

John failed to learn his lesson from the heavenly messenger in 19:10. John attempted to worship an angel and the angel rebuked him. Here again, John "fell to worship before the feet of the angel" who had revealed the holy secrets to him. The following rebuke is in harmony with the general biblical attack on the flourishing angel-worship in Asia Minor.

Verse 9

John was emphatically rebuked the second time. John was so emotionally involved as he was trying to write down the last words of the angel's message that he became more enthralled with the messenger than with his good tidings. The angel declared that he was a faithful follower of the Word of God, but that this did not give him any special standing before God. Even angels are creatures and not the creator.

SECTION 73

Text 22:10-16

10 And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand. 11 He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still. 12 Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is. 13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. 14 Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city. 15 Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.

Initial Questions 22:10-16

1. The angel told John that "the time is at hand." "At hand" for what - vs. 10?
2. What is the relationship between being righteous and doing righteousness - vs. 11? (The same for the filthy.)
3. Does this imply the finality of a man's spiritual condition at the coming of Christ?
4. What is the basis of Christ's reward - vs. 12?
5. What do the names given in vs. 13 tell us about the one coming quickly - vs. 12?
6. What is the basis of discrimination for those who would come to "the tree of life" - vs. 14?
7. Will anyone be excluded from the City of God - vs. 15? How does the content of this vs. harmonize with universalism?
8. Does vs. 16 make it very plain that Jesus is not to be identified with the angel messenger?

Verse 10

Daniel (12:4) was told to "shut up the words, and seal the book," but John is commanded seal not (*mē sphragisēs* - the not is the first for emphasis - certainly do not do it. The word seal occurs 18 times in *The Revelation*. It signifies to confirm or to seal up for security) the words of the prophecy of this scroll;

for the time is near" (*eggus* - means close at hand). The prophecy contained in *The Revelation* was (and still is) relevant. It is to be studied. We are to read and hear its message. It is a time for opening up the sealed mysteries of the book, not for sealing them up.

Verse 11

This is a clear refutation of the doctrines of purgatory and second chancism. John claims that the state of both the righteous and the unrighteous will be fixed. There will be nothing nor anyone who can modify their state. "The one acting unjustly, let him act unjustly (*adikēsato* - 1st aor. imperative - signify that the condition of the person is categorically sealed) still; and the filthy one, let him act filthily (this is the same form as above and signifies the sealed condition of the filthy one); and the righteous one let him do righteousness still; and holy one let him be made holy still." The force of this verse is crystal clear. This verse is a complete refutation, from the biblical view point, of universalism—the doctrine that everyone will ultimately be saved.

Verse 12

The reward bearer is coming! He will "render to each man as his work (collective noun) is" (*estin* - present tense - as his work is when the reward comes).

Verse 13

These titles of the reward bearer have been discussed in the *Special Study on The Titles for Christ in The Revelation*.

Verse 14

"Blessed are (not in the text) the ones washing (*plunontes* - present participle) their robes, in order that (*hina* - purpose clause) their authority will be over the tree of life, and they enter by the gates into the city." Every Christian has a robe of righteousness. We weave it by the thread of our thoughts, words, and deeds. There is no power in the entire universe that can cleanse a dirty robe, except the foundation of blood which was opened up on Calvary to cleanse the filth of sin from our souls. Its purging power is adequate! Thanks be to God that we have had recourse to the constant cleansing of the blood of the Lamb. Only those who continually come to the cleansing foundation have a right to the tree of life which is within the walled city of God.

Verse 15

John says again what he has already stated in 21:8, 27. Will anyone be excluded from the city? Emphatically the answer is Yes. We have a new outcast in this verse that has not been mentioned before - dogs. The dog is an image of the lowest, most defiled object in the East. (The dog in the East is like the frog - hated and despised).

Verse 16

Jesus Christ provides the divine attestation of *The Revelation*. He has authorized John to write down the vision and send them to the Churches. Who is the one who gave the divine stamp of approval? He is "the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star." (See the *Special Study on Titles for Christ in The Revelation*). The Messiah - Redeemer has authorized this work be sent to the Churches in the name of the Lord of the Universe.

SECTION 74

Text 22:17

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.

Initial Questions 22:17

1. How does the Spirit call men - vs. 17?
2. Who is the Bride - vs. 17?
3. How does the Bride call me - vs. 17?
4. Is the individual Christian responsible to invite those outside of Christ to accept Him as Lord - vs. 17?

Verse 17

The great invitation is extended—"Come" (*erchon* - the command is sounded). "The Spirit and the Bride" give the

invitation by co-witness. Both, the Holy Spirit and the Church of Jesus Christ bear the same testimony. "And the one hearing (this is singular and means that every single Christian is to issue the invitation) let him say, Come." The personal responsibility of *each Christian* to bear testimony to the Lordship of Christ is here asserted. The contemporary Church is snarled up in the clergy - system. Congregations hire "a minister" to do the work that God gave the entire Church to do (see Ephesians 4:11-16). (Compare Paul and John's metaphors for the Church of Christ. See the brilliant work by L. Cerfaux, *The Church in The Theology of Paul*, Herder and Herder, New York, 1959; Excellent, by Roman Catholic Biblical Theologian). "And the thirsting one let him come. The one wishing (wanting to) let him take the water of life freely."

SECTION 75

Text 22:18-19

18 I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: 19 and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.

Initial Questions 22:18-19

1. What warning does God give us in vs. 18?
2. What will God do to those who disobey - vs. 18?
3. Does God condemn taking away as well as adding to this word - vs. 19?
4. How severe is God's judgment upon all adders or subtracters of His Word - vs. 19?

Verse 18

Jesus is still speaking (see vs. 16). "I witness to everyone hearing the words of the prophecy of this scroll, if anyone adds

to these things (*auta* is a neuter plural - to them), God will add upon him the plagues having been written in this scroll." We must all heed Jesus' warning - do not tamper with the Word of God! God revealed it just as He wanted it. If He would have needed our advice, I am quite certain that He would have asked us. The emphasis in this verse was do not add (*epithē*) to God's revelation.

Verse 19

In this verse we read the same warnings being issued to those who would subtract from the Word of God. This is such a serious matter that God imposes a very severe judgment upon the person who takes away (*aphalē*) from the Words." What is judgment? "God will take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city"-----.

Either adding or subtracting from God's Word are explicitly condemned. God expects us to witness to His Word - neither more nor less!

SECTION 76

Text 22:20-21

20 He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: Come, Lord Jesus.

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.

Initial Questions 22:20-21

1. Will the committed Christian be waiting for Christ's return?
2. John expressed his desire for Christ's coming again. How did he show this concern - vs. 20?
3. What does the word grace mean - vs. 21?

Verse 20

"The one witnessing these things says, yes, I am coming quickly." The phrase "I am coming quickly" is used three times

in this chapter 22:7,12,20. John heard this majestic declaration and responded with a shout of joy - "Amen, Come, Lord Jesus."

Verse 21

The man who suffered persecution on Patmos rather than to deny his Lord, concludes *The Revelation* which he received "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day" with "the grace of the Lord Jesus be (not in text) with all."

We can thank our heavenly Father that He vouched safe these holy visions to *The Seer* who continues to inspire *The Saved* with the thought of the coming again of the cosmic conqueror - *The Savior*, Jesus Christ.

This great N.T. book is not for the curiosity seeker or religious fanatic, but for all those who would continue to the end - for the same shall wear the robe of righteousness and the crown of life. We must guard these with our very life because the righteousness is not our own but His; the crowns we do not merit either.

Discussion Questions Chapter 22

1. What other section of O.T. Scripture does the imagery of vs. 1-3 describe?
2. What does being "blessed" in vs. 7 imply?
3. Is it ever acceptable with our Lord to worship a creature, even if an angel - vs. 8?
4. How does the angel's command to John differ from God's command to Daniel - vs. 10?
5. Will a lost sinner who has died ever get another opportunity to accept Christ - vs. 11?
6. What is the condition which must be met before we have a right to the tree of life - according to vs. 14?
7. Who sent His angel according to vs. 16?
8. Who issues the great invitation in vs. 17?
9. What will happen to the person (or persons) who add to or take away from God's Word according to vs. 18-19?
10. How does John respond to Christ's declaration in vs. 20?

Note: "Christ in You The Hope of Glory!" (Col. 1:27)

Contemporary man is seeking for a source of hope, but he is more than reluctant to accept the biblical ground of hope - "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Ibsen depicts modern man in most penetrating imagery. He wrote of a man who viewed the crucifixion and had a toothache; he remembered the toothache but forgot about the crucifixion.

Man could not exist long without the grace of hope. What is unique about the Christian's hope? Why should all men turn their hope toward Jesus Christ?

Hope is always our aspirations projecting toward the future. Paul says that—"Now abideth, faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love" (I Cor. 13:13).

The Christian's hope does not come from within himself, but is grounded in the work and victory of God in Christ. The Christian's hope is not ultimately grounded in a doctrine, but in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Peter tells us that God - "begat us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Peter 1:3). He also admonished us to be in a state of readiness"---to give an answer (*apologia*) to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you,"---(I Peter 3:15).

In order to provide some basic *sermon suggestions on the biblical doctrine of hope*, we shall provide an outline of Wm. Barclay's study listed below in the bibliography. (See pp. 42-46 of that work. Also check the various vocabulary of O.T. and N.T. usage in a concordance).

- I. In what does the Christian hope consist?
 1. Hope of the resurrection (Acts 23:6).
 2. It is the hope of the glory of God (Romans 5:2).
 3. Hope of the new covenant (II Cor. 3:12).
 4. Hope of righteousness (Ga. 5:5).
 5. Hope of salvation (II Cor. 1:10).
 6. Hope of eternal life (Titus 1:2; 3:7).
 7. Hope of the second coming (Titus 2:13; - I John 3:3).
 8. Hope which is laid up in heaven (Col. 1:5).
- II. What are the Sources of Hope?
 1. Product of Experience (Romans 5:4).
 2. Product of the Scripture (Romans 15:4).
 3. Being called of God (Ephesians 1:8).
 4. Product of the Gospel (Col. 1:23).
 5. Dependent on work of our Lord (Col. 1:26; I Tim. 1:1).
- III. What great things happen by Hope?
 1. Hope comes through grace (II Thess. 2:16).
 2. Through hope that we rejoice (Romans 12:12).
 3. Saved by hope (Romans 8:24).
 4. Keeps Christian steadfast (Hebrews 3:6; 6:11,18).
- IV. What are the Foundations of Hope?
 1. Hope is in Christ (I Thess. 1:3).
 2. Hope is grounded in God (I Tim. 4:10).
 3. Hope looks to God (I Peter 1:21).

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- William Barclay, *More New Testament Words*, Harper Bros. N.Y. 1958.
- J. B. Bauer, editor, *Bible Theologisches*, Wörterbuch, Austria, (Roman Catholic).
- Wm. Childs Robinson, *Christ—The Hope of Glory: Christological Eschatology*, Eerdmans, 1945. Good study by basically conservative Calvinist who was aware of the relevant literature which had been published up to time his work became available, 1945. (See also George E. Ladd's two works listed in general bibliography. Dr. Ladd is professor of the Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. The school is now in a time of crisis because of a general attitude toward The Bible. Some there are taking a mediating position toward The Scriptures.
- X. Leon Dufour, editor, *Vocabulaire de Theologie Biblique*, 1962, Editions du cerf, Paris, (Roman Catholic).
- Kittel, editor, *Article-elpis* (Greek for Hope); Wörterbuch, Austria.
- Alan Richardson, editor. *A Theological Word Book of The Bible*, MacMillan and Co., New York, 1956, (now in paperback).

Note: These works do not always show a high regard for the scripture, except Ladd's and Robinson's works.

We have now come to the end of our journey through the blood-stained pages of a period of history of the Church written by Martyrs' blood. But we can only say with the author of the great hymn—

My Hope is Built on Nothing Less

My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus' blood and
righteousness;

I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in
Him be found!

Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne!

Refrain

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand. A-Men.

SERIES OF SPECIAL STUDIES

Special Study

N.T. Archaeology and The Book of Revelation

(Compare Sir W. M. Ramsay's, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia* listed in the bibliography below with W. Barclay's *Letters to the Seven Churches*, London, 1957).

The only area where extensive archaeological excavation has been carried on with regards to *The Revelation* is the seven cities of Asia Minor.

1. *Ephesus*. The city was the center for the worship of the great diana (Acts 19:23ff). Emperor worship and all kinds of magical arts were also involved in the religious activity of the citizens of this city.

2. *Smyrna*. This city was a Greek colony over a thousand years before the birth of our Lord. The modern city of Smyrna lies almost directly over the ancient site. This made extensive excavation impossible. We are dependent on ancient written materials for our archaeological information.

3. *Pergamum*. Here, several religious cults made their home. The god of healing, *Asklepios* was chief among the many gods worshipped by the people. Probably, the most important single discovery made here was the giant altar to the god Zeus. This altar has been reconstructed and is presently in a Russian Museum.

4. *Thyatira*. Here Apollo and the female diviner, Sibyl were worshipped. The very serious error of Montanism had a great following in this city at least as early as 150 A.D. (Keep in mind that archaeology provides written materials as well as cities, temples, and other artifacts, etc.

5. *Sardis*. The most important single archaeological find here was the bilingual text in Lydian and Aramaic. It dates from the 10th year of the Persian king Artaxerxes.

6. *Philadelphia*. It was strategically located for the defense of the entire Phrygian territory. There is almost nothing from this city but coins and inscriptions.

7. *Laodicea*. There is no new information about this city available. Ramsay's work is the best to which we have access.

There has been extensive excavation in only three of the seven cities—Ephesus, Sardis, and Pergamum.

Bibliography for Further Study

For excellent, non-technical reports on contemporary excavation see:

The Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Drawer 93A, Yale Station, New Haven, Connecticut. See also *The Biblical Archaeologist* - same address as above.

Near Eastern Archaeology, *Bulletin of Near East Archaeological Society* - edited by Joseph P. Free, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois (student membership, \$5.00).

Books

W. M. Ramsay, *The Letters to The Seven Churches*, N.Y., 1905. This is still an excellent work. Before more recent excavations in the geographical area covered by *The Revelation*, this work was indispensable. The bulletins listed above will give information of contemporary work which has been and is still being done - which is vital for the archaeology of *The Revelation*.

J. A. Thompson, *Archaeology, O.T. Pre-Christian Centuries, N. T.*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids - second edition, 1959. This text is a popularly written well informed statement by an alert Evangelical O.T. scholar. It is an excellent guide for Bible Study groups, and should be in the Church Library.

Merrill F. Unger, *Archaeology and The New Testament*, Zondervan Pub. House, Grand Rapids, Michigan; 1962. Chp. 15, pp. 274. This is a very alert work by an Evangelical (a Dispensationalist) of Dallas Theological Seminary. This is the best intermediate text for the study of N.T. archaeology that is presently available.

Wright, G. Ernest, *Biblical Archaeology*, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1957. Get the newer edition, if possible.

Note: W. G. Kümmel, *Promise and Fulfillment: The Eschatological Message of Jesus*, SCM Press, London, 1961, English edition.

Dr. Kümmel now occupies the chair formerly held by the leading European theologian, R. Bultmann (with the sole exception of Karl Barth). Because of its highly specialized character, we shall only raise the problem involved in Dr. Kümmel's work, and then direct you to the great work by the Dutch Calvinist, Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom*, Presb. and Reformed Pub. Co., Box 185 Nutley, New Jersey. Dr. Ridderbos' work is a much greater one than is Dr. Kümmel's and we have the extra advantage of his absolute commitment to the Word of God as special revelation.

Dr. Kümmel's thesis is that Jesus asserted that He would return within the span of the apostolic period. This coming again was not realized; therefore, Jesus was mistaken about His eschatological message. Dr. Kümmel claims that the biblical use of the terms *eggus* and *eggizein* necessitate that we hold to the doctrine of an immediate coming of Christ. Since there has been an almost 2000 year gap and still Jesus' words have not been fulfilled, He must have been mistaken. If He was mistaken, then He certainly could never be our Lord and Savior. Conscientiously study the two works listed in this note and you will see that our Lord was not mistaken, and we still anxiously await His appearance!

Earlier in this commentary we referred to the problem of Time and Eternity in Biblical Theology. Instead of writing a brief separate study we chose to include that problem in our *Special Study of a Theology of History*. See that *Special Study* and the appropriate section on time and eternity.

Special Study

Some Major Doctrines in The Revelation

We aspire to give, in brief scope, of the major doctrines in the works of John, but our specific point of departure will always be

The Doctrine of God

The doctrine of God which we encounter in *The Revelation* stands firmly on the O.T. foundation by claiming that God is one. The monotheistic emphasis is clearly revealed in John's cry that God is the "Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End." He is the creator, as John asserts—"for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created" (4:11). The whole earth is admonished to "worship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters" (14:7). He alone is holy, and the four living creatures sing the praises of God - night and day saying "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God"----(4:8). He alone is true. The martyrs cry—"How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (6:10). He will also call the dead into account. "And I saw the dead, the great and

the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works." And the sea give up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades give up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." (20:12-13). It is imperative that we keep in mind that these characteristics, and others we have not mentioned are also attributed to Jesus Christ.

The Doctrine of Angels

One need not read too extensively into contemporary literature on the biblical doctrine of angels until it is painfully apparent - that this doctrine is a stumbling block to our scientific age. Again and again we have read how this doctrine is dismissed as first century Rabbinical superstition, which the biblical authors (and our Lord also - John 1:51) unfortunately shared. Though we cannot critically discuss this matter here, we must note that the contemporary non-Christian mind has rejected every form of the traditional proofs of God's existence from Augustine, Aquinas, Newman, and all contemporary efforts to reconstruct these proofs in order to make them logically and psychologically compelling. They are not logically compelling to the intellectual of our day! When these arguments for a supernatural Being are repudiated, then it should come as no surprise to us that the biblical doctrine of angels, demons, etc. (the entire spirit world) is also rejected, because of the claim that the church is unable to provide defensible reasons for believing in angels as actually existing beings. Anyone can believe anything he choose, but if we are to attempt to communicate to the contemporary educated world, then we must provide *reasons* for believing a given doctrine if the belief in angels is to be elevated to a rational belief!

For our brief purpose here, we can do no better than to point out that the deity of our Lord is at stake. He affirmed that there are such beings as angels, and if He is mistaken, then He could hardly be the person who He claimed He was - God in human flesh.

Angels are referred to at least 73 times in *The Revelation* (though I do not thereby claim that the word always means the same thing in *The Revelation*). Each of the seven churches have an angel which is specifically referred to in chapters 2-3. In the

series of judgments, angels often revealed to John the content of his vision such as—"and he cried with a great voice, as a lion roareth"----(10:3). (Check Young's concordance for the 73 occurrences of angels and study the full doctrine).

The Doctrines of Heaven and Hell
(Hades is not equivalent to Hell)

It is common knowledge that the world view of The Bible has been under attack from the earliest negative critical period to Bultmann. Biblical cosmology does not present the universe as a three layered phenomenon - the heaven above, the earth as center (this is Aristotelianism but not the Biblical view) and hell below, as has been repeatedly claimed.

The Seer's doctrine of heaven includes instructions for all who would be inhabitants of the city of God. Only those who are faithful to the end - the same shall be saved! Only those who hear and heed the call of the Spirit and the Bride shall enter the new Jerusalem. Those who are victorious because of the victory of the Lamb will populate God's heaven. In *The Revelation*, heaven is the region from which God judges the world. Heaven is also the dwelling of the blessed. John said—"I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away."----(21:1). Heaven will not be a utopia (etymology means - no place) created by applied technology and social engineering, but will be a reality when God's will and purpose is fulfilled.

Hell is a very unpopular doctrine in our day. How relevant to daily living is the biblical doctrine of Hell? How does the Bible harmonize God's righteousness, justice, mercy, and love with its teaching about final and irrevocable judgment upon those who are not found in safety of the everlasting arms of Christ? John tells us who will not enter the heavenly Jerusalem—"But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death"---(21:8). (Also see the brief appendix on *Yes, There Is a Hell!*)

The Doctrine of Hades

"HADES (*hades*), the region of departed spirits of the lost (but including the blessed dead in periods preceding the Ascension of Christ). It has been thought by some that the word

etymologically meant the unseen (from *a*, negative, and *eidō*, to see), but this derivation is questionable; a more probably derivation is from *hado*, signifying all-receiving. It corresponds to "Sheol" in the O.T. In the A.V. of the O.T. and N.T., it has been unhappily rendered "Hell," e.g., Psa. 16:10; or "the grave," e.g., Gen. 37:35; or "the pit," Num. 16:30,33; in the N.T. the Revisers have always used the rendering "Hades;" in the O.T. they have not been uniform in the translation, e.g., in Isa. 14:15, "hell" (marg., "Sheol"); usually they have "Sheol" in the text and "the grave" in the margin. It never denotes the grave, nor is it the permanent region of the lost; in point of time it is, for such, intermediate between decease and the doom of Gehenna. For the condition, see Luke 16:23-31.

The word is used four times in the Gospels, and always by the Lord, Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; it is used with reference to the soul of Christ, Acts 2:27,31; Christ declares that He has the keys of it, Rev. 1:18; in Rev. 6:8 it is personified, with the signification of the temporary destiny of the doomed; it is to give up those who are therein, 20:13, and is to be cast into the lake of fire, ver. 14."

The above quotation has been taken from *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, with their Precise Meanings for English readers, W. E. Vine, M. A., Fleming H. Revell Co., Westwood, N. Y., p. 187-188, fifth impression, 1952.

The Doctrine of The Devil

The high strategy of Hell is to convince us that Satan does not exist! Paul said that Satan fashions himself into an angel of light. John presents Satan as the great dragon; and he is unmistakably "the prince of this world." The great trinity of evil is very explicitly declared in the book of the visions of victory. The first Epistle of John also has a strong doctrine of "the anti-Christ." John speaks of "a synagogue of Satan" in the city of Smyrna. This phrase clearly speaks of a gathering of people who enthralled by Satan, and the power of darkness. Chapters 12 and 13 present us with the most extensive discussion of Satan in the book of the Seer of Patmos. The fall of Satan is mentioned in 12:7ff, and is in complete harmony with the O.T. teaching about Satan, his fall and his angels of darkness. This doctrine is not a late Rabbinic tale full of sound and fury signifying nothing.

John also gives expression to the doctrine of Satan in the Gospel record 8:44 (see also I John 3:10) compare the doctrine of evil, the personal forces of darkness in the Gospel, the Epistles, and The Revelation. How relevant is this teaching to our contemporary world situation?

The Doctrine of Christ

The grammatical structure of the title of *The Revelation* shows that the book intends to reveal the person and work of Christ. Dr. Merrill Tenny's work on *The Revelation* (pp. 117) already mentioned in the commentary) contains a chapter just loaded with excellent preaching materials on the doctrine of Christ in the last book of the Bible. (See also the materials on John's Christology in Charles, Swete and Gebhardt listed below in the bibliographical note. (Advanced students will need Holtz, *Christologie der Apokalypse des Johannes*.)

John's first vision shows Christ as Lord of the Church 1): 12-17). The second vision reveals the Lamb, into whose power and wisdom has been committed the judgment of the non-Christian world (5:1-14). In the third vision He is the Word of God leading the redeemed in their march of victory (19:11-16). The last vision places Christ in the midst of the new city of God.

The prologue introduces Christ communicating to the entire universe (1:108). The first vision presents Christ in the Church (1:9-3:22). The second vision reveals Christ in the Cosmos (4:1-16:21). John's third vision shows the Christ in Conquest (17:1-21:8). The last great portrait John provided of Jesus is the Christ in Consummation (21:9-22:5). This excellent outline could be used as one sermon on the *Christ of The Revelation* or as a series of portraits of Christ from the pen of the prophet from Patmos. (See *Special Study* on the great themes of *The Revelation* which provide great preaching materials from this sadly neglected book. The book is difficult, but as a part of God's final revelation it should receive more attention in the pulpit than it does.

The Doctrine of The Holy Spirit

There is nothing new added in *The Revelation* about the Holy Spirit, which is not already available in the other N.T. literature. We might expect to find an extensive presentation of the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the only N.T. book of prophecy, but, as a matter of fact, we find very little specific teaching about the Holy Spirit. Yet, it is John that gave us some of the most extensive discussions on the Holy Spirit in the entire N.T. (see John chps. 14:16f, 15:26f, 16:1-14).

John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day" (see 1:10; 4:2 - for the phrase "in the Spirit"). He also speaks of "spirit of error" and "the spirit of truth" (1 John 4:6). He also warns Christians not to believe every spirit, "but prove the spirits, whether they are of God:". . . In *The Revelation*, John clearly speaks of the personality of the Spirit as independent of the Father and the Son (1:5; 4:5; 22:17; 2:7; 14:13). The activity of the Spirit is delineated in 5:6 ("...which are the seven spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth.") The Spirit speaks to the churches in 2:7, 11, 17) and gives the last invitation to "Come" in 22:17.

We have been invited to the great banquet hall of Christ through the proclamation of the word of God - impowered by the Holy Spirit!

The Doctrine of The Eternal Gospel

John does not employ the word evangelize (or any form of it) in any of his writings, but he does give us an amazing picture of an angel flying in the meridian with the eternal Gospel. All can hear this messenger of God! (For an excellent, brief study of the word Gospel - *euaggelion* see Swete's great work, *The Gospel According to Mark*, Eerdmans', reprint, p. 1). The Greek words *aiōnian euaggelioai* should not be translated "the everlasting Gospel" as is found in A.V. The content of this good news is the announcement of the coming again of Jesus Christ and the final results which this coming will bring to the whole of mankind. John reveals the audience of the angel in these words "unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people."----- God's message of judgment is not the message of an angry God, who demands that man placate His wrath. God's will has been and remains the same, only those in Christ can escape God's judgment of condemnation. Study the entire section of scripture - 14:6-7, where this angel and the Eternal Gospel is mentioned.

The Doctrine of Christian Life

All of John's writings speak eloquently of the Christian Life. His First Epistle is preoccupied with *The Tests of Life*. What is the difference between a Christian and a non-Christian life? John answers to this question. The First Epistle asserts that we walk in the light when we love in the Christian

sense, when we believe the truth, and when we behave in accordance with that belief - see Robert Law's classic work on the First Epistle - *The Tests of Life*. The Christian life is a pilgrimage to the heavenly city. Only those who persist unto the end shall wear the victor's crown. Only those who thirst for the fountain of the water of life (21:6; 22:17) have yielded themselves to the master.

We note a great emphasis on the prayer of life of the saints in *The Revelation* (see 4:10, 11; 5:8-10, 16-18; 7:10; 15:3-4; 12:10, 11; 19:1-7). The same book calls sinning Christians and entire congregations to repentance (chps 2-3). Only the persistent pilgrim will walk in the streets of the new Jerusalem (also see *Special Study on Victory* in this commentary). See the brief discussion and bibliography for further study in the *Special Study on The Anti-Christ* in this commentary.

The Doctrine of The Consolation of The Christian

What possible consolation can there be for Christians who are passing through the fires of persecution? What can words do to comfort? Often it seems to be the Christian's ultimate blessing to hope against hope! John claims that Eternal Life is the Christian's present possession. The ultimate consummation of Eternal Life will come when God's purpose is fulfilled and the curtain comes down on the great drama of *The Revelation*. Our consolation comes through the forward look of hope. Christian hope is not an effort to escape from reality or to avoid this world, but we look forward to that hour when Jesus comes again. In that hour "we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). Thanks be to God that "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1). This is our sole source of consolation whether during first century persecutions or present burdens.

The Doctrine of The Judgment

John dramatically pictures the great judgment morning in 20:11-15.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead,

the great; and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it; and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, even the lake of fire. And if any was not found written in the book of Life, he was cast into the lake of fire."

John clearly states that there will be a day of reckoning for all men. Education, wealth, social status will not avail any thing on that day! Even those who have died in the past will not escape, because God shall call them to life again and will judge "according to their works whether bad or good." There is no possible way to escape God's judgmental condemnation, except one be found in Christ.

The Doctrine of Works

At least since Luther's interpretation that redemption involved "Faith Alone" (*ganz allein*) from the human side, the tension between Faith and Works has generally permitted protestant thought. Paul and James are very clearly not making contradictory claims about Faith as Luther claimed. One of John's central concerns in the Gospel and First Epistle is to show that belief and behavior are inseparably related. (Note that the golden text - John 3:16 - contains not the noun faith, but rather a present tense form of the verb - "God so loved. . . , that whosoever keeps on believing (present tense verb) on him should not perish, but have eternal life." It is one of the purposes of verbs in any language to show the type of action being performed by the subject of a sentence. One should be amazed, even upon a first reading to note the doctrine of works in *The Revelation*. Exegetically, we can easily establish that the works which John speaks of as essential for the ultimate victory of the Christian are absolutely necessary for our redemption. Psychologically it is not difficult for us to understand how Luther could revolt against the Roman Catholic system of works, which dominated the practical life of the medieval church, but it does not follow from Roman Catholic perversion, that the Bible claims that a sinner need have only faith if he would be saved. (Note the often quoted passage in Acts 16:31—"Believe on the

Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved". . . . The form of believe is very clearly a verb and not the noun form, faith.

John claims that men will be judged "according to their works" (20:1-15). John is not speaking of legalistic works, as if we were still under Old Testament authority, but of works which flows out of the committed life. Protestants in general will acknowledge that a true believer produces good fruit, but John is going far beyond this claim; he is claiming that we cannot be saved without these works. The faith that John is speaking about (like Paul and all other N.T. authors) produces "the endurance of the saints 2:19; faithfulness in persecution 2:13; 13:10" (see Charles pp. cxv-cxvi).

The Doctrine of The Church

John uses both the plural and singular form of the word Church in *The Revelation*. John moves from seven actually existing congregations in Asia to the imagery of The Bride of the Lamb (Rev. 21:9). The imagery of the marriage of the Lamb is clearly a metaphor for the Church (19:7ff). "The Spirit and the Bride say, come." (22:17).

The Church's ministry is not discussed in this last book of the New Testament, but Swete is certainly mistaken in asserting that John—"speaks of the itinerant, charismatic, ministry of Apostles and Prophets, but not of the bishops or presbyters and deacons who were doubtless to be found in the Christian communities of Asia" (Swete, p. CLxvii). The New Testament is too clear on the matter of the nature of the ministry, and government of the Church for us to spend much time refuting Swete's assumptions based on later ecclesiastical development.

The Church is the fellowship of the redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. The Church is ultimately victorious, because of the victory of the Lamb. John speaks of individual congregations, Christians and The Church Triumphant in the City of God. The Church alone will be ready when the Lord of Glory appears a second time to render judgment. Only the persistent pilgrim can shout with John—"Come, Lord Jesus" (22:20).

Note: The following works will be helpful in further study of the great doctrines available in John's works.

R. H. Charles, *The Revelation of St. John*, volume I, section 12, pp. cix to cxvii. Some Doctrines of our author. He discusses - The Doctrines of God, Christ, the Spirit, Works, the first Resurrection, the Millennium, and the second Resurrection.

Hermann Gebhardt, *The Doctrine of The Apocalypse* and its relation to the Doctrine of the Gospel and Epistles of John, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street, 1878. This is a great, old work, but is still quite readily available as a used book, though sometimes quite expensive. There is a vital need for a new work of this subject in view of the vast contemporary critical literature on *The Gospel, The Epistles, and The Revelation of John*. This work is filled with running debate with the leading 19th century theologians therefore much of the content is irrelevant except for considerations in Historical Theology. The same is also true of the great theological commentary on the First Epistle of John, Robert Law, *Tests of Life*, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark. This is an excellent examination of the First Epistle of John and should be reprinted.

Gebhardt considers the doctrines of God, Angels, Heaven, The Devil, Perdition, the Earth and Mankind, Christ, The Spirit, The Gospel, Christian Life, Christendom, AntiChrist, The Last Things, The Call to the World to repent, the consolation of the Christians, The Future of Israel, The World in Wickedness, The End of the World, The Coming of the Lord, The Resurrection of Believers, The Judgment, and the Final State. Gebhardt provides an excellent analysis of the major doctrines of The Revelation in pages 1 through 303 from 304 to 424 he compares the theology of the Gospel, Epistles and The Revelation. Gebhardt also shares some of the negative German attitudes of his day toward the Bible and its doctrines. We shall consider only some of the doctrines discussed in the last section of Gebhardt's work.

G. B. Stevens, *Johannine Theology*. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1895. This is still a valuable work to consult, but like Dr. Steven's other works, it clearly reveals that he does not have an adequate view of The Scriptures as the Word of God.

Henry B. Swete, *The Apocalypse of St. John. op cit.*, chp. 14, Doctrine, pp. clx to clxxiii. There is much valuable material in this excellent reprint. Dr. Swete discusses the doctrines of God, Christ, the Spirit, the Church, Salvation, Angels, the Last Things, and Christian hope.

Special Study

Titles For Christ in The Revelation!

(These titles and their significance can provide excellent preaching materials for a series of sermons).

This appendix does not pretend to give an exhaustive list of the titles applied to Christ in *The Revelation*. Neither does it claim anything resembling an adequate discussion of these great names and phrases which describe the nature of the person of Christ, and the function of His work as redeemer.

We shall use Warfield's two general categories for the names of Christ in *The Revelation* (see his work listed below in note pp. 287): (1) Simple Designations; (2) Descriptive Designations. We will not discuss the distinction which must be made between the terms as proper name and as Messianic titles.

Simple Designations

(1) *Jesus Christ* (1:1, 1:5). This compound title is a combination of Jesus, which is transcribed from the Greek name and was used to translate the Hebrew *Jeshua*. The root of this Hebrew name means "He whose salvation is Yahweh." Jesus was a very common name in the first century A.D. Josephus gives over twenty persons with this name. Many of these were contemporaries of Jesus Christ, our Lord. (See Acts 13:6 - "a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus." *Bar* is Aramaic for son; therefore this man was the son of a Jesus).

The other title of the combination, *Christ*, is used in The Septuagint for the Hebrew word translated anointed. (Kings, Priests, Prophets and the Messianic Son of David were anointed.) Jesus Christ summed up all the implications of these two great names in the combination Jesus Christ.

(2) *Jesus* is used in 1:9; 12:17; 14:12; 17:6; 19:10; 20:4; 22:16. See brief discussion above on the compound - Jesus Christ.

(3) *Christ* used in 20:4,6. *The Christ* is used 11:15; 12:10 (compounds used 1:1,2,5).

(4) *The Lord Jesus* is used 22:20,21. The name Jesus has already been mentioned. The other part of this compound title is one of the most important applied to Jesus, so we will give a more extended consideration.

(5) *The Lord* is used in 14:13 (probably); 1:10; and part of title in 19:16 and 17:14. To the infant Christian community in Jerusalem, the ascended Jesus was their God, whom they addressed in prayer and from whom they sought in prayer the activities which specifically belong to God. Quite naturally in these circumstances the chief narrative name for Jesus in Acts becomes the honorific *the Lord*, which is employed about twice as frequently as the simple *Jesus* (thirty one times), and which is occasionally given more precision by taking the form the Lord Jesus or even the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is equally clear that in the use of this term the meaning primarily expressed is the profoundest reverence on the part of the

community before the highest conceivable exaltation and authority on the part of Jesus himself. It is often extremely difficult to determine whether, by *Lord*, Jesus or God the Father is intended. Some scholars maintain that the word *Lord*, appearing alone, always is God the Father in the New Testament.

We would have no problem concerning this title, had it not been for the publication of Wilhelm Boussett's *Kyrios Christos*, and the literature resulting therefrom. Dr. Vincent Taylor suggests an interval after Christ's ministry before the term was applied to Jesus.

What does the term *Lord* imply? What is its source - Hellenistic or Judaistic? How does the New Testament employ the term? Was the deific implication latent in the term before Pauline terminology became the dominant language of Christianity? Conflicting answers are given in Rudolf Buttmann's *New Testament Theology* and Adolf Deissmann's *Light From the Ancient East*. The problem is more than apologetic. It raises the question as to how the believing community regarded Jesus, and the grounds on which their regard rested.

In classical usage, *lord* describes a person who has control over another person or thing, either by right of divinity or by right of ownership. In the case of Christ, these two propositions are inseparable.

In the Septuagint translation, *kyrios* ("lord") is used as the translation of some twenty different Hebrew words and phrases, some of which apply to God specifically, and a few of which apply to man.

The New Testament use of the term involves at least three aspects: (1) "ownership"; (2) right of service"; and (3) "right of obedience." Paul uses this title for God almost exclusively in quoting from the Old Testament.

Elsewhere the term is employed of rulers, Roman deities, both male and female, and as a title of respect. It is used in Acts to show the subjection of the believer to Christ, thus manifesting two of the aforementioned three basic ideas in the term: ownership and right of obedience. Christ is designated in a discourse of Peter as "Lord of all" (Acts 10:36); the Greek for all is neuter, meaning Lord of all things - that is to say, universal sovereign. The phrase recalls the great declaration of Romans 9:5 to the effect that He is God over all. This use might also contain a theocratic suggestion of authority over all things. The sense of majestic exaltation is so clearly implied

we shall not labor its defense. To the early Christians, Jesus was Lord, as Jehovah God was Lord. They were neither led to that declaration nor deterred from it by Gentile applications of the term to their gods and great men.

(6) *The Lord's Christ* (also *God's Christ*) 11:15; 12:10. Here the term Lord is plainly applied to Yahweh. Note also that this term is applied without qualification to Jesus Christ.

(7) *The Son of God* is used in 2:18—(Note Jesus' words - My Father 2:27; 3:5,21). This title categorically asserts the Deity of Jesus Christ. Neither the O.T. nor the Hellenistic usage can possibly account for the biblical significance of this term as applied to Jesus by inspired writers. The title claims that Jesus Christ is unequivocally the Son of God (via His divine nature and not by way of adoption, as sinners *become* sons of God through Christ).

(8) *Son of Man* is used in 1:13; 14:14. This is a title which finds its origin in the Book of Daniel. This is the title which Jesus used - himself. It emphasized His human nature, just as other titles emphasized His divine nature.

(9) *The Word of God* is used in 19:13. (Hebrews 4:12-13; John 1:1-18). For our brief remarks see Special Study on The Biblical Doctrine of The Word of God after Chapter 19.

(10) *King of Kings and Lord of Lords* is used in 19:16 and in varied form in 1:5; 2:1,12; 3:7; 5:5; 17:14. The entire biblical teaching concerning the Kingdom of God in both O.T. and N.T. is summed up when the Seer of Patmos called Jesus Christ - "King of Kings." As Lord of the universe, He will reign over heaven and earth. The O.T. Messiah was to set on the throne of His Father David. Jesus fulfilled the prophetic declarations of the O.T. as He reigns eternally from the throne in the hearts of believers. But even the lost, unbeliever will one day need to acknowledge that Jesus is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords." There is no greater ruler in the universe!

Descriptive Designations (See B. B. Warfield, pp. 290)

(1) "Him that loved us and loosed us from our sins by His blood" - is used only in 1:5. This descriptive title has been basically considered in the text of the commentary. Every Christian must be grateful to Christ for redeeming us by His blood. This is our only hope of escaping the deadly power and guilt of our sins. (Also see note on *Blood* in this commentary.)

(2) The Lamb that hath been slain" - used in 5:12, 5:6,9; 7:14; 13:8. The title Lamb has already been discussed in the commentary. This is the imagery of the sacrificial lamb. Here is a clear and categorical claim for the vicarious atonement by God's Lamb, our Lord! (See *The Hebrew Epistle* for further marvelous claims about Christ's redemptive sacrifice.)

(3) *The Lamb* is used in 5:8, 13; 6:1,16; 7:9,10,14,17; 12:11; 14:1,4,10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7,9; 21:9,14,22,27; 22:1,3. The entire imagery of Isaiah 53:7 (see Acts 8:32f) is brought into play in this symbol. John the Baptist also came heralding - "Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"! John 1:29,36. This is also our unchanging message to the contemporary world which is filled with lost men!

(4) *The First born of the Dead* is used only in 1:5. The Greek word *prototokos* - firstborn is derived from the O.T. - Exodus 4:22, where it is used of Israel; Jeremiah 31:9 where it is used of Ephraim and Psalm 89:27, where it is used of the Messianic King. The implication of the term derives from the fact that God required the firstborn of the flocks, and the first-born male inherited a double portion of the inheritance and the birthright. This background necessary to understand; John's use of the title. (See also Romans 8:29; Col. 1:15,18; Hebrews 1:6.)

The Arians, both ancient and their contemporary counterpart, the Jehovah's witnesses, attempted to use this term to show that Jesus Christ was a created being. This is a far cry from the scriptural assertions that Jesus Christ is God come in human flesh.

(5) *The Faithful Witness* - used only in 1:5. This title describes Jesus as faithfully bearing testimony concerning His heavenly Father. Their will or purpose for and message too - us are identical. "Nevertheless, thy will be done" - Matt 26:39.

(6) *The Faithful and True* - used only 19:11. Again, Christ is described as faithful to His Messianic vocation. He is said to be true. The Greek noun form means truth as distinct from the false, and it also has the connotation of being real or genuine in contrast to the unreal and counterfeit.

Note: For an excellent, but strange source for further study on the implications of the Greek vocabulary for *truth*, etc., see Martin Heidegger's, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, New Haven, Yale University Press. It contains a brilliant analysis. *The Manual of Discipline* (Dead Sea Scrolls) also contains some interesting information on the general Hebrew attitude toward the truth, the real, etc.

(7) *The Amen* is used in 5:14(?); 18:4. The English form is the transliteration of a Hebrew adverbial form of a verb meaning to support, or to confirm. These implications fit neatly into the picture of our Lord given in *The Revelation*.

(8) *The beginning of the creation - of God* - is used only in 3:14. The word translated "beginning" is *hē archē*. From the period of Homer forward it has the significance of beginning, first cause, government, as in Ephesians 6:12. This title declares that Christ is the source and origin of the creation of God (See also John 1:1-18; Hebrews 1:1-4.)

(9) "He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the keys of David, He that openeth and none shall shut and that shutteth and none shall open"—3:7.

(10) *The Lion that is of the tribe of Judah* is used only in 5:4. This title is found only in *The Revelation* (in the N.T.). Jesus is connected with the Davidic throne and the people of Israel. A lion would never be attacked by any animal its size, particularly when it is in its den. When John saw "in the midst of the throne, he saw not a lion, but a lamb standing as though it had been slain." Note the paradox - The Lion and the Lamb!

(11) *The ruler of the kings of the earth* is used only 1:5. Its meaning is clear and is also asserted in other titles.

(12) *The Root of David* in 5:6 only. This title is also found only in *The Revelation* (in the N.T.).

(13) *The Root and the Offspring of David, the bright, the morning Star*. Only in 22:16. The Bright, the Morning Star is found only here in the N.T. (See Numbers 24:15-19.)

(14) "The Son of God who hath eyes like a flame of fire and His feet are like unto burnished brass" - 2:18.

(15) "He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, He that walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks - 2:1.

(16) "He that hath the seven spirits of God and the seven stars" - 3:1.

(17) *He that hath the sharp two-edged sword* - only in 2:12. The Word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword in Hebrews 4:12-13. Here the living word personally wields a sword of judgment, which is also the Word of God! The sword is for the battle with evil.

(18) *The First and Last, which was dead and lived again* - only in 2:8. See the commentary for brief explanation of the verse. The words First and Last are clear claims for the deity of Christ. These titles are taken from Isaiah 44:6 - "I am the

first and I am the last; and besides me there is no God." (See also Isaiah 48:12).

(19) *The Living One* - only 1:18. This participle asserts that Christ is eternally alive. He has forever abolished death!

(20) *Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End* - only in 22:13. R. H. Charles shows that this title was used by the Greeks, Romans and the Jewish Rabbis to denote the entirety of all things.

The term God (*Theos*) is not directly applied to Christ in *The Revelation* but His deity is asserted with the most unequivocal language. Swete (*op. cit.*) has an excellent, brief statement, pp. c 1 XII (p. 162).

"1. He has the prerogatives of God.

2. He searches men's hearts, 2:23.

3. He can kill or restore life, 11:18; 2:23.

4. Receives worship - 5:13.

5. His priests are also priests of God - 20:6.

6. He occupies one throne with God - 22:1,3.

7. Shares one sovereignty with God, 11:15.

8. Christ receives the titles of God - He is the Living One 1:18; Holy and True, 3:7; Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, 22:13.

9. Passages which in O.T. relate to God are without hesitation applied to Christ, e.g., Deut. 10:17; 17:14; Prov. 3:12, 3:19, Dan. 7:9; 1:114; Zech. 4:10; 5:6."

There is some great biblical preaching to be done on the great names of Christ. They describe His person and function of His work. The imagery is not hard to communicate in preaching and teaching.

Note: The following works will be valuable for further study on the titles for Christ used in the N.T. in general, as well as *The Revelation*.

William Barclay, *Jesus as They Saw Him*, Harper and Row, New York, 1962. Very good preaching material.

O. Cullmann, *The Christology of The New Testament*, Westminster Press, Phil. English translation, 1959. Very fine examination of the titles, and their implication for the person and work of Christ. Cullmann is an excellent "mediating," European Lutheran scholar. He has control of the vast range of literature, and he also provides excellent bibliographical information, both of which are imperative in any critical, scholarly work.

Dr. Paul Heinisch, *Christ in Prophecy*, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1956. This contains a very valuable study of the messianic concepts of non-biblical religions as well as the O.T. doctrine of The Messiah. Dr. Heinisch discusses the great messianic titles used throughout the O.T. The discussions are excellent, but the beginner must be warned that he accepts the negative critical results concerning some of the O.T. books. He also includes a chapter on the supposed biblical foundations for the Catholic doctrine of Mary - pp. 237.

S. Mowinkel, *He That Cometh*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1956. The work considers the great Messianic titles. He is the father of Scandinavian O.T. scholars. His scholarship is of the highest order, but he works with the presuppositions of Scandinavian scholarships, and must be used only by those aware of this. There is a great reward here for those able to discriminate.

Vincent Taylor, *The Names of Jesus*, MacMillan and Co., N.Y. reprinted, 1954. Good brief study by a capable, mediating scholar.

B. B. Warfield, *The Lord of Glory: A Study of the Designations of our Lord in the N.T. with especial reference to His Deity*. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, chapter, The Witness of The Apocalypse, pp. 286-297. Warfield was the greatest conservative mind in his field. He was a brilliant Calvinist. This work is still excellent because of his biblical exegesis; but the work is dated regarding the works cited, and general critical attitudes then prevalent. Still excellent for Bible Study and personal study!

Special Study

Introduction

No one could seriously deny that *The Revelation* is a neglected source of biblical preaching today. The present author has been engaged in studying the text of the seer's book since he had a N.T. Seminar in the Greek Text of *The Revelation* during the spring semester of 1960 with Professor S. M. Smith of Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, Indiana.

I have enjoyed countless hours of creative discussion with my dear and beloved friend, Wayne Shaw, minister, Ellettsville Church, Indiana. He and his wonderful wife, Janet, opened their home to me while I was finishing residence requirements for Ph.D. in Philosophy at Indiana University. Wayne is working on a Ph.D. in the Speech Department at Indiana University. He also has the B.D. and M.S. degrees. He plans to teach in the Graduate School of Lincoln Christian College, Lincoln, Illinois, upon completion of his work at I.U. His special concerns are

Homiletics and to help restore great preaching in the Restoration Movement. He graciously consented to prepare this following brief challenge to all preachers of the Word—You Can Preach intelligently from the great themes of *The Revelation*. Some of the great themes listed below come from the seminar on *The Revelation* mentioned above; but the rest of this special study is his generous contribution to this study commentary. May it challenge every preacher to give serious study to the relevant N.T. book of our ages of crises.

A SERIES WITH THE SEER: PREACHING VALUES IN THE REVELATION

by Wayne Shaw

In the opening lines of his book, *As Seeing the Invisible*, D. T. Niles gives an apologetic for studying Revelation, which, at the same time, states its demand to be preached: "The book of Revelation is part of Scripture, so that an adequate understanding of it is essential for a right appreciation of the biblical message as a whole. This is all the more true during times such as these when the sin of men and of nations is yielding such rich harvest, and the common man is asking what the meaning of life's tragedy may be."¹ Quite apart from his liberal attitude toward the Bible, Dr. Niles reminds us that we dare not ignore the ministry of the Word of God in Revelation for two reasons: it is a part of Scripture, and it has a vital message for us in our twentieth century.

For various reasons most preachers slight the Writing of the Revelator in their pulpits today. To some the message is too difficult to decipher and too mystical to proclaim with certainty. To others it is simply not worth the effort to explain the apocalyptic imagery and attempt a vigorous application to present-day man. To still others it seems a winding path far removed from the thoroughfare of first principles recorded in the book of Acts. The Lord's messengers are not so much guilty of adding to or taking away from the words of its prophecy as obscuring its important message by neglect.

Even the brave who plunge in have too often blunted the Revelator's cutting edge by becoming so preoccupied with intricate details that they entangle themselves in an exhausting yoke of bondage. Instead of the book's penetrating relevancy, they

lose themselves in points that can never be settled for certain; but worse, they lose the book's vision of Christ centered in the dramatic description of His church and His creation. "Lord, deliver Thy church from both its de-emphasis and its wrong emphasis of the book of Revelation that has stifled preaching from its pages."

The purpose here is not to provide sermon outlines but to suggest homiletical sources, preaching approaches, and sermon themes from the Revelation; in other words, to help the preacher translate the matter of the commentary into the method of the pulpit.

Homiletical Sources for Preaching from the Revelation

Recent books that offer helpful suggestions include:

1. Clovis Chappell, *Sermons from Revelation* (Abingdon, \$2.00).

2. C. H. Spurgeon, Volume XX of the new series of his sermons published by Zondervan at \$2.95. (Helmet Thielicke, the German theologian, has sparked renewed interest in Spurgeon with his *Encounter with Spurgeon*, Fortress, \$4.75.)

3. R. C. McCan, *A Vision of Victory* (Broadman, \$3.00), combines both exposition and application by first presenting the meaning for the original readers in their day and then probing the problems of today.

4. D. T. Niles, *As Seeing the Invisible*, (Harper, \$3.50), has a section on "Theological Meditations" in which he works the apocalyptic language of Revelation into brief meditations on relevant doctrinal themes for our time.

5. William Barclay, *Letters to the Seven Churches*, (Abingdon, \$2.00), provides resource material for a series of sermons on the seven churches of Asia. Devoting two chapters to each locality, he first describes the situation in each of the seven cities and then explains each letter verse-by-verse.

6. Merrill C. Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation* (Eerdmans, \$3.50), treats Revelation from a permillenarian and moderate futurist standpoint; he attempts to state all views fairly and offers a variety of perspectives for approaching the book homiletically. Not the least of his contributions is his chapter on "The Christology of Revelation," which emphasizes the centrality of Christ in the four visions.

7. Although he takes a liberal approach to some passages, Dwight E. Stevenson, *Preaching on the Books of the New Testament*, opens up an important area for exposition when he explores the possibility of preaching entire Bible books. His chapter on Revelation, entitled "Fire on the Earth," gives the background of the book and suggests five different approaches to a book sermon. He does not intend the volume to replace New Testament study; but rather to serve as a homiletical manual for those who have done their Bible homework.

In no wise do these seven books signify bibliographical completeness; they do illustrate how others have struggled to preach powerfully and relevantly Revelation's message to the church.

Illustrated Approaches for Preaching from Revelation

For several months this writer has studied with special interest the preaching of James S. Stewart, Professor of New Testament, New College, University of Edinburgh, Scotland. This outstanding Scottish preacher has used a variety of approaches to the Scripture texts from Revelation that he treats in his two volumes of sermons, *The Gates of New Life*² and *The Strong Name*.³ A glance at these will show homiletical possibilities for other passages in the book.

His approach in "Clouds and Darkness and the Morning Star"⁴ is to contrast man's doubt of the final purpose of God — "which means to doubt the rationality of the universe, and the significance of human experience, and the worth of moral values —"⁵ with the certainty revealed in Christ. He dramatizes this doubt with the words of Isaiah 5:30, "If one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof"; and then sets Revelation 22:16 over against it, "I am the bright and morning star," stressing the power of Christ's light to scatter the darkness of doubt.

His sermon from Revelation 19:6, entitled "The Lord God Omnipotent Reigneth,"⁶ amplifies three consequences of the topic-text: the liberation of life, the doom of sin, and the comfort of sorrow.

In "The Final Doxology" he offers Revelation 1:5,6 as the one single sentence that summarizes all that religion means to him. His treatment is clearly textual, and he is careful to restate his points as he goes: "Unto Him that loved us"; "Unto Him that loved us, and loosed us from our sins by His blood";

"Unto Him that made us Kings unto God"; "Loved us—loosed us—made us Kings—and made us priests to God"; and "Unto Him who has done all that—loved us and loosed us and made us Kings and Priests—unto Him be glory and dominion for ever."

When he preached on Jerusalem as "The Mother of Us All,"⁷ he chose three texts from the Psalms to capture the meaning of Jerusalem for the Jew; it symbolized his history, his religion, and his home. For his application he used Revelation 21:2, "I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," to tie together symbolically three deep elements of our nature—the hunger for God, the craving for the fellowship of a beloved community, and the instinct of immortality.

The text for his sermon, "The Cry of the Martyrs," comes from Revelation 6:9,10, and raises the problem of evil in the world. The passage means, says Stewart, "that the tragic element in life, as represented by their sufferings, cries out insistently to be interpreted, lays on God Himself the terrible onus of vindicating and justifying the way in which His world is run."⁸ He then offers the divine answer in three words—the patience of Christ, the victory of God, and the communion of saints.

Stewart admirably illustrated the relevance of Revelation in a message entitled "What the Spirit Is Saying to the Churches" when he gave the Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary in April, 1962, on the general theme, "Preaching to This Generation." This writer attended the lecture curious to discover Stewart's theological view of the seven churches and his method of applying this section of Scripture to contemporary needs. As he finished, at least one person in the audience had the feeling, not that he had attended a lecture on Bible history and exegesis, but that the Word of God had been speaking through the preacher to his heart and to his involvement in Christ's Church today. Taking only one point from each of the seven churches, asserting it in the present tense, and making careful transitions between Asia in the first century and America in the twentieth, he led the congregation in Princeton Chapel to participate in the message as they listened. There was no need to tack on an application. Relevance had been there throughout. It had been woven into the fabric. The preacher who can do this with the rest of Revelation will grip his hearers and will bless them as they listen.

Themes for Preaching from Revelation

The plan here is to offer three series of sermon themes from Revelation as connected preaching units around which one can build a course of sermons or Bible study lessons. But employ caution here. Be selective. Better to have several series at spaced intervals than to run on indefinitely. Here, as elsewhere in preaching, length seems to attract boredom. Dr. Andrew W. Blackwood suggests three months as the duration for a course of teaching sermons from a Bible book. Thirteen sermons, then, are maximum; sometimes ten or less make a better unit. The idea is to select carefully from the suggested themes as they speak to your heart and the needs of your congregation.

The first group of themes utilizes the material in the appendix on major doctrines in Revelation. With the topic restated attractively and in the present tense, the preacher can take advantage of the usual curiosity about the contents of Revelation to proclaim the great doctrinal teachings of the book. With his Bible and this commentary before him, the earnest preacher should be able to plan three months of worthwhile preaching from the following topics:

1. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about God"
2. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about Angels"
3. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about Heaven"
4. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Devil"
5. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about Hell (Perdition)"
6. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Earth and Mankind"
7. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about Christ"
8. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Holy Spirit"
9. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Gospel"
10. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Christian Life"
11. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about Christendom"
12. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Antichrist"
13. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Last Time"

14. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Call to the World to Repent"
15. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Consolation of the Christian"
16. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Future of Israel"
17. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the World in Wickedness"
18. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the End of the World"
19. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Coming of the Lord"
20. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Resurrection of Believers"
21. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Judgment"
22. "What the Book of Revelation tells us about the Final State"

The second series of themes comes from D. T. Niles's *Theological Meditations*.¹² The subjects, Scriptures, and topics are included to make the list as helpful as possible; however, the reader should consult Dr. Niles's book to profit from his brief, Scripture-packed, devotional treatment.

1. Title (1:1-2) "The Subject of Revelation"
2. Address (1:3) "The Nature of Time"
3. Greeting (1:4-6) "The Situation of the Christian"
4. Preface (1:7-9) "The Being of God"
5. Contents (1:10,11,19) "The Necessity of Decision"
6. The Opening Vision (1:12-18) "The Object of Faith"
7. The Letters of the Churches (2:1-3:22) "The Verdict of Love"
8. The Throne in Heaven (4:1-5:14) "The Ruler of the Universe"
9. The Four Horsemen (6:1-8) "The Dissolution of History"
10. The Cry of the Martyrs (6:9-17) "The Wrath of the Lamb"
11. The Sealed Multitude (7:1-17) "The Tribulation of Life"
12. The Unsealed Scroll (8:1) "The Redemption of Sons"
13. The Altar in Heaven (8:2-5) "The Hope of the Gospel"
14. The Four Trumpets (8:6-12) "The Fall of Nature"

15. The Shout of the Eagle (8:13-9:21) "The Wages of Sin"
16. The Gospel of Redemption (10:1-11:11) "The Mystery of Mercy"
17. The Last Trumpet (11:12-19) "The Reversal of Man"
18. The Dragon Against the Child (12:1-17) "The Motherhood of Grace"
19. The Four Monsters (13:1-10; 17:1-18) "The Manifolness of Evil"
20. The Mark of the Beast and of the Lamb (13:11-14:5) "The Assurance of Heaven"
21. Four Harvest Cries (14: -13) "The Certainty of Judgment"
22. The Harvest Is Reaped (14:14-20) "The Fulfillment of the End"
23. The Bowls of Wrath and Song of Deliverance (15:1-8) "The Persistence of Pity"
24. The Four Plagues (16:1-9) "The Death of the Soul"
25. The End of Evil (16:10-21) "The Suicide of Wrong"
26. The Judgment of Rome (18:1-8, 21-24) "The Punishment of Power"
27. Lamentation (18:9-20; 19:1-4) "The Waste of Wealth"
28. The Great Hallelujah (19:5-16) "The Consolation of the Saints"
29. The Four Powers (19:17-20:6) "The Foretaste of the Kingdom"
30. Gog and Magog (20:7-10) "The Close of the Ages"
31. The Opening of the Books (20:11-31:1, 5-8) "The Promise of the New"
32. The Eternal City (21:2-4, 9-22:5) "The Coming of the Lord"
33. Seven Last Words (22:6-21) "The Seven Beatitudes"

The third series of themes is more general. It contains random comments on vital contemporary issues without reference to specific Scriptures which may kindle sermonic fires that burn to the depths of human need. The suggested topics are set off by quotation marks followed by the comments.

1. "The Christian View of Tragedy"—suffering, persecution, and our Christian commitment.
2. "Temptation: Individual and Corporate"—the temptation for the individual or the church to compromise in times of trouble.

3. "The Reality of A God Who Cares"—The transcendence of our Creator God and the emmanence of our Redeemer God. God really cares about our needs.

4. "The Lordship of Christ"—in the church, in the Christian life, and in the world.

5. "The Recovery of the Church"—suffering churches in need of repentance are not hopeless, but their recovery depends on their willingness to repent.

6. "Christ's Concern for a Pure Church"—His message to the seven churches.

7. "The Christian View of Progress"—never dependent upon evolution but on God. There is a difference between change and progress. Man is depersonalized in our age of technological advancement.

8. "The Spiritual Struggle Beyond Our Vision"—Satan and the World Powers: there is more to our world situation than meets the eye!

9. "The Victory Which Only God Can Give"—victory comes through God's power, not man's. Our salvation is available only in Christ because of the blood of the Lamb.

10. "Being the Church in Times of Crisis"—Revelation was written against the backdrop of crisis. We are to live *in* but not *of* the world. (The opportunity and the danger.)

11. "The Purpose of God in History"—God's ultimate goal for the world as He makes even the wrath of men to praise Him. What does all that goes on in the world mean to the committed Christian in light of God's power?

12. "The All-Inclusive Judgment"—individual, nation, and international; no individual or nation is exempt.

13. "Living in Two Worlds"—this one and the next; it takes both of them to make sense in light of the Bible's teaching on the healing of the nations.

14. "The Victory of Faith"—faith in God and the victory of the righteous. The nature of the Christian victory compared with non-Christian concepts of victory: barbaric victory via brute force contrasted with victory via the righteousness of Christ.

15. "The Humiliation of Man"—the hopelessness of unaided man, the failure of humanism, naturalism, and rationalism. The tension between the pessimism of God's judgment and the Christian optimism based on the ultimate victory of Christ.

16. "Jerusalem the Golden" (title of a hymn written by Bernard of Cluny in the twelfth century)—Jerusalem in history

and symbol; Jerusalem of the Jews and the New Jerusalem, the Mother of us all.

17. "The Dark Line in God's Face"—the wrath of God demonstrated by pouring out the seven bowls of wrath. How does a righteous God treat man with both justice and mercy?

18. "The Happiest Moment in Heaven"—the marriage of the Lamb as the church realizes its eternal destiny.

19. "You Cannot Hide From God"—there is no hiding place; God's judgment is complete.

20. "The Promise of Christ's Return"—looking, longing, living. Christ's coming: sudden, serious, certain. ("I come quickly" is used three times in chapter 22).

Homiletical Hints for Preaching from Revelation

Andrew W. Blackwood has given abiding counsel on how to preach teaching sermons on Bible books. Clarity, mingled with simple beauty, is not the least among his homiletical virtues. He has packed so much practical advice into one sentence that it could almost be called Blackwood's preaching theory in a nutshell: "In making ready for a sermon with 'teaching—preaching,' the practical aim guides in choosing a text both relevant and clear, in phrasing a topic both appealing and clear, in collecting materials both Biblical and current, in making a plan both sturdy and clear, in selecting a few examples both luminous and clear, and last of all, before the actual writing, in deciding on a way of introduction both interesting and clear, as well as brief and terse."¹³

With its dramatic style, the book of Revelation has always gripped the church's heart and imagination more than her understanding; a course of sermons ought to clarify and make relevant the message without milking it of its grandeur and majesty. The following homiletical hints are offered to guard against dull and boring sermons from a Bible book packed with breathless excitement.

1. Preach, do not lecture. Whenever possible, without doing violence to the text, preach in the present tense to men in need of a word from the Lord today. Far too many messages leave application out entirely or tack it on to the end. It is much better to choose a relevant topic and text, and treat them in a way that builds application into the structure of the sermon. But if the Lord's messenger declares the whole counsel of God, he cannot

always do this, for ancient imagery sometimes obscures the Scripture's timeless relevance—that "principle of penetration" which makes Bible-based preaching possible and vital. However, the three series suggested above help to clear this homiletical hurdle in two ways: first, enough topics are suggested in each series to allow the preacher to select only those that cause an echoing response in his soul or that speak vitally to the specific needs of his congregation; second, they are worded in such a way that their relevance is apparent, and one can then unveil the hidden light that a difficult passage throws on the topic.

2. Vary the structure and treatment within the series from sermon to sermon. Basic, but often ignored, is the homiletical rule of iron that the headings (points) flow naturally out of the topic as important and related parts of a unit; however, from that starting place, a sermon may vary in many ways. You might begin the introduction with an illustration, start another time with a question that goes to the heart of the theme, an interesting narrative, or a life-situation with which the hearers can identify. Vary the sermon structure by merely changing the number of points. Three headings do not guarantee either holiness or success. F. W. Robertson was a master of the two-point sermon. As a working principle, two to five are best; over five, except in rare cases with memorable material, are dangerous, if not impossible, for the congregation. Or preach with a telescope one Sunday and with a microscope the next; use a longer passage, than a shorter one. Partition a text that captures the topic imaginatively; or begin with a major problem confronting the human situation and proceed to the Biblical answer. A notebook kept on the different types of sermon outlines used by able preachers will supply an endless source of tested outline plans.

3. State the headings in complete, parallel sentences, as memorably as possible. One-word-pegs are excellent memory aids, but they should be expanded to complete sentences in order to avoid ambiguity. Rhetorical devices (such as alliterations, analogies, and epigrams) should be used with caution lest they appear clever, strained, or trite; however, used with taste and not too often, they aid the memory and lend clarity and force.

4. Arrange the sermon headings climactically, heeding especially Dr. Blackwood's admonition to follow the Biblical order (evident in the Epistles) of putting doctrine first because it is the most important and duty second because it is the most interesting. This order is theologically sound because Christian

action flows out of Christian belief. In Revelation, John's vision is given by the living Christ to stabilize the faith of Christians who will be tempted to act in unchristian ways because of impending persecution.

5. Be sure to raise the relevancy of the topic in the sermon introduction. Dr. Blackwood warns that unless one puts God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit in the introduction or under the first heading, it becomes increasingly more difficult as the sermon proceeds.

6. Conclude your sermon by leaving the congregation aware that you have preached the Word of God to men in the twentieth century. Remember that the conclusion is your last opportunity to plant the sermon topic in your hearers' hearts. If the introduction and conclusion are relevant, it is easier to make relevant the Biblical truth treated under the sermon headings.

7. Plan to preach at least one book sermon on Revelation. Better still, plan a survey sermon on the message of the book to open the course and a summary sermon at the close to restate the major topics under one majestic theme. This writer utilized Dr. Merrill C. Tenney's excellent chapter on "The Christology of Revelation"¹⁴ to preach a book sermon emphasizing the Centrality of Christ in the drama. Tenney offers the following outline of Revelation: The Prologue: Christ Communicating (1:1-8), Vision I: Christ in the Church (1:9-3:22), Vision II: Christ in the Cosmos (4:1-16:21), Vision III: Christ in Conquest (17:1-21:8), Vision IV: Christ in Consummation (21:9-22:5), The Epilogue: Christ Challenging (22:6-21). For the sermon, the title was changed to "Pictures of Christ in Revelation." The introduction attempted to explain the nature of apocalyptic literature, the value of its hidden message in a time of persecution, and the theme of its dramatic form centering in the leading figure—Christ. The four visions present four pictures of Christ. Vision I: Christ is the Head of the Church, 1-3 (with a brief explanation of His seven descriptions to the churches of Asia). Vision II: Christ is the King of Nations, 4-16 (with a brief explanation of the imagery used in His three titles: Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Root of David, and the Lamb Slain). Vision III: Christ is the Conqueror of the World, 17-21:8 (with judgment as the key theme, His three names are: Faithful and True, Word of God, and King of Kings and Lord of Lords). Vision IV: Christ is the Center of the City of God, 21:9-22:7 (with the following pointing to Him: the Marriage Feast of the

Lamb, the Foundations are His Apostles, the Center of Worship is the New Temple, Christ is the Light of the City, the Citizens are Christ's Redeemed, their Occupation is to serve Christ). Conclusion: the entire message is set in the promise of the second coming of Christ (for the church as a whole, V. 7; for humanity, V. 12; for the individual Christian, V. 20). The sermon outline is offered not as a model for imitation but to illustrate that valid theological language and insight can be put into homiletical form that presents the living Christ as real today as in days long ago when He walked among men by Galilee's sea. Admittedly, there is too much here for one sermon, but at least it offers a perspective and opens doors for a sermon course.

James S. Stewart expressed eloquently the possibilities of Biblical preaching such as we have discussed when he closed a lecture entitled "Exposition and Encounter" with these words: "It is tremendous, this issue which is bound up with our Biblical exposition, this issue of encounter with that living Christ. It is not a moving thought that there may be some who will confess in after years that they owe their soul to some divine encounter during your expounding of the Word and will say, 'I met God there; it was there Christ led me captive?'"¹⁵

FOOTNOTES

1. D. T. Niles, *As Seeing the Invisible* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Pub., 1961), p. 15.
2. James S. Stewart, *The Gates of New Life* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937).
3. Stewart, *The Strong Name* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1940).
4. *The Gates of New Life*, pp. 1-10.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 11-20.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 241-251.
8. *The Strong Name*, pp. 179-186.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 218-228.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 223.
11. *Planning A Year's Pulpit Work* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1942). Recently available in paperback.
12. *As Seeing the Invisible*, pp. 117-183.
13. From his introduction as editor of *Evangelical Sermons of Our Day* (New York: Channel Press, 1959), p. 28.
14. Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), pp. 117-134.
15. Notes from taped lectures taken by the writer at Reigner Film and Tape Library, Union Theological Seminary of Virginia, Richmond, Va.

Special Study

The Biblical View of History

This statement precludes any attempt at being creative while discussing the crucial problem of the Old Testament attitude toward history. Neither of the terms - history nor philosophy, were utilized by the Hebrews.

In any adequate statement it would be imperative that we ask—"what constitutes history?" The designed task in the following pages is to point out the correlative factors of the Hebrew concept of God, Exodus, Election, Covenant, the Servant of Yehweh as the focii of Israel's theology of History."

No attempt shall be made in this statement to discuss the *supposed* variety of concepts of history involved in the motives of the early narratives, The Prophets, The Deuteronomic Historians, The Post exilic Prophets and Apocalyptic interpretation of history. (Daniel, Ezekiel, etc. - this is adequately stated in a chapter by Millar Burrows, "Ancient Israel" in a composite volume edited by Dr. Dentan - *The Idea of History in The Ancient Near East*; and in *The Old Testament Interpretation of History*, by C. R. North. The theses of these works can be answered by elimintary knowledge of the Logic of Science involved in a supposed scientific view of history.)

I shall not labor a defense of the major presupposition of this paper which is the uniqueness of "Israel's Faith." This thesis is maintained by Albright, Rowley, Wright, *et al.*, and I have basic security following scholars of their repute. But the Word of God asserted the uniqueness of Israel's Faith long before any of these internationally famous scholars were born.

No basic advance could be made in a discussion concerning a "theology of History" until we obtained common agreement as to the nature of historical knowledge and the problem of objectivity. The question is—Is *History* a Science?

The question of Historical Relativism and the quest for an absolute standard is settled in this paper by affirming the absoluteness of Israel's Faith. What is the origin and ground of perpetration of this Faith? The Old Testament unmistakably declares that the people of Israel were in possession of revelation from God! This historical revelation is the origin and them in "Events" as well as verbally (i.e., the events were interpreted in The Scriptures). The word of God (I use this phrase in a generic sense. There are several Hebrew words

for the word - but *dabar* carries this implication and means both word and event!) The Events in which Israel's salvation history rested are to be discussed in this paper. Israel was committed to Yahweh; for he was the sovereign God of the universe and His will was being worked out in spite of their freedom to rebel against Him.

The monotheism of Israel is the foundational element in their understanding of history. God manifested Himself in Nature via the great creative events. That the events occurred no one would seriously challenge but the explication of them are beyond any scientific scrutiny. In Israel's thought these were never merely datum; they were datum plus the interpretation of Faith in Yahweh as their God.

The uniqueness of Israel's understanding of God has been and still is challenged by competent scholarship.

A thorough consideration of this subject would take us far beyond the total bounds of this essay, but we shall enumerate some of the hypotheses regarding the source of Old Testament monotheism.

The various elements involved in our cursory considerations all hinge upon Israel's belief in Yahweh as sovereign of all the universe. To know (*Yadah*) God does not signify knowledge obtained via discursive reasoning, but rather an experimental knowledge.

The Wellhausen school maintains that pre-mosaic religion in Israel had been polydemonism. Archaeological investigation repudiate the affirmation that Near Eastern religions sank to such levels. They were polytheistic in character. A study of pre-history and Ethnology would be imperative in an adequate study; because the concepts of so-called primitive peoples are purer than those of their neighbors already engaged in agriculture and cattle raising.

Albrecht Alt's position is that Polytheism is the foundation of worship in ancient Canaan (his most famous pupil, Martin Noth's *History of Israel* is imperative for this school of study.) The "loca numina" were amalgamated with Yahweh in the process of time. This thesis does not consider the crucial point how was the gap bridged from Polytheism to Monotheism. (Journal of Biblical Literature, January, 1958, Part I, Volume LXXVII.)

This monotheism cannot be the result of a peculiar Semitic racial genius. Israel could not have received Monotheism from

neighboring nations simply because those nations did not have it themselves.

A consideration of the age of the documents and the stage of development of the concept of God can never eliminate monotheism from the Old Testament documents or from the "Faith of Israel." The contemporary attitude is based upon the most recent archaeological and Linguistic research and from this datum the historical aspect is reconstructed and the theological articulation is explicated.

There were many monotheistic currents in the ancient orient, but these can never explain Israel's early monotheism.

The Babylonians had many gods with Marduk at the apex after the time of Hammurabi. The thought that Marduk could be god exclusively was wholly foreign to the Babylonian manner of thinking. (For fuller treatment see *Theology of the Old Testament*, P. Heinisch, The Liturgical Press, 1950, England, translated by Heidt, p. 61-64; also *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, W. F. Albright, 1957, p. 178-9.)

The Canaanites, the Egyptians, and The Persians all show progressive deterioration in relationship to a full monotheism as seen in Israel.

The issue is succinctly stated by G. E. Wright—"the nature of deity worshipped is the basic consideration upon which all other considerations rest." (*The Old Testament against Its Environment*, G. E. Wright, Alec R. Allenson Inc., Pub. Studies in Biblical Theology, 1954, p. 16). In polytheistic theology a new god in the pantheon meant a new helper; in the theology of Israel any inclination to a different god implied apostasy from the true faith. The history of Israel from Moses till the end of the Babylonian exile, and even after the exile, is the history of monotheisms' struggle to win acceptance.

The strength of Yahweh was known by Israel because He had chosen them to be His people. At this juncture it became apparent that the three aspects of Exodus, Election, and Covenant are inseparably bound. These are independent yet, intrinsically bound together. These factors are different perspectives of the great event which made Yahweh Israel's God and Israel Yahweh's people. In these factors Israel's unique Philosophy of History becomes apparent only by "Faith." This fundamental notion could never be subjected to empirical scrutiny. Therefore, the attitude of Israel toward history must be approached with this in mind.

Israelite tradition universally connected the Exodus with the work of Moses. During this period - Israel - by faith, accepted God's call - *The Election*, *The Exodus*, and *The Covenant* became the whole fabric of their existence. (The multiple implications of these aspects of Israel's Faith are discussed in Pederson's *Israel*, p. 19ff, Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, p. 58f, Ricciotti, *The History of Israel*, pp. 167-229, and Jacobs, *Old Testament Theology*, pp. 183-226 and Köhler, *Old Testament Theology*, pp. 59-82.)

The former sceptical attitude toward the Exodus narrative can no longer be maintained. Now it is the fundamental issue in Old Testament Theology. Yahweh became the God of Israel and the issue is not which god, but as Wright so aptly says—"The issue is not the careful weighing of the various merits of the god. It is rather, who is God? Decide on the evidence and act accordingly! What is evidence? It is the evidence of history. What God has the power to do what he wills, and to fulfill what he promises? (*Old Testament Against Its Environment*, G. E. Wright, p. 43.)

The confidence of Israel's Faith in Yahweh could have its origin only in the Exodus events themselves. (The contrast of attitudes toward the place of the Exodus in Old Testament studies can be appreciated by examining the *History of Israel*, Oesterly and Robinson, Vol. I, pp. 69-96 (now seriously dated work); Lod's *Israel*, part II, *The Hebrews Before Their Settlement in Palestine*, pp. 151-209, and Albright's, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, pp. 13-15.)

The nature of this brief statement forbids discussion of the validity of the Patriarchal narratives. (Since the work of R. de Vaux, these scriptures are accepted as historically accurate—even by negative critics. See the profound chapter, *Recent Discovery and the Patriarchal Age*, a lecture delivered by H. H. Rowley in 1949 in the John Rylands Library found in the volume *The Servant of the Lord* by H. H. Rowley, Lutterworth Press, 1952; and *The Journal of Semitic Studies*, Manchester University Press, Spring, 1962, J. C. L. Gibson, *Light from Mari on The Patriarchs*, pp. 44-62; C. H. Gordon, *Introduction to Old Testament Times*, Ventnor, New Jersey, chp. 8 - "The Patriarchal Age," pp. 100.) But they play a vital part in the background understanding of Election in the history of Israel. Israel became a chosen people in Abraham - if the patriarchal narratives are correct; the covenant became a reality at Sinai during the time of Moses.

The reign of God over Israel began in Election and the response of the people to the grace of the covenant.

The Election was grounded in *hesed*. The chosen people were so because of God's purpose not for priority. Wright calls Election the clue to an understanding of the Old Testament. Many of Israel's confessions were grounded in this fact (Amos 2:9-11; Micah 6:2-5; Ezekiel 20:5-7).

Israel's concept of her mission finds its origin in the purpose of God for all mankind! In the Election, God chooses Israel. Freedom is granted only in the acceptance or rejection of *The Covenant*. God's election is not like the arbitrary caprice of despot; it is always directed toward a precise end and this end is the salvation of man. The obligation of election is service, and this involves faithfulness to the covenant which shall be discussed later. Israel distorted her election by a feeling of superiority and by forgetting her mission. God's righteousness and justice demands that they comply to the stipulations of the agreement, or swift punishment will ensue (exile, etc.). It is for this reason the doctrine of the remnant appears in the prophetic literature.

The very possibility of punishment for rejecting the covenant implies the sovereign power of Yahweh. This sovereign reign of God is of vital importance in later prophetic literature for the purpose of showing God's purpose will always be done in the universe - ultimately. This doctrine is of crucial importance for the Old Testament philosophy of history. H. H. Rowley's statement strikes at the central problem of the relation of response to election—

The Servant of Yahweh is a single figure without parallel in the Old Testament. He is chosen for his service, and his response to his election is complete. Others at whom we have looked sometimes responded and sometimes did not respond to their election. But always election and response in service and loyalty belong together, and the final repudiation of the service is equally the renunciation of the election. He who responds feels that he can do no other than respond, for he feels the constraint of the Divine call. Yet they who fail to respond are the evidence that election does not really turn man into a puppet and sweep away his will. Many are called, but few are finally chosen, because few there are who finally respond to the choice. (H. H. Rowley, *The Biblical Doctrine of Election*, Lutterworth Press, London, 1952,

page 120; this is by far the most adequate statement concerning the election in English that I know anything about. Jacob Jocz's work on *The Theology of Election* is also a must. For a brief statement regarding New Testament doctrine see *Scottish Journal of Theology*, December, 1958, p. 406. The calvinistic conception of Predestination is an attempt to speak to this problem. The resurgence of the heresy of universalism is an attempt to speak to the problems involved. Neither Calvinistic exclusivism nor Universalisms inclusivism represent the Biblical doctrines involved).

This paves the way for the covenant in relation to election. These concepts are really very similar, at least historically, but in reality to keep the covenant is to acknowledge election. Rowley's fine chapter on Election without covenant points this out clearly. For this reason Israel's election is not founded on blind favoritism but conditioned by their faithfulness to the covenant. The History of Israel shows that election was not for preferential treatment but service. God's providential control of the nations manifest that election without covenant was a living reality in the history of Israel. (This distinction is met in the two words *hesed* and *hen*. The first was covenant love and the second was love outside of the covenant, cf. book of Ruth for both uses.)

The Assyrians, Babylonians and Egyptians, etc., all performed the purposes of Yahweh in punishing Israel for her apostasy. In the individual sphere there was great variety of election outside of covenant, cf. Nebuchadrezzar, Jeremiah 25:9, Cyrus, Isaiah 40:1ff, and Pharaoh, Exodus 4:21 and 9:12. These references point to a distinction of election and covenant in the nations over against Israel.

Wright affirms that Israel's election found expression in the Sinatic covenant. This pointed to the unique relationship that Israel had with Yahweh. This unique relationship was the perspective from which they viewed the purpose of God to the ends of the earth. This relation was conditioned and the prophets repeatedly claimed that the conditions were unfulfilled, therefore, the place of the remnant is vital!

The significance of the covenant idea cannot be exaggerated. Yahweh, the creator of heaven and earth had elected Israel to service and the foundation of this service was conditioned by the covenant.

Only the idea of covenant (for a popular presentation see Wright's *The Challenge of Israel's Faith*, Chicago University Press, 1944, pp. 72-81. Köhler's *Old Testament Theology*, pp. 60-74; The greatest document in English covering this idea is Pedersen's, *Israel*, pp. 263-335; Mendenhall's *Idea of Law and Covenant in the Ancient Near East*; Bright's *The Kingdom of God*, first part; Eichrodt develops three great volumes of Old Testament Theology around the concept of covenant, *Theology of the Old Testament*, German original 1933, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1961. J. Barton Payne's recent work on *The Theology of The Older Testament*, Zondervan, 1962 - builds the entire work around The Covenant Concept. Also George A. F. Knight, *A Christian Theology of The O. T.*, John Knox Press, 1959; and T. C. Vriezen, *An Outline of O. T. Theology*, Massachusetts, Charles T. Brandford Co., 1958. These will do to show the emphasis on the Covenants in contemporary theological discussions. Does it not seem strange that almost no one is aware of The Restoration Movement and its biblical emphasis on the Covenant distinction)? The Covenant concept makes it possible to understand that love of God, His righteousness, His grace, and His salvation; it alone makes comprehensible the character of sin. This explains the central place which it occupies in the Theology of the Old Testament.

Köhler's work is a mixture of both old and new wine. In his section on covenant his beginning paragraph states that the covenant was given in a polytheistic framework because Yahweh is a proper name distinguishes him from all other gods. This point cannot be established technically.

God is always responsible for this agreement. Israel is free to accept or reject the covenant but they have no part to play in determining its content.

The covenant is with "The People" and not an amalgamation of individuals. Köhler's emphasis on the collective needs the qualifications given by Wright. The individual was not completely absorbed in the collective whole. The fundamental passages dealing with covenant in Exodus and deuteronomy speak in the singular. The Decalogue is written in the singular, and if it is the basic content, that Köhler, at least, needs to rephrase his emphasis. The people is not a limited community as a quantitative community it includes the children of the promise. Every obedient individual could come under covenanted relationship with Yahweh.

This point provides entrance into the last phase of our brief study--The Servant of Yahweh. Who is the Servant of Yahweh? What place does he play in the history of the Covenanted people? How does he fit into the Old Testament Philosophy of History? What part does he play in the purpose of Yahweh?

We must pass by the eschatological factors involved in the Old Testament Philosophy of History. If space permitted we would need to explicate "The Day of Yahweh," "time and eternity in the Old Testament vocabulary," "Judgment," etc.

The question of the identity of *The Suffering Servant* has received extensive treatment. (See H. H. Rowley's three chapters 1, 2, and 3, in *The Servant of The Lord*, pp. 3-88; Klausner's *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, pp. 153, 157, 162-168; Mowinckel's, *He That Cometh*, trans. Anderson, pp. 187-257; The finest statement in English is North's, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah*—the entire book is a historical survey of Theories of The Servant. These negative critics refuse the inspired New Testament identification of The Servant in Acts 8:32-35. See Karl-Heinz Bernhardt, *Das Problem der alterient alischen Königs Ideologie im Alten Testament*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1961. See also publishers E. J. Brill, Leiden for the definitive work on *Sacral Kingship*.) We must face the question - Was Israel in any sense—the suffering servant? This is the apex of Hebrew thought in regard to her philosophy of history. If Israel is the servant (in any sense of the phrase), then the issues discussed in this paper fit neatly together. God elected Israel and she became a covenanted people, and Israel's part of the covenant was an obedient life or one of service. This service involved the purpose of Yahweh for all mankind. The throne of the King became the point of perspective for Israel's view point of history. Her purpose was God's purpose and God's purpose was the salvation of fallen man. God's loving kindness *Hesed* was foundation for the demand for righteousness. Righteousness made peace possible, and Yahweh became victor over the powers of darkness—not by sword or armies, but via Israel doing His will which was for the *purpose* and not *privilege*. In a profound sense Israel's entire obedience to Yahweh's will was involved in her faith that God had chosen, called and covenanted them for a universal purpose. If this be not so, then Israel's faith is inexplicable. This faith is beyond the grasp of empirical methodology and her interpretation of each phrase involved in her history—Exodus, Election, Covenant and Suffering Servant, etc.,

cannot be subjected to scientific examination. These events were actual historical phenomena, but their significance (their biblical interpretation) could have come only by Revelation!

Some Basic Problems of The New Testament View of History

The ground of correlation between the Old and New Testament datum concerning history is that one must stand within the faith (or be a non-Christian) in order to accept the Christian meaning of God's redemptive events centering in the person of Christ.

The central problem of a Christian Philosophy of History is - how can God be revealed through temporal events? How can the relative disclose the absolute? How can time be a vehicle for eternity? How can Jesus be the bringer of the reign of God? How can a process universe sustain the Christian affirmation that God did something in a divine event which is once for all? This paradoxical situation must find correlation, but where and how? Is our attitude toward history summed up in Kierkegaard's "Absolute Paradox"? We must give a categorical - No! Before and since Anselm's "*Cur Deus Homo*" men of keen insight sought an answer, but few have attained even a comprehension of the magnitude of the problems involved.

The noun history does not occur in the New Testament. The verb *historein* occurs only one time in Galatians 1:18, but here in it is used with its Hellenistic meaning - (to visit in order to get acquainted with) and does not imply what historiography signifies by the term. (For a history of Historiography see Fitzsimmons-Pundt-Nowell's, *The Development of Historiography*, The Stackpole Co., 1954. For an excellent discussion concerning the problem of historical relativism see Mandelbaum's *Problem of Historical Knowledge* and J. V. L. Casserley, *The Christian in Philosophy*, pp. 120-138-200-211, 214-215.)

The form-criticism (see the works of Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*; and R. Bultmann's *Geschichte der Synoptischen Tradition*; B. Easton's *The Gospel Before the Gospels*; V. Taylor's *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition* are indispensable in studying "Form-Geschichte analysis." This is the leading European and American negative theory of analysis.) approach was a necessary development in the problem of the Gospel records. Historical relativism progressed to a historical scepticism. The presupposition that the faithful community

had interpreted the Christ event and that these interpretations are found in the records is a vital aspect of the general problem.

From this general attitude scholarship moved to one of denying that the historical Jesus could be ascertained. Now we can see the perspective of the contemporary "Heilsgeschichte" (see Albert Schweitzer's classic, *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*, and C. C. McCown's, *The Search for The Real Jesus*; see the recent work of Eric Rust, *Salvation History*, John Knox Press, Richmond, Virginia, 1963; his *Toward a Theological Understanding of History* is due from the Oxford University Press later this fall. Dr. Rust is a mediating Southern Baptist Scholar). method which recognizes that the records were written by those within the Faith, therefore, the records are articulations from the perspective of the faith bringing Gospel.

The Eschatological Message of the New Testament and Its Relation to a Christian Theology of History

The New Testament is unified by the affirmation that Christ is the bringer of The Kingdom of God and that He came in the fulness of time. (Gal. 4:4 - "hote de ēlthen to plērōma tou chronou exapesteilen ho theos ton huion autou genomenon ek gunaikos genomenon hupo nomon." "But when the fulness of time came, God sent forth his son, becoming of woman, becoming under law, . . ." Also for a survey of concepts of time see W. Lewis's *Time and Western Man* and Callahan's *Four Views of Time in Ancient Philosophy* Note also the unique development by all existential and process interpreters, especially P. Tillich's *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I.

The Greek New Testament contains two words for time, *chronos* and *kairos*, in the Galatians passage the term *chronos* appears. A problem arises from the Biblical language concerning time and eternity. This particular issue is part of the broader problem which we shall examine in this paper—that of a comprehensive doctrine of Eschatology. A thorough study of this area would provide us with the datum of a Theology of History from the Biblical perspective. (I found the most penetrating volumes to be Danielou's, *The Lord of History*, Regnary Press, Chicago, 1958; E. Rust, *The Christian Understanding of History*; and Cullmann, *The Early Church*, Westminster Press - this is not the volume mentioned previously under Eric Rust's name.)

Several New Testament words are involved in the vocabulary of a theology of History. *Hour* is a vital word in Johannine

terminology and it is set over against the infrequent use of time, *kairos*. (For a complete examination of Old and New Testament words for *time* see F. H. Brabant, *Time and Eternity in Christian Thought*, Bampton Lectures, 1937; O. Cullmann's *Christ and Time*; J. Marsh, *The Fulness of Time*; and James Barr, *A Biblical Theology Document on the Biblical Vocabulary of Time*.

The *kairoi* falls into two basic areas. One speaks of the last (*eschatos*), and the other speaks of the end (*sunteleion*). The New Testament shows that the last time of God's decisive action began and ends in the coming again of Jesus Christ. *End* implies three basic meanings of the Christian scriptures—cessation, final period, and outcome. These all carry great significance for a Christian understanding of history. The Greek words for everlasting and eternal (*aion* - *aionios*) imply Christ-filled time not uncharacterized duration.

Plato taught Western Philosophy to contrast time with eternity. Such an antithesis is alien to biblical thought in so far as the contrast rests on a philosophical conception of either term. The coming of Jesus Christ into the world has marked the close of one age (for development of the concept of the two ages from Daniel forward see H. H. Rowley's *The Relevance of Apocalyptic*, Lutterworth Press, 1955.) and the beginning of another. That Jesus is the event which is the center of history and its source of a significance is the point of contemporary discussion.

What is God's relation to history and how is He related to history? This is the contemporary problem of the relationship of the immanence to the transcendence of God. If the relation is perceptible only through faith, then we can see the continuity of the Old Israel's faith, and the New Israel's faith via the Lordship of God in Christ. What is involved in the reign of God which judges the past and present by the future? God's reign came in a manner which cannot develop, or be in process, or be a product of this world. The kingdom is both present and future in the same manner that the Pauline doctrine of salvation is past, present, and future.

The Kingdom of God has been interpreted in three basic ways. It has been interpreted as exclusively future, and that the sole function of Jesus was to announce its coming. In the second instance the Reign of God is exclusively present and men are invited to join it, and realize its reality in their own

Christian experience. The third position affirms that the Kingdom is already present, but hidden, and its ultimate realization is still to be consummed in a future act of God. From this basic analysis we see four vital questions. Did Jesus believe that the end of the world was imminent? (For affirmative answer and contemporary bibliography see W. Kümmel's *Verheissung und Erfüllung*; and R. H. Fuller's, *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus*, particularly the first three chapters, pp. 9-77). Most scholars of the present generation would hold this view, but it is contrary to the biblical data. Did Jesus really believe that his death would usher in the end of the world? This was Schweitzer's position, but even negative critical scholars reject this today. Did the early disciple believe that in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ the Kingdom had dawned? This position finds its chief advocate in C. H. Dodd. (C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and its development*; *The Parables of the Kingdom*, make use of Dodd's new edition - not 1936 edition. But note basic change concerning his "Realized Eschatological" view in his commentary on John; see also *The Festschrift to C. H. Dodd, Eschatology and Background to New Testament Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1956.) Like most other emphasis there is a basic element which is true, but it distorts clear and textually credible passages, or precludes them from discussion altogether. Did Jesus himself believe that with his activity and his person the Kingdom had already come? Most recent New Testament scholars would admit this contention against Schweitzer.

The variety of theological methods produce differing interpretations concerning biblical eschatology. The apocalyptic interpretation separates the future hope from the past acts of God in history as recorded in scriptures. The ecclesiological-sacramental interpretation affirms that the Church is regarded as the place where time is eliminated by the sacraments.

The individualistic eschatology is extensively formed in Protestantism, and confines the "Last Things" to individual survival after death. The cosmic eschatology of the scripture is either left in background or abandoned.

The rediscovery of the biblical doctrine of The Kingdom of God aided in the movement from individualism to interest in spreading the Kingdom. Eschatology is an expressing of the urgency of missions.

The dialectical tension between (*telos*) and (*eschaton*) is brilliantly expounded by Niebuhr. (For Niebuhr's views see *Faith and History, Nature and Destiny of Man* and Robert E. Fitch's article on philosophy of history in R. Niebuhr, *His Religious, Social and Political Thought* ed. by Charles W. Kegley and R. W. Bretall. Niebuhr cannot correlate time and eternity because he rejects the incarnation as an historical or temporal event; see also Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of The Church, Faith and the Consummation*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1962.) Reinhold Niebuhr has contributed more than anyone else in America to a Christian understanding of the historical order. Niebuhr discusses the Biblical doctrine of history as rooted in two ideas. First, the idea of universal history over which God is sovereign and through which his purpose is attained. Secondly, history testifies to man's misuse of his freedom and his consequent denial of the Lordship of Christ by becoming a god. He repudiates all progressivism which envisages man inherent ability to irradicate all the negative factors of his environment. Niebuhr affirms one of the three general areas of eschatology already mentioned, that of the presence, yet future aspects of the kingdom of God.

The Christological eschatology is represented by Karl Barth. God has revealed his nature through a series of mighty acts, the greatest of which is Jesus Christ as the mediator of God. He repudiates all secular and philosophical attempts to understand the course of history. His concept of Revelation is vital to his teaching about history - only God can define his purpose, and this is done via the Christ event. We know God and history only when God breaks through in Christ according to Barth.

Barth accepts the New Testament Eschatology as valid for our day. This he was able to do by interpreting eschatology or eternity as the absolute transcendent which stands in radical antithesis to time. Here there is no end of history and no future advent of the Kingdom of God for the end is always equally at hand. Today Barth shows dissatisfaction with his older approach in his *Römerbrief*. Dr. West shows brilliant insight into Barth's concept of Biblical History.

The anthropological-existential exposition of eschatology comes from R. Bultmann. The eschatological message of the New Testament needs to be demythologized according to Bultmann. Bultmann utilizes Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* as the basis

of his existential analysis of man. This anthropological position is the foundation of his hermeneutics! Bultmann's ultimate conclusion is that man is history. (See R. Bultmann's Gifford Lectures, *The Presence of Eternity or History and Eschatology* for a clear statement of his redefinition of history; also *Kerygma and Myth*, ed. Bartsch.) The real significance for Bultmann is the existential choice which decides man's destiny in the present. This decision to accept this new life is eschatological. His position is one of the approaches to the New Testament around which a great controversy now rages—the "Heilsgeschichte" and of "Existence."

Negative Scholars affirm contradictory variety of New Testament teaching, but if they would attempt correlation of the factors, as they stand, without rejecting other biblical features merely because they do not fit into their apriori-framework, then they supposed contradictory character of the data would be dissolved. (Danielou, Lord of History, Lowith, *Meaning in History*, Cullmann's *Christ and Time*, see also his *Immortality of The Soul or Resurrection of The Dead*, p. 17, where he affirms that he wrote *Christ and Time* intending to propagate *Heilsgeschichte* and instead scholars thought he wrote about time and eternity. See also F. V. Filson, *Jesus Christ the Risen Lord*; Wilder, *New Testament Faith for Today*; and Dawson's, *Dynamics of World History*, Sheed and Ward, New York.) The apriori of the New Testament framework is Faith or commitment to the Lord of History. This does not reduce history to anthropology as Bultmann does *a la* Heidegger.

The Pauline doctrine of eschatology contains most of the factors which are isolated by the various articulations mentioned. The two major points not discussed elsewhere are the two ages (I Cor. 10:11, *telē tōn aiōnōn katentēken*) and the idea that history is a battlefield between satanic powers, (see particularly the *Colossian Epistle*) and the redemptive activity of God. We shall conclude this survey by deliniating the view of history implicitly and explicitly maintained in *The Revelation*.)

The Theology of History in The Revelation

Jesus Christ has own final victory over Satandom! The Lord of Glory appeared to John "on the Lord's Day" (chp. 1:10). This was the day of His victory over sin and the grave. The entire book is intended to make the eschatological character of the

resurrected Christ stand out in all its glory. (See the excellent insights in Dr. Merrill C. Tenny's, *Interpreting Revelation*, chp 12. The Christology of Revelation, pp. 117. The Prologue: Christ Communicating (1:1-8); Christ in The Church (1:9-3:22); Christ in the Cosmos (4:1-16:21); Christ in Conquest (17:1-21:8); Christ in Consummation (21:9-22:5); The Epilogue: Christ Challenging (22:6-21).

The basic division of the book which relates "the things that thou sawest," the things which are," and the things which are about to occur" (1:19) provide us with the framework for a Christian view of history which asserts the fulfillment of the will and purpose of God for His entire creation.

The Lamb of God is the executor of the will of God. The Revelation moves from the first century (or period of Roman Persecution) to the consummation. The Slain Lamb is standing presiding over the unfolding of history. At no time, even when evil intensifies, does The Lamb of God fail to be sovereign over the entire creation (note the passive form "was given" throughout the Revelation).

The coming again of Christ, the final resurrection, the judgment, the subjection of the powers, are all involved in a Christian view of history. The *pleroma* (fulness) of Christ's victory is vividly asserted in John's imperative - "come (*erchon* - present imperative form) Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). Even a banned prophet (John on Patmos) knew that the victory had been already gained and he could endure the suffering knowing full well that ultimate victory was his through Jesus Christ - The Lord of History! (See the excellent, suggestive study by Stanislas Giet, *L'Apocalypse et l'histoire; e'tude historique seer l'Apocalypse johannique*. Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1957).

"Come, Lord Jesus"!

Note: *History and Dialectical Materialism*

The Leading Contemporary contender with the Christian View of History is Dialectical Materialism (communism). This view maintains that man will eliminate all negative social factors when private property (the cause of *all* social evil - so asserts Marxism) becomes state or community owned.

The best single volume interpreting the Marxist view of history is still M. M. Bober, *Karl Marx's Interpretation of History*, second revised edition, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1948.

For an excellent survey of Russian views of history see, Anatole G. Mazour, *Modern Russian Historiography*, second revised, D. Von Nostrand Co., Inc. Princeton, New Jersey. Dr. Mazour discusses views of history from the 18th century through the Marxist view of History, good bibliography - p. 252.

The present author is preparing a 150 page "*Annotated Bibliography on Communism for Christian Students*." The subject of history will receive more extensive treatment there.

For further study on the philosophy of History and the Challenge this area brings to our historically grounded Faith, see—

F. P. Gooch, *History and the Historians in the 19th Century*, Longman Green and Co., 1913. General background of the Marxian era.

Patrick Gardiner, editor, *Theories of History*, Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1959. This is a book of readings in historiography and critical studies. Excellent - raises the question which historians have pontificated about, but have produced no adequate argument. Is History a Science?

Karl Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1957. A brilliant criticism of the totalitarian doctrine of historical inevitability (*a la* Marxism, Evolutionism, etc.)

Marxist Philosophy of History stands in irreconcilable tension with the Christian view of History (specifically the view delimited in *The Revelation*).

Note: Dr. John McIntyre, *The Christian Doctrine of History*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1957. This is a fine outline study of some of the central issues for a Christian Theology of History.

Any view of History must clarify and defend its attitude toward historical *explanation, causation and fact*. This has not been done by Dr. McIntyre or anyone else committed to the unique phenomenon of Biblical history. What are the problems of the logic of historical explanation (see following notes and bibliographical data for direction in reading material).

Christians must maintain that there have been unique events which have occurred in space and time, i.e., incarnation, etc. What does the most behavioristic logician say about "unique historical phenomenon"? We can not here consider probability theories of explanation and prediction, but we can know that many things in the scientific world approach the probability of (0 based on classical probability theory the scope runs from 0 to 1), yet are actually true; therefore, no necessary and sufficient attack can be made on the biblical claims just because they are highly improbable. The contemporary rejection of the validity of *Induction* is also a must area for serious Christian Apologetics. Karl Popper's *Logic of Discovery*, and his *Conjectures and Refutation* are imperative works for advanced study in this area. The present author has just finished attending Dr. Karl Popper's seminar: *Special Problems in the Logic of Science* at Indiana University (the spring semester 1963). Since the collapse of Newtonian Physics and the falsification of the claim that water is a compound of hydrogen and oxygen (H O), the

Logic of Induction has been under the most severe criticism. Both of the above claims (Newtonian Physics and water as compound, and other similar claims) had vast inductive evidence to support their assertions, but they are now known to be false, in spite of the mass of inductive evidence. There is no known escape from this *Dilemma of Induction*. Among top flight Logicians of Science the problem of Induction is presently receiving intense scrutiny. The problem of Induction is a central problem of the Logic of historical explanation, prediction, and postdiction (and also retrodiction). The outline of Dr. McIntyre's work might be helpful in providing directions for further thought and study.

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Note: *The Biblical View of History and Scientific Historiography*

It is imperative that those of us committed to Biblical Christianity come to grips with the claims of so-called *Scientific-Historiography* with respect to the biblical records. This is one of the three areas of *Christian Apologetics* which call for immediate attention in *The Bible Colleges*.

For the best single *introductory volume* in the English Language - see Ernest Nagel, of Columbia University, *The Structure of Science: Problems in the Logic of Scientific Explanation*, Harcourt, Brace, and World, New York, Inc., 1961, chp. 15 - *Problems in the Logic of Historical Inquiry*, pp. 547.

William Dray, *Laws and Explanation in History*, New York, 1957 - excellent, indispensable! Editor M. F. Ashley Montague, *Toynbee and History*, Boston, 1956. This work is made up of critical studies of Toynbee's attempt to establish Laws of History.

An understanding of the problems of historical causation, historical fact, historical explanation (necessary and sufficient condition as vital issue in the logic of history), the genetic fallacy (i.e., if one knows the origin of a concept, then one can therefore explain it.) This particular problem needs examination in view of the negative critical attitudes toward the biblical records. The issues of history and the biblical records can by no means be reduced to the fact that liberal theologians reject many biblical claims, and that conservative theologians accept the Bible as the very word of God. The Bible makes claims that are either true or false. If the Biblical claims are in harmony with the actual state of affairs, then actually they are true, if not they are false. (We are not here implying that the Bible contains false assertions). We cannot permit ourselves to side step the ultimate problem by taking up the escape position of *Heilsgesichte-geschichte*. The biblical records are either right or wrong! An understanding of *The Logic of Historical Inquiry* is imperative, if those of us how love the Word of God, as life itself, wish to give defensible answers to the negative critical reconstructions of Old and New Testament Literature by von Rad, Bright, Albright, Martin Noth, *et al.*, and the New Testament by Bultmann, *et al.*

We are vitally concerned with the problem of History and The Revelation! Does the apocalyptic form of this work preclude it from historical accuracy, and valid assertions about the culmination of human history? We thank God that we can give a categorical - No! to this question.

Note: *Handel's Use of Texts from The Revelation in The Messiah*

G. F. Handel's oratorio was composed in 1741 in 24 days (from August 22 - September 14). It was first performed in Dublin, Ireland, April 13, 1741.

Handel's *Messiah* was written on the basis of the *prophecy, promise and presence* of the Messiah. The first part covers *The Advent* on Christmas season; the second part covers *The Passion* or the

accomplishment of salvation through the redemptive sacrifice of Christ; the third part instructs us in the most moving manner about the Resurrection. Handel employs four pages from *The Revelation* - Chorus 44 - Revelation 19:6; 11:15; 19:16; Chorus 53 - Revelation 5:12-13. The beautiful Hallelujah (this word is composed of two Hebrew terms meaning praise Yahweh) Chorus contains phrases and message from chapter 19:6 and 16, and 11:15.

See number 44 Chorus page 193 in Schirmer, Inc., New York edition of G. F. Handel's *The Messiah* for use of the following passages from *The Revelation*.

Rev. 19:6 - "Halleluia because our Lord God the almighty reigned (*ebasileusen* - 1st aor. indicative)."

Rev. 19:16 - "King of Kings and Lord of lords."

Rev. 11:15 - "The kingdom of the World became the kingdom (not in Greek text but implied) of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign unto the ages of the ages."

Rev. 5:12 - "Worthy is the Lamb having been slain to receive the power, and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory; and blessing."

Rev. 5:13 - "the blessing and the honor, and the glory, and the might unto the ages of the ages."

Special Study

The Theme of Conflict and Victory in *The Revelation* and The Dead Sea Scrolls

The best single source which examines the theme of *Conflict and Victory in The New Testament* is Ragnar Leivestad, *Christ The Conqueror*, Macmillan Co., New York, 1954. This excellent study is controlled by the Scandanavian hermeneutical principle of "Motif Research," and therefore must be used with care by the uninitiated in technical theological issues. For the critical and discerning mind it will open up vistas of New Testament research which will produce great preaching materials.

One of the key theological words in *The Revelation* is *nikaō* - victory. The term is used twenty-seven times in the entire New Testament, and seventeen times it appears in *The Revelation* (Moulton-Geden - *Greek Concordance of New Testament*, pp. 665-666). The victory attained by The Lamb of God is available to all obedient, faithful followers. The Bible can, of course, speak of victory and conflict without using either term directly. The victory of Christ stands in irreconcilable contrast with the

Greek concept of victory by brute force. The Greek idea of *nikaō* was the superior power overcoming the inferior power. Greek victory was available only to the person who had the power to *take* what he wanted. The new conception of victory and power which we find in Christ, is that a holy, righteous, justice person has the power to *give* what the receiver cannot give to himself. This is what Paul meant when he spoke to former barbarians - the Romans - "The Gospel is the power of God unto Salvation." Romans 1:16f).

The one who is victorious over sin and death, and the principalities and powers becomes the recipient of eternal life through Christ. Our victory is a derived one! John speaks of the martyr's victory, and this certainly is paradoxical. This thesis is parallel with Christ's victory over death—through death on the cross! Victory becomes a synonym for Eternal Life for the Christian believer.

The following list contains the use of the various forms of *nikaō* in *The Revelation*.

John's record of Christ's words to those who have gained victory through him are most important to every Christian.

Revelation 2:7 — "*tō nikōnti* doso autō phagein ek tou xulon tos zones ho estin en to paradeiso ton theou."

"To the victorious one I will give to him to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God."

2:11 — "*ho nikōn* on me adikethē ek tou thanaton tou deuterou."

"The victorious one will by no means be hurt by the second death."

2:17 — "*Tō nikōnti* doso autō ton manna ton kekrummenou"—

"To the victorious one I will give to him of the manna having been hidden."—

2:26 — "*kai ho nikōn kai ho tērōn* achri telous ta erga mou"—

"And the victorious one and the one keeping my words unto the end."—

Revelation 3:5 — "*ho nikōn* houtōs peribaleitai en himatiois leukois" —

"The victorious one thus shall be clothed in white garments."

3:12 — "*ho nikōn*, poiēsō auton stulon en tō naō ton theou mou" —

"The victorious one, I will make him a pillar in the tabernacle of my God."

3:21 — "ho nikōn, dōsō autō kathisai met emou en tō thronō mou hos kago enikesa" —

"The victorious one I will give him to sit with me in my throne, as I also overcome (or was victorious)."

Revelation 5:5 — "mē klaie idou enikesen ho leōn ho ek tēs phules Iouda." —

"Weep not; behold the lion of the tribe of Judah overcame (was victorious)."

Revelation 6:2 — "kai exēlthen nikōn kai hina nikēsē."

"And he went forth overcoming (victoriously), and in order (or for the purpose of) that he might be victorious (he might over-being victorious) come)."

Revelation 11:7 — "kai nikesei autous kai apoktenei autous."

"And will overcome (be victorious over) them and will kill them."

Revelation 12:11 — "kai autoi enikēsan auton dia to haima tou arniou" —

"And they overcame (were victorious over) him because of the blood of the Lamb." —

Revelation 13:7 — "kei nikēsai autous" —

"and to overcome (be victorious over) them." —

Revelation 15:2 — "kai tous nikōntas ek tou thēriou"

"And the victorious ones (overcoming ones) over (of) the beast."

Revelation 17:14 — "kai to arniou nikēsei autous"

"and the Lamb will overcome (be victorious over) them." —

Revelation 21:7 — "ho nikōn kleronomesei tauta" —

"The victorious one shall inherit these things." —

John also declares in his first Epistle (5:4) that "because everything (one) having been begotten of God overcomes (*nika* - is victorious over) the world; and this is the victory (*hē nikē*) that keeps on overcoming (*hē nikēsasa*) the world" — Thanks be to our Lord for our Victory!

Note: The theme of *Conflict and Victory* is also a leading doctrine in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The best single work on The Scroll of Wars is Yigael Yadin, *The Scroll of The Wars of Sons of Light Against The Sons of Darkness*, edited, plus introduction and commentary by Yadin, Oxford University Press, 1962. This theme follows from the Old Testament and Intertestamental Literature.

Special Study - Persecution

How is The Church to Relate to the State?

The Revelation was written to a generation of Christians who were facing the hideous realities of persecution. Because of the great persecutions many Christians felt that evil dominated the human situation, and that the God of righteousness and peace had abdicated His heavenly throne. Many things in *The Revelation* are still inegmatic to the finest of dedicated scholarship, but one thing is crystal clear, that God chose the medium of apocalyptic symbolism to announce to the redeemed that He was still sovereign over heaven and earth. Victory had been gained; hold out to the end and every faithful follower will participate in His victory!

Why did the cultural environment of biblical Christianity persecute the Christians? What had they done, either individually or collectively, to merit the animosity of the world?

This particular problem raises the fundamental issue of how The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ shall relate to the world - either in the first or twentieth centuries.

Christ has said - "My Kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). This same Lord also said - "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." (Matthew 22:21). Peter continues this same line of thought as he declares - "Be ye subject therefore to every human creature for God's sake: whether it be to the king as excelling or to governors as sent by him—Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (I Peter 2:13f.) Paul desires the same attitude toward kings. He declares, "pray for kings, and for all that are in high station—" - (I Timothy 2:2; see also Romans 13:3f). If the early Church carried out these biblical stipulations, then why persecutions? I believe that the problem of being the body of Christ, and at the same time encountering the world in order to "witness" is the largest single issue facing The Restoration Movement in our time.

How many ways can biblical Christians possibly relate to the world? I believe that they ultimately reduce to four possibilities. (1) *Ghetto-Christianity* or a monastic withdrawal of the Church - is an option which is actually chosen by many. (2) *Pious Parallelism* is a possibility, which finds its modern historical roots in the Lutheran-Pietistic controversies. (3) *Immersion in the World* generates the problem of being unable to distinguish between the Church and the World. (4) *Critical Inter-action* seems to this author to be the only serious attempt to fulfill our Lord's request to be "in but not of the world." This position is the most difficult one because it requires informed, committed Christians, and that they also know the intellectual and cultural grounds given by others for their rejecting Jesus Christ as Lord. (Note the New Testament metaphors for the Christians relationship to the world - pilgrim, alien, sojourner, etc.) What is the relationship of human efforts to the purpose of The coming of The Kingdom? Contrary to the attitude of the Liberals - man cannot create The Kingdom of God, but what is the function of human efforts to witness to Christ's redemption in the purpose of God on earth?

None of the above considerations could or would have prevented persecutions; but this does not preclude that our generation of the Church grapple seriously with the above mentioned issues. Because redeemed man is a citizen of *The City of God* and *The City of This World*!

In the *Book of Acts* we read of the first persecution of The Church - by the Jews. Stephen had been stoned by the Jews (Acts 7); and immediately following this event we read—"there arose on that day a great persecution against the Church which was in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles.---- They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the Word (Acts 8:1,4). Saul of Tarsus was persecuting "the disciples of the Lord." (Acts 9:). The Herodian persecution took the life of James by the sword (Acts 12:1-5). The tensions between Jewish and Gentile Christians would require attention, if we were giving comprehensive analysis of our subject. There were many oppositions and stumbling blocks before the young church, but none of these reached the white hot animosity of the great persecutions. The Epistle of James speaks of the dispersion (*diaspora*) of the twelve tribes (See James H. Ropes, *The Epistle of James*, International Critical Commentary, for a discussion of the scattering of the Jewish Christians).

Christians were severely persecuted until the Roman Empire was (forcefully) baptized, then for all practical purposes, persecutions ceased. We would be mistaken if we took the relative date of *The Edict of Milan* as the end of persecution. Its publication merely brought an *official* end, but certainly not an *actual* end to persecution. The Edict was only the beginning of the end of the Empires' hostility to the body of Christ.

The first major persecution was during the reign of Nero. In this brief statement we shall deal with only two persecutions - Nero and Domitian, because these cover the possible range for *The Revelation* background. Much of the New Testament literature comes during and after this general conflagration. The persecution during the month of July 64 A.D. resulted in the destruction of the entire quarter lying between Palestine and the Aventine. (See the descriptions given by Tacitus, *Annals* 15, sections 38-44; Suetonius, Nero; 31, 38, 39; Dion Cassius, 62, sections 16-18). Seneca, Nero's teacher, praised the martyred Christians when he mentions these men who died with joy, with serenity, amid such sufferings and torment. (See Seneca, *History* 5, section 55). Roman Catholic "tradition" places the martyrdom of Peter and Paul in the period of Nero's persecution. This assertion cannot possibly be sustained except by the most far-fetched inferences from early Patristic literature.

Soon the populace demanded lighter sentences for the "crime" of being a Christian. It was during Nero's reign that many great public works were started and Christians served as laborers. The Neronian persecution ended in 69 A.D. and for over twenty years afterwards the Christians lived in comparative peace throughout the Roman Empire. During this "period of peace" Balba, Otho Vitellius, Vespasian and Titus were on the Roman throne - successively. From Nero's persecution onward there was a complete distinction between Judaism and Christianity. Up to this period the distinction was not always apparent to the non-Christians. (See The Book of Acts, chp. 1-12 - Peter and Jewish emphasis, chp. 13-28 - Paul and Gentile emphasis).

The period of tranquility was broken when Domitian (81-95 A.D.) renewed what Tertullian called the "*institutum Neronianum*" (see Tertullian, *Ad Nationes* - to The Heathens I,7). *The Revelation* was written against this background.

After much persecution and anonymous accusations of Christians, Domitian became convinced that Christianity could not seriously harm his reign, and he suspended further persecutions.

There were other great persecutions of the Church in the second and third centuries. The persecutions of Trajan, Hadrian, Marcus, Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerian, Claudius and Aurelius, Diocletian, and the last extensive persecution by Julian the Apostate, all contributed to the flow of martyrs blood, but Christianity finally triumphed because the power of God shall prevail over all forms of evil. Jesus Christ said "I will build my Church and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it." No human effort, not even persecutions for the "crime" of being a Christian, will ever prevail against it. The Lord has spoken and His Word shall not return unto Him void!

Bibliography for Further Study

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The following list is to aid those concerned with further study of this great closing book of our New Testament. We have tried *not* to list books again which have been referred to in the body of the commentary, notes, or appendices. This list will be too large for some, useless to others, but it is given to provide a vast range of study in *The Revelation* and its theology. This list by no means exhausts all that the present author has examined in his study of this marvelous book of promises and victory. The advanced scholar, or student will not find any (or many) things that he has not already critically examined, but this work has been written for the beginner, and the intermediate student of the word of God. We have made a conscious effort to provide materials in the notes, appendices and bibliography for advanced study of The Book of Visions.

I. *English Translations*, Original Texts, Concordances and Lexicons

A. English Translations:

American Standard. 1881, 1900 - the text used in the commentary at the head of each section.

Revised Standard Version, 1946. The more recent controversial translation produced by American scholars.

New English Bible. This translation was produced by English scholars.

King James Bible. Compare this text with the 1900 American Standard for good view of sound differences and similarities.

The Roman Catholic Confraternity Translation - 1948 - translated from the Latin Vulgate. (This is a revision of the Challoner-Rheims Version)

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B. Original Texts:

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D. Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon - Old Testament:

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E. Greek Lexicon - New Testament:

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II. Old Testament Commentaries for Study of the Materials Quoted in *The Revelation*.

(Limited to Daniel, Zechariah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah) For critical examination of the Old Testament quotations in *The Revelation* it

would be necessary to examine the original Hebrew (or Aramaic of Daniel) and compare with the Septuagint translation, then note the specific quotation or imagery. Often this background is necessary if we are to do anything more constructive than guess at the meaning of John's symbolism, etc. The excellent set of Soncino Commentaries will be very helpful to the intermediate student. It contains both the Hebrew Text and an English translation with a basically conservative commentary.

The Soncino Press, 5 Museum House, Museum St. London, W.C. 1.; volume VI, *The Twelve Prophets* contains, of course, Joel and Zechariah. These are vital for quotations and imagery in *The Revelation*.

Volume VII *Isaiah*

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Volume XIII *Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah*

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It does not list Biblical authors (prophets, etc., not emphasized) nor the names of our Lord or God the Father. This by no means implies that they are not far more important than the names we have actually listed—His name is above every name!

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