

**OUTLINES FOR BIBLE TEACHING (7)****12. DEATH AND BURIAL OF ABRAHAM; BIRTH OF ESAU AND JACOB; THE BLESSING — Genesis 25:1-34; 26:1-5; 27:1-40***Outline*

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|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Abraham's death and burial     | Gen. 25:1-10  |
| 2. Birth of Jacob and Esau        | Gen. 25:20-26 |
| 3. Esau despises the birthright   | Gen. 25:27-34 |
| 4. Isaac receives the promise     | Gen. 26:1-5   |
| 5. Jacob's deception and blessing | Gen. 27:1-29  |
| 6. Esau's complaint and blessing  | Gen. 27:30-40 |

*Explanation*

1. Abraham's death (Ps. 92:13-14) and God's gracious provision (Ps. 25:13).
2. After twenty years Rebecca bore twins. The Lord had revealed to her that they would be the forefathers of two nations: Israel (Gen. 35:10) and Edom (Gen. 25:30).
3. The birthright entitled its possessor to a double portion of the inheritance, to dominion, and and to inherent blessings. Esau, being "profane," surrendered great future benefits for a scanty temporary advantage (Heb. 12:16-17; see also Mal. 1:2-3).
4. God reiterated to Isaac the promise He had made to Abraham (Gen. 22:17-18).
5. Rebecca, not willing to wait for God, devised her crafty plan. Her unbelief brought sorrow upon herself: although Jacob received the blessing, his lies and deceit were punished by having to flee and endure an exile of twenty-one years.
6. Having been deprived of both the birthright and his father's blessing, Esau was filled with hatred and thoughts of murder.

*Lesson*

Isaac's fleshly love for Esau and his savoury food caused him to ignore God's desires (Gen. 25:23, 28). Human nature with all its plans only makes mistakes and must be put to shame. Jehovah deals righteously and executes His counsels in a mysterious way (see Ps. 37:3).

**13. JACOB'S FLIGHT; JACOB WITH LABAN — Genesis 27:41-30:43***Outline*

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|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Esau's hatred and Jacob's flight | Gen. 27:41-28:9  |
| 2. Jacob's dream at Bethel          | Gen. 28:10-22    |
| 3. Jacob meets Rachel               | Gen. 29:14       |
| 4. Jacob serves for Rachel          | Gen. 29:15-30    |
| 5. Jacob's children                 | Gen. 29:31-30:24 |
| 6. Jacob obtains his flock          | Gen. 30:25-43    |

### *Explanation*

1. Esau's lack of love for God showed itself in hatred of his brother. Jacob's lack of dependence upon God bears its bitter fruits.
2. God often used dreams to speak to His own in the Old Testament. God reaffirmed the promise He had made to Abraham with Jacob.
3. Jacob met his father's relatives for the first time. He was to take a wife from among these people.
4. Jacob served seven years for Rachel, but was tricked by Laban, who gave him Leah. He then had to serve another seven years for Rachel, whom he loved.
5. The unloved Leah bore four sons while Rachel was barren. Jacob had sons by Bilhah (Rachel's maidservant) and by Zilpah (Leah's maidservant) as well as two more sons and a daughter (Dinah) by Leah. Rachel finally bore him a son (Joseph).
6. Through his manipulations, Jacob obtained an abundance of sheep, goats, and cattle.

### *Lesson*

God revealed Himself to Jacob and made known to him his election. God showed unlimited grace to foolish, weak, and helpless Jacob, who had no claim upon God's election by birth or character. Jacob, full of fear and restlessness before God (see 1 Jn. 4:18; Ps. 26:8; 27:4), showed his meager knowledge of God: he answered with an "if" and a vow, as if making a contract. The dream about the ladder will be fulfilled in Christ's coming kingdom, when Heaven and earth will be joined together (cf. Jn. 1:50-51). God chastened Jacob through Laban's craftiness and unfaithfulness, but Jacob still did not wait in dependence upon God (Jas. 1:4).

## **14. JACOB'S RETURN AND ENCOUNTER WITH GOD — Genesis 31, 32**

### *Outline*

1. Jacob flees from Laban      Gen. 31:17-29, 55; 32:1-2
2. Jacob's fear and prayer      Gen. 32:3-12
3. The presents to Esau      Gen. 32:13-23
4. Jacob wrestles with God      Gen. 32:24-32; 35:10
5. Jacob is renamed Israel      Gen. 32:28

### *Explanation*

1. Both Jacob's flight and craft stemmed from unbelief, but God graciously protected him (Heb. 1:14; Ps. 34:8).
2. Jacob makes plans, and then he prays.
3. Jacob relies on the presents to save himself.
4. When Jacob is alone with God, he is brought low by the breaking of his strength; then he casts himself into God's arms and God blessed him (Job 42:5-6).
5. God renames him "Israel" - "wrestler with God."

### *Lesson*

Jacob, the supplanter, could not be touched by Laban because of God's protection (31:24). Although Jacob acted on his faith in God, he did not portray confidence, but trusted his own craftiness. When he was left alone, he encountered the Angel of Jehovah, whom he wrestled with until the break of day. In this fight, Jacob was taught not to have confidence in

the flesh (Phil. 3:3). As a prince he had wrestled with God and men, and had prevailed (Gen. 32:28). Jacob's story is ours: we must learn to rely entirely upon God, who desires to bless us and form Christ in us, and teach us to walk in newness of life.

## STUDY CORNER (7)

We are now approaching the end of our series of questions. ~~Only one after this and we end our contest. Besides the prizes we have promised, we will mail each contestant a list with correct answers, so you can see how you have done. We will make this list available only to those who have responded (even if it was only once). So don't hesitate to mail us your answers.~~ Besides the spiritual blessing, you will have the list of answers for future reference.

74. Paul addressed the various assemblies differently, depending on what he was going to say. How did he address one assembly when thinking of the individuals that composed it?

75. The word "church" is often used when referring to a material building. Give a scripture or two in which Paul speaks of the Church as being *in* somebody's house.

76. Cite an instance or two of how the Apostle Paul spoke of the assemblies in a country or region.

77. A woman on her way to a meeting was asked if she was "going to church." She replied, "No I am a bit of the Church going to a meeting." Her answer was correct. Give a scripture to prove that she was "a bit of the Church."

78. Paul often spoke of "Assembly (or assemblies) of... ." Then he used different terms depending on the subject before him. What word did he use when thinking of their spiritual character?

79. What word did he use when viewing the assemblies in their relation to Christ?

80. And which words when thinking of their relation to God?

81. Believers should not take any name but such as is common to all Christians. Mention some of these.

82. Are divisions among believers contrary to the mind of Christ? Quote some verses to prove your answer.

83. What did the twelve loaves on the table of showbread (Lev. 24:5-6) say about Israel in this connection?

84. The loaf of bread on the Lord's table speaks to the Christian's heart of the Lord's body which was given for him. What else does the one loaf express?

~~This month's deadline is September 30. Remember, even if you mail in your answers only once, you will receive answers to these questions.~~ May the Lord bless you.

## VERILY, VERILY (7)

—J. van Dijk

The portion now before us (Jn. 12:24) is most solemn. Although the Lord is by man's account a Man in the midst of His years, strong and promising, His death is nevertheless near. He had not remained hidden, but His fame had spread abroad. One day a few Greeks who had arrived early for the passover feast thought to use the opportunity to see the Lord. They realized something of the greatness of the Lord, although they did not understand its character. So, they spoke to Philip, who in turn spoke to Andrew. Together they came to the Lord. Were they impressed by the request? Perhaps. They handled the matter in an "official" manner. They themselves must have realized the greatness of their Lord and have been delighted to notice that others from afar had come to know about Him. At last, the Lord would get some recognition!

But then the Lord responds to their request: "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified." These words must have given the disciples some hope. For a moment it seemed as if the Lord acknowledged that the time of being in

the background, of being despised, was coming to an end. After so many days of patient suffering it was high time. At least if one reckoned according to man.

If there were any such hopes springing up in the disciples' hearts, they certainly did not last long, for the Lord continued to speak. But let us first look closer at these first words of His. The Lord's thoughts must have been different altogether. The Lord had lived thirty years in obscurity, after which had followed three years of public ministry, which He had spent as a rejected Teacher. All the while God had been honoured by every thought, word, and action of the Lord. God had given promises to those who would live such a God-pleasing life and He was the first One ever to satisfy God: He had proven to be the perfect Man. Such a man at the end of his time of testing should be glorified, at least if the Law were the only guide. And so these words of the Lord are full of significance. Rightfully He could now claim the glory due to one who had perfectly answered every demand of God. But then He spoke the following words:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, it abides alone; but if it die, it bears much fruit." The Lord shares a tremendous mystery with His disciples. True, it was time that He should be glorified, but then He would remain alone! He would fill Heaven with His glory, but He would be there alone! The desire of God to give companionship to His Son would not have been met. When God created, He made as the crown upon His creation man and woman (two, yet one flesh), the expression of the relationship which He longed to bring about. If the Lord would now be glorified, God could have shown His righteousness by condemning each man who had not lived as His Son had. But how could God have shown His love without compromising His righteousness? Impossible!

How deeply this whole matter affected the Lord is evident from what we read a little later: "Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour. But on account of this have I come to this hour. Father, glorify Thy name" (vv. 27-28). We should not think that because the Lord was God He was not deeply stirred by having to go to the cross and by the awfulness of having to become the Sin-bearer. I do not believe that it was the nails and the crown that caused Him to utter these words, although these things were serious enough, but the prospect of His being forsaken by His God. And then we see that the Lord, in view of the joy set before Him, said, "Father, glorify Thy name."

God's Word gives us three instances in which the Lord Jesus spoke in a decision-making way regarding the cross. The first occasion was in eternity past when the Lord said, "Lo, I come... to do, O God, Thy will" (Heb. 10:7). He spoke these words as the Son of God in Heaven. The third time was in Gethsemane, where the Lord as dependent man decided to do the will of His Father with whom He had lived in perfect fellowship all the days of His flesh. The second occasion is the one here before us, where the Lord makes this decision as the responsible Man, foregoing the reward, to glorify the Father.

At the very same time that men first came from afar to acknowledge the greatness of the Lord, we find (seen from man's view) the Lord deciding to honour the Father rather than claiming the glory that was rightfully His as the perfect Man. One day soon, you (if you have come with confession of sins to the Lord and believe in the value of His blood) and I will be in the Lord's presence to worship Him in a perfect manner for the words He spoke on this occasion.

*To be cont'd*

## **THE HOLY CITY, JERUSALEM**

—H. L. Heijkoop

### *Revelation 21:9-22:5*

Before we consider this passage, it may be good to look at some scriptures that relate to it. In Matthew 13:39, for instance, the Lord spoke of "the completion of the age," which in the KJV is rendered "the end of the world." It is indeed true that the Greek word *aion* which is used there can also be translated "world." It has, however, not the same meaning as the word *kosmos*, which, everywhere but in 1 Peter 3:3, is translated "world" in the KJV. *Aion* has to do with time, as in Matthew 13 and most other places where it occurs in the New Testament, particularly with the time in which we live. It speaks of the time in which the Lord Jesus is rejected by the world. The end of the *aion* in Scripture is therefore not what is frequently referred to as "the last day," but a moment occurring a thousand years earlier, when the Lord will come to this earth to take possession of it and judge His enemies (1 Cor. 15:24-25). *Aion* speaks of the end of the Kingdom of Heaven in its present form during which the King, having been rejected — even crucified — has returned to Heaven.

We find this "completion [or "end"] of the age" of which the Lord Jesus speaks in Matthew 13, in the last chapters of Revelation. In Revelation 19:7-9 we see the marriage of the Lamb in Heaven. The literal translation of the Greek word *arnion* is "little lamb." This is the name most often used of the Lord in Revelation. It refers to Him as the world saw Him

last — nailed to the cross, apparently powerless before His enemies. But in the last chapters of Revelation we see the reality of what we read in 1 Corinthians 1:25: "The weakness of God is stronger than men."

It is one of the moral glories of the Lord Jesus that He has conquered the highest creatures, Satan, with all his angels, and with him the whole of human society in all its diversity: the political power (the Romans), the religious power (the Jews), and the power of science and art (the Greeks) — when He surrendered Himself in an apparent lack of power (Jn. 12:31; 16:8-11). At that time He did that wonderful work whereby all the works of the devil throughout the ages will be destroyed (1 Jn. 3:8 — see also Col. 1:19-21). This apparently powerless One will execute the judgment. By His word alone He will soon destroy the world's mightiest army (Rev. 19:15,19-21).

But first we are shown that all believers will then be in Heaven to be perfectly united with Him. "Let us rejoice and exult, and give Him glory; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife has made herself ready." Immediately afterwards He comes to earth: "And I saw the heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and One sitting on it, [called] Faithful and True, and He judges and makes war in righteousness. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head many diadems, having a name written which no one knows but Himself; and [He is] clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which [are] in the heaven followed Him upon white horses, clad in white, pure, fine linen. And out of His mouth goes a sharp [two-edged] sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He shall shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the wine-press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. And He has upon His garment, and upon His thigh, a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords" (see 1 Tim. 6:15 and Rev. 17:14).

We see there the Lord returning to earth, not now as a little babe, as He once came; now He comes in His full dignity as judge (Jn. 5:22,27). The armies out of heaven follow Him. These armies consist of angels (2 Th. 1:7) and believers (1 Th. 3:13), for the latter are then already in Heaven (1 Cor. 15:51-53 and 1 Th. 4:13-17). We will therefore come with Him to this earth when He comes as King and judge to take possession of His inheritance. This we see in verse 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." According to chapters 13 and 17, the beast is the emperor of the restored western Roman Empire. Western Europe will unite once more and this man will reign over it as a dictator during the last years. Once this empire murdered the Lord Jesus; now they will seek to do so again. But this time they will not be able to lead Him as a Lamb to the slaughter (Isa. 53:7). just as the Lord by His word created the universe (Heb. 11:3), so He will, by His word alone, conquer His enemies. His armies don't have to fight! He alone has a sword — the sharp two-edged sword going forth from His mouth (v. 15). "And the beast was taken, and the *false prophet*" — the antichrist, who has "two horns like to a lamb, and spake as a dragon," and who "deceives those that dwell upon the earth by reason of the signs which it was given to it to work before the beast" (Rev. 13:11-18) — "Alive were both cast into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone."

After this we come in chapter 20 to that glorious realm of peace which will then begin. The devil will be bound and cast into the abyss for a thousand years. Then we read, "And I saw thrones; and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them" (v. 4). This refers to the Assembly and to the believers of the Old Testament, who went to Heaven when the Assembly was taken up (1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Th. 4:15-17). Until 19:4 these are seen together in the figure of the twenty-four elders. After that, they are seen separately as the bride of the Lamb and as those who have been called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb (19:7-9). But in 20:4 we see a third group, those who (after the Assembly had been taken up, that is, during the time of the beast and the antichrist) were "beheaded on account of the testimony of Jesus, and on account of the Word of God;... and had not received the mark on their forehead and hand [see 13:7-10,15-17]; and they lived and reigned with the Christ a thousand years:... This [is] the first resurrection. Blessed and holy he who has part in the first resurrection: over these the second death has no power; but they shall be priests of God and of the Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (vv. 4-6).

After the thousand years follows the judgment of all who are still dead at that time. This group is comprised only of the unbelievers from the beginning of creation until the end. The first resurrection had consisted of believers only, both those of the Old Testament and those of the New Testament. All unbelievers will then stand before the Great White Throne to be judged out of the things written in God's books, according to what they have done during their life on earth. The judgment of the Lord Jesus (who, as we can see from Jn. 5:22,27, Acts 17:31, and 2 Cor. 5:10, will execute this judgment) will be the same for all: They shall be "cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." In verse 11 we read that the heaven and the earth fled from the face of Him who sat upon the throne, the Lord Jesus. Peter, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote of this in his second Epistle: "But the present heavens and the earth by His word are laid up in store, kept for fire unto a day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men... and [the] earth and the works in it shall be burnt up... [the] heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and [the] elements, burning with heat, shall melt" (2 Pet. 3:7,10,12). But then come the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness." This latter condition is presented to us in Revelation 21:1-9: it is the eternal one.

Thus chapters 19 and 20 of Revelation have presented us the entire history of the earth's future: from the judgment of western Europe (the western Roman Empire) to the subsequent Millennium. This latter period, however, was described in only a few words: "They lived and reigned with the Christ a thousand years." After this we have in chapter 21:1-8 the eternal condition, the new heavens and the new earth. This obviously brings us to the end of the histories of man and earth, insofar as these take place in this creation. There is no further mention of Eternity in Revelation, nor do we find there the house of the Father, our eternal abode as children of the Father whom the Lord Jesus calls "My brethren." This is because Revelation speaks only of events in this creation. It never calls God our Father, which is His glorious name throughout the New Testament. When the name Father occurs, it is in connection with the Lord Jesus (1:6; 2:27; 3:5,21; 14:1).

So in Revelation 21:9 we go back to the Millennium. This is evident from vv. 26-27, for instance: "And they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations to it [to the holy city, Jerusalem]. And nothing common, nor that maketh an abomination and a lie, shall at all enter into it; but those only who [are] written in the book of life of the Lamb." It is quite evident that this is not the eternal condition, for then there is no more uncleanness. All that is contrary to God is then confined to hell, the lake of fire and brimstone. Besides, 22:2 says that the tree of life shall be in the midst of the street of the holy city Jerusalem, "and the leaves of the tree [are] for healing of the nations." There will not be nations in the eternal condition, for the division of men into nations is one of God's judgments over men (Gen. 11:1,6-9). When creation will share the results of the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross, this judgment will also be removed (Jn. 1:29; Col. 1:19-21). Consequently we find in the description of the eternal condition in Revelation 21:1-9 only men, no nations. It is clear, moreover, that there will be no need for healing in Eternity. All who live on the new earth sin no more but serve God perfectly. These are some of the proofs that Revelation 21:9-22:5 does not speak of the eternal condition but of the Millennium. During that time, there will still be sin on earth, although suppressed. Psalm 101 says that every morning judgment will be executed over the ungodly in the land (see also Isa. 66:22-24).

Chapter 21:9 and what follows is therefore not a continuation of the first 8 verses, but rather a review of something earlier, for after Eternity there is no new thing — otherwise Eternity would not be Eternity. How could there be an improvement in a condition that gives perfect satisfaction to the triune God and perfect blessing and joy to the creature and the entire creation? How could there be a change in a condition brought about by the Creator's own wonderful intervention? He became Man, like to His creatures, so that, for those who wanted to receive Him, He could take all the results of their departure from their Creator upon Himself. He longed to bring them to the place and the blessings which up to that time had belonged to Him, the Father, and the Holy Spirit (see Jn. 14:2-3; 17:1-3; 20:17; Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:3-6).

*To be cont'd*

## QUESTIONS ON PROPHECY

### *Will the Church go through the Great Tribulation?*

This is an often-recurring question among Christians. For a moment, I would like you to consider what would be true *if* the answer were "Yes."

We would know, since the Great Tribulation is not here yet, that the Lord couldn't come today. Consequently, we would no longer look for Him, but for indications that the Great Tribulation had begun. In 2 Thessalonians 2:2 Paul says that the day of the Lord (a time period which includes the Great Tribulation period) is not yet present.<sup>1</sup> Then he also says that day will come only after the antichrist has been revealed. Therefore we would be justified in looking for the antichrist; as soon as we would see that he was revealed, we would know that the Lord's coming was near (but not before that time).

Is this in keeping with what Paul wrote to the Thessalonians (1 Th. 1:10)? They were told to expect God's Son from the heavens. But how could they really do so if the tribulation (supposing that the Church is to go through it), was not there yet? All expectation of the Lord would be moved to the background; the attention would be focused on the great opposer rather than on the Lord. I believe this is the main reason that Satan seeks to keep this idea alive among Christians: it dulls their sense of waiting for the Lord.

Moreover, what would be the value of the Lord's promise to Philadelphia? He said, "I also will keep thee out of the hour of trial, which is about to come upon the whole habitable world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10). We know

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the correct reading of verse 2 is: *be not soon shaken in mind, nor troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as [if it were] by us, as that the day of the Lord is present* (N.Tr.)

from God's Word that Christians pass through many trials (2 Th. 1:4; 1 Pet. 4:12). The Lord's words must therefore be more specific than just referring to trials in general: He speaks of a trial that comes over the entire habitable world. If the Lord had said, "I will keep you *during*," or "*in* the hour of trial," it would have meant that He would keep the Christians in a safe place where the tribulation could not touch them. But the Lord said, "I will keep you *from*," or "*out of* the hour [time] of trial," which can only mean that they will not experience this period. They will not be in this world but with their Lord. The Church, the dwelling place of the One who restrains evil, the Holy Spirit, will have been removed, and when it is gone there will be no more restraint to the evil, and the lawless one will have free rein (2 Th. 2:5-8). We certainly do not have to be in doubt as to this question. God's Word could not be clearer. But we must read God's Word attentively, not simply listen to what others (and that includes me) have to say on the subject. Only by reading the Scriptures for ourselves can we be sure of God's thoughts. Articles like this may, through the grace of God, give hints and be a help, but the reading of Scripture must confirm it to our souls.

### *How far are we from the rapture?*

I have only a short answer from Scripture on this: "Now [is] our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. 13:11). One who reads Scripture and realizes that things which are to be *after* the rapture are already shaping up can only say: "We are very, very near. Perhaps today."

### *Will the antichrist be a Jew?*

The term "antichrist" is found only in John's writings (1 Jn. 2:18; 2:22; 4:3; 2 Jn. :7). In none of these verses is it clearly stated who he is. The first reference speaks more of his character, for it says that there are already many; the second speaks more directly of "the antichrist" himself: he denies the Father and the Son; the third and fourth speak of his not confessing that Jesus Christ has come in flesh. For someone to come in flesh, he must exist prior to presenting himself in a human body. To deny that Christ has come in flesh is to deny His pre-existence in eternity past. The antichrist fails to acknowledge that Christ is from eternity and has become Man.

Next we may ask if this same person is referred to elsewhere in Scripture by another name or description. Many believe, as I do, that the willful king of Daniel 11:36 is the same person. He exalts himself above every God. But notice how he honours at the same time another God than the God of his fathers (vv. 37-38). Who is he that so exalts himself? I believe we find him in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 where he is called "the man of sin." As you will notice, this latter person does the same thing as the willful king in Daniel. He puts himself in the temple, saying that he is God (v. 4). From the verses that follow, which refer to him as "the lawless one," we see that he comes through the working of Satan, and that the Lord Jesus will personally consume him at His coming (vv. 7-10). Note here that he performs "signs and wonders of falsehood" which we will also find when we look at Revelation 13.

In Matthew 24:15, the Lord spoke about an abomination standing in a holy place. The Lord referred to Daniel 9:27, where we read that, because an abomination will be protected, there will be a desolator. The holy place for the disciples was certainly the temple. The prophecies refer to one who will put himself in the place of God. Paul said that someone would one day place himself in the temple. I believe these scriptures speak of the same person.

Now let us look at Revelation 13:1 and 11 where we read of two beasts, one rising out of the sea, and one rising out of the earth. If you know a little about the symbolical language of the Bible, you will realize that "the sea" stands for the nations other than Israel, whereas "the earth" generally refers to Israel. We will return to this later. One of these two beasts shows most remarkably the characteristics of the antichrist. The second beast had two horns like a lamb: at first sight it resembles the Lamb of God. Then we see it spoke as the dragon, which is defined in Revelation 12:9 as Satan, and that it caused the people on the earth to honour the first beast. This parallels Daniel 11 where the willful king, although declaring himself to be above every god, causes men to honour another instead of God. By making an image to the first beast, this second beast trains men to honour the first: a satanic replica of the Lord's declaring the Father to us and bringing us to God.

These considerations cause me to see the antichrist in the second beast of Revelation 13. In this I (and others) differ with many of today's expositors — on good ground, I believe. Now let us go back over these portions, both to summarize and to see on what basis we may say that the antichrist is a Jew.

As we saw from Revelation 13, he is identified as the beast from the land (Israel). This agrees with Paul's remark in 2 Thessalonians that he will place himself in the temple, which is in Israel. The Lord's remark that the antichrist, as the abomination, will be in the holy place confirms this. Daniel 9 speaks of this abomination in connection with Israel. Now the

antichrist is seeking in all things to resemble the Lord Jesus. We know our Lord as the King of the Jews, an aspect of the antichrist we find in Daniel 11, where we saw him as the willful king who will not regard the God of his fathers nor the desire of women. Who are his fathers? Who is that God? And who is the desire of women? Are they not the patriarchs, the God of Israel, and the Messiah? (The prophecy is directed to Daniel, a Jew.) But now notice how, in verse 40, two other kings are introduced: the king of the north and the king of the south. Earlier in the chapter these are shown to be the kings of Syria and Egypt. The king of the south pushes at this willful king and the king of the north, as a result, enters the land of beauty, which is Israel. From the context, then, it is not difficult to see that the willful king, the antichrist, is the King of Israel.

I believe that it is obvious from all that we have considered that this willful king is indeed a Jew who in every respect seeks to pose as the Messiah. He presents himself as Lamb of God and as King of Israel. Another name which we have not yet mentioned we find in Revelation 16:13. Just before the antichrist comes to his doom, he loses his position as king through his leaving the flock in an effort to escape the armies of the kings of the south and the north. He thereby becomes the worthless or idol shepherd of Zechariah 11:15-17. He retains, however, his claim to be a prophet, and so Revelation 16 and 19 refer to him as the false prophet which the Lord Jesus Christ casts, together with the beast out of the sea, into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20).

*Is the antichrist alive today?*

This is a question for which we do not have a Biblical answer. If we believe that the time of his revelation is very close, it could be that he is alive today, but we cannot go beyond recognizing the possibility that he is alive today. No one can say so until he is revealed. But since that will be in what is called "his own time" (2 Th. 2:6), those who now believe in the Lord Jesus will not be here. So if you believe that the Lord bore your sins in His body on the cross, you will never be able to say for certain that the antichrist is already alive.

*Will the antichrist arise from the ten countries which now form the European Economic Community?*

As we have seen, there is solid scriptural evidence to say that the antichrist is a Jew. So we already know that he will not arise politically from the ten countries of Western Europe, although he could be born there.

On the other hand, we have seen that the beast from the land has an allegiance to the beast of the sea. This beast from the sea is a governmental power (as are all the beasts in Daniel — 7:17). Revelation 13 describes how it had a "wound of death," yet lived. It will rule for forty-two months. In connection with the great whore in Revelation 17, we find the beast further described in verses 8-18: it was, and is not, and yet will be there. Its seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. Skipping now to verse 18 in an effort to restrict ourselves to the question before us, we notice that this woman is the great city which has kingship over the kings of the earth. One needs to know only a little of history to realize that this is a direct reference to Rome, the city of seven hills, which ruled the known world in John's days.

This establishes that indeed the beast of the sea has Rome as its power base. This beast is further described as one that was, and is not, and shall be present. The Roman Empire is in view. This empire has disappeared, but today we see a group of ten nations in the general area of this ancient empire. John mentions the ten horns of the beast and tells us that they are ten kings, ten separate governments. The image in Daniel 2, which depicted the world governments through the ages until the coming of the Lord Jesus, had its last form in the ten toes. From all this we certainly expect a union of ten nations to spring up in the area of the once-mighty Roman Empire. Is it any wonder that many expect this to grow out of the ten nations of the European Economic Community? I do. But this is not the area from which the antichrist comes, although he will be a confederate of this new, yet old, empire.

*To be cont'd*

**TO BE CHRISTIAN, EVERY DAY (2)**

—K. Rouw

**Deuteronomy 22-1-12**

*The Mystery of Husband and Wife*



5. "There shall not be a man's apparel on a woman, neither shall a man put on a woman's clothing; for whoever doeth so is an abomination to Jehovah thy God."

Husband and wife: the most beautiful thing in creation. A picture of the highest thing in Scripture: the bond between Christ and His Church. God's eternal thoughts are expressed in this wonderful bond between two persons.

God shows us in His creation that He could have populated the world in a different way: by single-celled organisms and self-pollinating plants. God's declaration, "of one blood" shows how the second was contained in the first; the woman, having come out of the man, was yet different: she was before him, and suited to him.

The husband, placed in authority above her, after having named the animals, gives her a name also; at the same time she is his loving helpmate. Later, after the fall, he is appointed to rule over her, yet her desire will go out to her husband, and the husband may love her "as the Christ also loved the Assembly." Just as Adam received his bride after a "deep sleep," Christ received His Bride after a sleep of death, waking on the resurrection day (Jn. 20).

Can we imagine even a little of the feeling of His heart when a believing young man and woman are about to express this (the most beautiful thing in His eyes) in marriage? It's a mercy that this picture has not been taken away from fallen man; just as God abased the serpent, He could have taken this picture from man. But no, just as Christ is the Head of every man, so is, even in a fallen creation, man (in general) the head of the woman (in general).

Without an express command of God, man has begun to wear man's clothing, and a woman, woman's clothing. All over the world a woman is differently dressed from a man; even when the dress is the same, the shoes, for instance, will be different. In Deuteronomy 22:5 we find therefore a word that can be translated "something that belongs to a man," although after this follows "the clothing of a woman." It is therefore not important what constitutes the distinction in dress; the distinction is simply observed by Scripture, and this is to be maintained.

Satan is active in two ways to undermine God's purpose in this:

1. By reducing people's sense of shame through the use of non-covering clothing — even in men's fashions, and
2. By causing men and women to wear the same clothing.

"Unisex" full-grown is Sodom and Gomorrah! Unisex clothing, to a great extent, incorporates points 1 and 2. Not only are men and women clothed identically, but the fit is so tight that it exposes rather than covers, which shows how these two points are related. This is very serious because Satan's main purpose is to tread on the Lord's heart in things related to His love for and communion with His Church.

Should this not be sufficient reason to cause each believer who truly loves the Lord to throw every piece of clothing that is tainted with this fashion on the junk heap, so that there may not be any hindrance to follow and serve the Lord in all things?

How good to have a Lord who is ready to forgive. Many never knew how serious and important these things are in the Lord's eyes. And here we, older ones and teachers, may well bow our heads in shame for having failed to state these things clearly enough, and to insist on these things within the assembly, *His* Assembly. How important these things are is evident from the last clause, "For whoever doeth so is an abomination to Jehovah thy God." Not just the exchange of clothing, but "whoever doeth so" is bad: the person is an abomination to the Lord thy God. How serious! Some seek to shove such things aside with a verse: "There is no male and female... in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). This is self-evident. In Christ, a bondman is the Lord's free man, and the free man Christ's bondman (1 Cor. 7:22). But "in Christ" is a totally different thing from "in the Assembly." In earthly relationships a bondman is addressed as a bondman, and a woman must be silent in the Assembly. Both inside and outside the Assembly women must dress modestly, decently, and discreetly (1 Tim. 2:9). Men, in turn, must behave themselves like men.

"But don't we live under grace, rather than under law?" True enough, and how good it would be if we understood this better. Being legal is just as bad as being lawless. To apply all the principles of Deuteronomy in a legal manner is totally wrong. The lawyers were mainly responsible for the Lord's crucifixion: this shows how far legality can lead us into a quagmire. The desire to be legalistic is just as thoroughly embedded within us as the desire for freedom for the flesh.

We don't *have* to obey — we *may* obey. A young Christian man may go along with the world to his heart's content, and still go to Heaven. A believing girl may dress as a prostitute (it happens!) and still go to heaven... But that is neither Christian freedom nor Christian joy. It is a most horrible thing. "By the fruit the tree is known" is one of God's principles.

Christian joy is when we love to go "twice each Sunday" to where the Lord is, when we speak with Him during the prayer meeting, when we enjoy coming to know His Word better in the reading meetings, and when we honour Him and serve Him by our behaviour the whole week, every day. That gives joy and spiritual strength.

Imagine a bride who would ask her bridegroom shortly before her wedding (and such is our situation today), "Tell me dear, what will be my liberties? Do I always have to dress the way you want me to? Do I have to cook every day? And must I cook the things you like?" I wonder what her bridegroom would answer. Our Lord is very saddened at such questions. He asks, "Will ye also go away?" Through this question He seeks to entice us to come to complete surrender to Him, to a new beginning.

After we have noticed how this verse is related to God's highest thoughts, we may further see that it is also based on the principle that the Creator has given all things in His creation their fixed position and character. It is His desire that not just man, but also each animal retains its own character. Leviticus 19:19a says, "Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with another sort." (The remainder of the verse states the same things as Dt. 22:9 and 11). God made sheep as sheep, horses as horses, and He uses them in their specific character throughout the Bible. He made the eel to show us that a fish without fins and scales is not considered a clean fish by Him; and the bat, which wants to be both bird and quadruped, is unclean by Him (Lev. 11:19). How beautiful that He shows us His thoughts.

Similarly God pronounces His woe over men or women who leave their God-appointed place in creation; "Every one that lieth with a beast shall certainly be put to death" (Ex. 22:19). There are angels who left their place (Gen. 6). They are, according to Jude, kept "in eternal chains under gloomy darkness, to [the] judgment of [the] great day." Sodom and Gomorrah went after other flesh "in like manner with them"; now they "lie there as an example, undergoing the judgment of eternal fire." In our days the rejection of authority expresses itself in so-called democracy, in strikes, in liberated women who have cast aside "the yoke of man," and in churches that, now that they have "come of age," put the Word of Christ aside, exchanging it for "what suits our time." We see it in the woman in the pulpit! God's Word, "I do not suffer a woman to teach nor to exercise authority over man" (1 Tim. 2:12) is countered with, "Oh, that was true then; Paul didn't know any better." And, the modern woman takes up the position of teacher and manager, for she is man's equal.

If we believe 1 Timothy 2, and consequently Genesis 1-3, we see that man "was formed first, then Eve: and Adam was not deceived; but the woman, having been deceived, was in transgression." This statement is introduced with the little word "for," which gives the "wherefore" of the matter. Then it continues with: "But she shall be preserved in childbearing," which is another thought ill-suited to the emancipated woman. When the Lord asked Abraham, "Where is Sarah thy wife?" he could answer, "Behold, in the tent." She was in the family sphere, and thus became the mother of the Israel of God.

Fathers and mothers who understand and occupy their places will, if the Lord does not yet come, be the parents of future "patriarchs." For neither is a woman's attire befitting for a man. A man who fails to be a priest in his house or in the meeting, a husband who has no answers for his wife when she "asks her own husband" (as it should be), a man who is not a warrior of God (as all men over thirty should be) — are all of these not peculiar to our days? Isn't it often the case that, because the husband is so busy with other things, he does not find time to study God's Word? Isn't there always something to fix in the house? And what about time for his hobby and worldly distractions? Are not these things often the reason for the lack of priests and levites?

And then we have our youths, who in so many respects have to carry the brunt of all that these times "offer" us. Shouldn't we prepare ourselves and our young ones for a time in which, if the Lord does not come very soon, very great sacrifices may be asked from us? How can we do so if we are not now prepared to bring small sacrifices?

A girl asked me, after someone had told her that we should be prepared to be burned at the stake for our faith, "Can we know today if we are prepared?" I answered her, "I doubt it, but I'd like to ask you another question. Say you become an adult and the Lord asks you for a thousand dollars. Will you give it to Him?" She replied, "I cannot tell now if I would." "Fine," I responded. "But now something else: If tomorrow the Lord asks you for a dollar for one or the other purpose, and you are not willing to forego one ice-cream cone or one helping of french fries, then you will certainly not give the thousand dollars when you are an adult. If you are not prepared to bear a little shame for the Lord today, for instance, by not following every fashion and face being laughed at about it, then you will certainly not be prepared to bear real shame for Him if that should become necessary.

Today the Lord uses small things to train us to bear shame for Him. "Count it all joy, my brethren" and sisters, to be driven out to the Lord by the pins and pricks of this world. The earlier our young people learn to know that their (and our) place is outside this world, the more they (and we) will grow in true spiritual strength.

*To be cont'd*