

SIGNS of the Times

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?

Hard Times on Planet Earth

Some people insist that we can't understand the book of Revelation. They look at the symbols in the prophecies—the dragons and demons and angels and strange-looking animals—and they throw up their hands saying, "I can't understand all that! It's too confusing."

But would God send us a message we couldn't understand?

THE FOCUS AND PURPOSE OF THE PROPHECIES OF REVELATION

Actually, the book of Revelation is not about dragons or demons or the antichrist or anything like that. These things appear in the book, but they are not its focus. They aren't the central message.

1. Whom does the book of Revelation reveal? (**Revelation 1:1**)

The book of Revelation reveals *Jesus* to us. It's a revelation of Him. *Jesus* is also the One doing the revealing; the things revealed belong to Him and come from Him. *Jesus* is the focus and theme of Revelation.

2. As we study the prophecies of Revelation, what three things does God ask us to do? (**Revelation 1:3**)
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____

God wants us to pay attention to His words in the book of Revelation, understand them, and follow them. They are an important message from God's heart to our heart. Revelation is not about fear; it's about hope. It's not about destruction; it's about avoiding destruction. It's not about death; it's about conquering death and living forever with Jesus. Jesus is the Man of Revelation.

JOHN SEES A PROBLEM IN HEAVEN

3. What did John see in heaven, and why did it make him cry? (**Revelation 5:1-4**)
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In a vision, the prophet John sees God holding a scroll fastened shut with seven seals. It needs to be opened, but the problem is: No one is worthy to open it—no one in heaven or earth!

4. What solution to the problem does John hear in his vision? (**vs. 5**)
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WORTHY IS THE LAMB

5. Why is the Lamb worthy to open the scroll? (**vs. 9**)
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Jesus is the Lamb who was slain—killed—for us. He took our sins and died on the cross. He has redeemed us. Because of this, all authority [power] in heaven and earth has been given to Him. (Matthew 28:18)

6. What is the inevitable result of sin? (**Romans 6:23**)
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When we sin, we cut ourselves off from God. God doesn't reject us; we separate ourselves from Him. And the result is death. God is the Source of life; every breath we take comes from Him.

So, what happens if we separate ourselves from Him through sin? We die. "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23) No wonder the prophet John was weeping when he thought no one could be found to open the scroll and solve the problem!

SEPARATION AND SALVATION

7. What does sin do to our relationship with God? (Isaiah 59:2)

8. How many of us human beings have sinned? (Romans 3:23; 5:12)

9. Although we deserve to die because of our sins, what is God's gift to us? (Romans 6:23; John 3:16)

10. Why did Jesus come to our world as a human being? (1 Timothy 1:15)

All of us have sinned and are subject to eternal death—the ultimate penalty for sin. But Jesus became “sin for us.” (2 Corinthians 5:21) He died in our place, thus paying the death penalty for us. He gives us His sinless life as a gift. That’s why Paul says “the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)



RECEIVING GOD'S GIFT

11. How do we receive God's gift of eternal life through Jesus? (1 John 1:9)

When we come to Jesus—**accepting Him as our Lord and Savior and confessing our sins**—He will forgive *every* sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. No sin is too dark for Jesus to forgive. Salvation is God's gift to you because He knows you can't earn it. (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

For your personal Study:

While He was on earth, Jesus never sinned. (**Hebrews 4:14, 15**)

Jesus stood firm against every temptation. He lived a perfect sinless life. That's how He is able to offer us eternal life as a gift. He took our sinful life upon Himself and offers us His sinless life in its place. This is how sinners are declared righteous before God—solely on the merits of Jesus. Paul writes that God “made Him [Jesus Christ] who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

As you read in Revelation 5:9, Jesus is worthy to open the scroll because He laid down His perfect, righteous life as a gift—even for the most unworthy. Because of His death, we are able to have **Peace** through “our Lord Jesus Christ”? (**Romans 5:1**)

Is it any wonder that every creature in heaven and earth proclaims, “Blessing and honor and glory and power be . . . to the Lamb, forever and ever”? (Revelation 5:13) **Without this peace, men will continue to have a hard time on planet earth.**

Do you believe that Jesus can forgive your sins and give you everlasting life? Can you think of any reason not to accept God's gift of eternal life? Is there anything that would keep you from accepting Jesus as your Savior?

MY DECISION

Jesus, I accept You as my Savior from sin. Thank You for Your promise of forgiveness.

MY PRAYER

Father, I invite Jesus into my heart. I accept Him as my Lord and Savior. Take away my sins that separate me from You. Give me the gift of eternal life that You have promised. I ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

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