

As In The Old, So In The New!

“The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.” Ecclesiastes 1:9

The book of Revelation is one of the most complicated and hard to understand books of the Bible. Most times it is to be taken literally, but at other times it has to be taken figuratively or symbolically. That is why this book is so often taken out of context, misquoted, and misinterpreted. Most people avoid reading this book, for various reasons. Some say, “It is just too hard to understand”, while others say, “It is too scary to read”, while still others say, “It is for a time far into the future so why bother to even study it?”

But, is it a book for the distant future, or are we on the threshold of it starting to be fulfilled right now? We wrote this study so as to hopefully give the reader a little better understanding of the book of Revelation. The many strange and frightening events that are going to happen in the very near future have in many cases, already happened in the past. We believe the Lord allowed this to happen so that the least read, and most controversial book of the Bible, will be a little easier to study (2 Timothy 2:15). So, read the following 11 examples and see for yourself that there is “nothing new under the sun.” What has happened in the past, is going to soon happen again in the near future.

1. The next great event on God’s prophetic calendar is the rapture of the church. This is where all the true believers of Jesus Christ miraculously and instantaneously disappear (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17) from off the earth and are taken to heaven by Jesus Himself (John 14:2-3). Is this a onetime event or has this happened before?

Genesis 5:22-24 talks about a man named Enoch, the first great man of God. It says, “*Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*” Enoch just up and disappeared, or was translated because he pleased God (Hebrews 11:5), just like the church will be, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:51-53), at the rapture

2. Very soon after the rapture of the church takes place, God sends an angel down to the earth to seal 144,000 male virgin Jews with the seal of God in their foreheads, 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel (Rev. 7:1-8, 14:4). It will be their job to go out and preach the gospel all over the world continuing where the church left off, and they will be responsible for a great multitude of souls from all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, getting saved (Revelation 7:9, 13-14). But, this is not the first time men of God have been supernaturally protected by being sealed with a mark on their foreheads.

In Ezekiel chapter 8, Israel was committing abominations in the sight of the Lord. In chapter 9, verse 2, six men with slaughter weapons in their hands came near to the temple. One of the men who came also had a writers inkhorn by his side. The Lord said to him, “*Go through the midst of the city of Jerusalem and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry for all the abominations that are being done.*” (vs.4). Then the Lord told the other men to go and slay all, old and young, maids and little children, but come not near any man upon whom is the mark (vs. 5-6).

3. At the beginning of the Great Tribulation two men will appear. They will be God’s two great witnesses (Revelation 11:3) to Israel and the world. They will also pick up where the church left off proclaiming the gospel of the Kingdom or the gospel of Jesus Christ. It will also be their job as they preach at the Temple in Jerusalem to refute the claims of the antichrist that he is Israel’s long awaited Messiah. One of the powers that they will have will be to turn the waters to blood (vs. 6) as man refuses to repent.

In Exodus 7:17-21, this happened once before in Egypt. Because of the hardness of Pharaoh’s heart, the Lord commanded Moses to say to Aaron his brother, “*to smite the waters that were in the river and the waters were turned to blood.*”

4. Another one of the powers that the two witnesses will have will be to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy (Revelation 11:6). The Bible says that they will prophecy for 1,260 days (vs. 3) or 42 months, or for 3 ½ years. Elijah, will be one of the two witnesses (Malachi 4:5-6).

When he was here before, in the days of the evil king Ahab (1 Kings 17:1) he prayed that it might not rain,

and it rained not on the earth for exactly 3 ½ years. He then prayed again, and the heaven gave rain (James 5:17-18). Can you imagine the famine that will occur on this planet when it does not rain for 3 ½ years?

5. When the first four seals are opened that begin the time of Jacob's trouble (Jeremiah 30:7), or the Great Tribulation, in Revelation 6:1-8, the four horsemen of the Apocalypse begin to ride on four different colored horses. The first is on a white horse - which is the antichrist, then followed by the red horse - war, which is followed by the black horse - famine, and finally the pale horse - which is death. Hell will actually follow with him and they will be given the power to kill one-fourth of the earth's population. And this is only the beginning of the terrors to come. That's how bad the great tribulation is going to be.

But, these four colored horses have appeared before in the Bible. In the book of Zechariah, chapter 6:1-4, Zechariah sees four chariots coming out from between two mountains. In each chariot there are horses. The first chariot has red horses, the second chariot has black horses, the third chariot has white horses, and the fourth chariot grisled (grayish or pale) horses. And what are these horses? They are the four spirits of the heavens which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. As in the old, so in the new.

6. As previously stated, when the pale horse rides in Revelation 6:8, he will have power to kill ¼ of the world's population with sword (war), and with hunger, and with death (plagues and pestilences), and with the beasts of the earth.

In Ezekiel 14:21 these same four great judgments were used against Jerusalem and the house of Israel when they rebelled against the Lord. The sword, and the famine, and the noisome (hurtful) beasts, and the pestilence (death). Israel was warned in Leviticus 26:17-26, that this would be the penalty for their disobedience to the Lord. It got so bad that the Lord said that if three great men of God, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only their own souls and nobody else's (Ezekiel 14:20). The Lord doesn't mess around.

7. When the sixth seal is opened in Revelation 6:12, there is a great earthquake and the sun becomes black like sackcloth of hair and the moon becomes like blood. And also, the stars of heaven (meteors) fall upon the earth (vs. 13). Verse 14 says, "*And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together...*" And all men of all kinds, rich and poor, slave and free, will hide themselves in the dens (caves) and in the rocks of the mountains and say to the mountains and rocks, "*fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb.*" They are actually going to be able to see the Father and Jesus sitting on their thrones up in heaven and they will be terrified.

As fascinating as this will be, once again, this has actually happened before. As Stephen was on trial in Acts chapter 7, due to the false charges brought against him by certain of the synagogue (6:9-14), he gave a long defense of himself. Toward the end of that defense, he looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And said, "*behold, I see the heavens open and the son of man standing on the right hand of God.*" (vs. 7:55-56). Stephen actually saw heaven opened up just as the men on earth will see it during the great tribulation. The circumstances of these two incredible events however, will be greatly different.

8. In Revelation 13:13, the Bible says the false prophet, the religious counterpart to the antichrist, is given great power to perform wonders on the earth in the sight of men. And, one of these wonders will be to call fire down from heaven. But, he is merely duplicating what Elijah the prophet already did in II Kings 1:10 and 12.

When Ahaziah, the king of Samaria, got sick, he sent 50 men to enquire of Elijah whether he would recover. When they came and called him a man of God, he exclaimed, "*If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume thee.*" And it did, twice! Both to the first fifty that were sent, then to the next fifty that the king sent. So, what the false prophet will do in the very near future was once again already done in the past.

9. When the two witnesses finish their ministry, the beast (this is the first time the antichrist is called this) will overcome them and kill them (Revelation 11:7). He will not allow their dead bodies to be buried and they will lie in the street of Jerusalem for 3 ½ days (vs. 8-9). Why 3 ½ days? Because they preached for 3 ½ years. A day for a year (Numbers 14:34). But after 3 ½ days, the spirit of life from God enters into them and they come back to life again and stand upon their feet (vs. 11).

The same thing happened when Jesus was here almost 2,000 years ago. Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and their brother Lazarus (John 11:5). But Lazarus died (vs. 14) and was dead four days already (vs. 17) before Jesus

arrived in Bethany where they were from. Jesus saw all the grieving that was going on and even wept himself (vs. 35, which is the shortest verse in the Bible). And for the glory of God (vs. 4) He raised Lazarus from the dead (vs. 43-44), as He will also do to the two witnesses.

10. At the midway point of the Great Tribulation, a statue of the antichrist will be erected and placed in the Holy of Holies (Matthew 24:15) of the newly rebuilt third Temple. Jesus called this, "*the abomination of desolation.*" To the Jewish religion this is the ultimate blasphemy against God. Many feel this is a one-time future event that has never happened before, but, this is not the case.

It also happened in the second Temple which was built by Ezra (Ezra 1:1-3) and the returning exiles from Babylon after 70 years of captivity (Jeremiah 25:12). In 168 B.C., Antiochus IV Epiphanes, after conquering Jerusalem, went into the Holy of Holies and sacrificed a pig to his god (Daniel 11:28-31). This blasphemous act started the Maccabean uprising culminating in the Jewish recapture of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, and the re-cleansing and re-dedication of the second Temple to the Lord.

11. When the Jews see the statue of the antichrist standing in the Holy of Holies, Jesus warned them to flee to the mountains for safety (Matthew 24:16) because what was happening already to the rest of the world, was now going to happen to Israel (Matthew 24:21-22). Many believe that Petra, which is located in present day south west Jordan, will be the location they flee to. In Revelation 12:7-9, after satan and his angels are defeated by Michael and his angels, he is forced down to the planet. He then goes forth to destroy the Jewish people once and for all (vs. 12-14, 17). The Bible says that, "*the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman (Israel), that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*" But, it is not water that he is sending. It is an army under the command of the antichrist to wipe them out (Jeremiah 46:7-8, Isaiah 59:19). Verse 16 then says that, "*the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood*", or the army that satan sent to destroy all of the Jews. This is not the first time that the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up God's enemies.

In Numbers 16:1-3, Korah and 250 princes, famous men and men of renown, gathered together against Moses and Aaron and challenged their authority to lead the people. The Lord then got very angry and caused the ground to open up and consume Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and all that appertained to them (wives, children, and goods), verses 31-33. Then the Lord sent a fire to consume the 250 men that had aligned themselves with them (vs. 35).

These 11 examples are just a sampling of events that happened in the past and that are going to repeat themselves in the near future. By studying the past though, it makes the book of Revelation less complicated and easier to understand. But as complicated as the reading of the book of Revelation can be, salvation is just the opposite. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 11:3, "*the simplicity that is in Christ*"- and it is! Almost 2,000 years ago, God the Son took the form of a human and was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:23). He stayed obedient to his earthly parents (Luke 2:51-52) until the age of 30 (Luke 3:23). It was then that things went back to their proper place. Jesus went from being the son of Mary with brothers and sisters (Mark 6:3), to being the Son of God, "her creator." He then began to preach repentance towards God and He preached this message for 3 years until the false religious leaders plotted his death (Mark 14:55-64). He was arrested, beaten, spit upon, and finally crucified (Mark 10:34) so as to pay for the world's sin (John 3:16). This He did because He loves us and wants us to be with Him forever. The blood He shed for us on the cross was the most precious blood of all. It was sinless, redeeming blood (1 Peter 1:18-19, Revelation 5:9), and the only atonement for all of our sins. He made this perfectly clear when He said in 1 Timothy 2:5, "*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*"

If you accept the free gift of salvation (Romans 6:23) that Jesus paid so dearly for, and if you receive Him into your heart (John 1:12) to make Him the Lord and Saviour of your life, you will be saved! Washed in the blood and sealed by the Holy Ghost in your heart (2 Corinthians 1:22). That makes you Born Again (John 3:3) and a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). As we said before, frightening times are coming. You don't want to be here when they start. So get saved today! (2Corinthians 6:2).

Amen

(All scripture references taken from the King James Bible)

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