

Jesus Victorious and the Rest of the Story



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While on vacation, Enrique's backpack with his expensive camera was stolen. Enrique was very upset. He had spent years saving his money to buy the camera.

He immediately called the police. But the police told Enrique that he should not expect to get his camera back. Enrique's hard-earned camera was gone, and there was no hope of catching the thief. It was not fair. How Enrique wished he could bring the thief to justice!

Have you ever had something happen to you that was not fair? Did you feel angry or sad?

In Daniel and Revelation, we see a lot of unfair things happen to innocent people. We read that God lets Satan and his helpers persecute, kill, and destroy—it seems without consequences. How can a God of love and justice allow these innocent people to suffer?

Thankfully, Revelation gives us "the rest of the story." It explains how ultimately God will right all the wrongs that happen in this world. Someday all the universe will acknowledge that God is just, fair, and totally loving. This "rest of the story" is what we will study today.

God says that He is love. (1 John 4:8.) He also says that the only way to be happy is to obey His law. (Proverbs 29:18.)

Satan claims that his way is better, and that it gives people more freedom. He says that to be happy, we just need to follow our hearts and do whatever we want. (Deuteronomy 29:18, 19.)

God says that Satan is a liar. (John 8:44.)

God also says that our hearts are "deceitful" and "desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 17:9), so it is not safe to follow our hearts. God warns us that "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).



But which one is telling the truth—God or Satan?

Of course, God is telling the truth. But God wants us, and everyone in the universe, to know that for sure. He wants us to trust Him totally. So He is letting Satan show exactly what his kingdom is really like. Right now, Satan is the "prince of this world" (Ephesians 2:2). We can see the results of his rule in all the pain, suffering, and unfairness that happen around us.

Do you like that kind of kingdom? Does Satan's way really bring happiness? Do you want to have someone like that as your ruler? Of course not!

Let's see how the story ends.

Read Revelation 19:11–16 to see a beautiful description of the dramatic rescue Jesus is preparing. It will be more powerful and glorious than we can imagine.

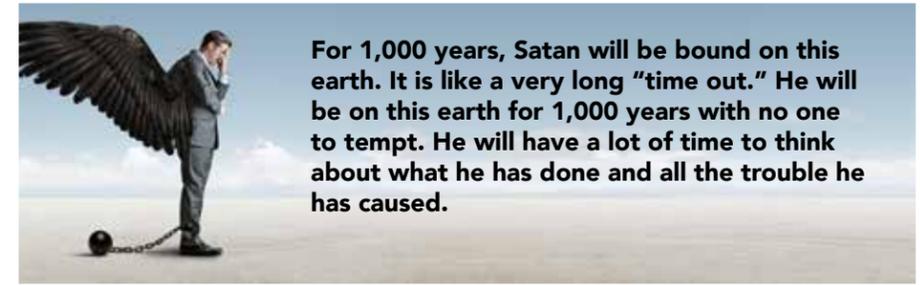
- On what will Jesus ride? **Revelation 19:11**
 - White horse
 - Gray horse
 - Black horse
 - Red horse
- Who will come with Jesus? **Revelation 19:14**
 - All the kings of the earth
 - The persecuted people
 - All the armies of heaven
 - The Roman army
- What will happen to the wicked people when Jesus comes? **Revelation 19:19–21**
 - They will become slaves of Satan.
 - They will be left behind and have another chance to repent.
 - They will be killed.

When Jesus comes as a mighty king, the earth will be destroyed and the bodies of the wicked will be food for birds. No one will be left alive to bury them.

- What will happen to the righteous people when Jesus comes? **1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17** "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will _____ first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be _____ together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."



- What will happen to Satan? **Revelation 20:1, 2** "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and _____ him for a thousand years."



For 1,000 years, Satan will be bound on this earth. It is like a very long "time out." He will be on this earth for 1,000 years with no one to tempt. He will have a lot of time to think about what he has done and all the trouble he has caused.

- What about the saints? What will they do during this 1,000 years? **Revelation 20:4–6** "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and _____ was committed to them.... And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the _____ resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall _____ with Him a thousand years."

During this time, the saints will be in heaven reigning with Christ and judging the wicked. We will even judge the wicked angels! (1 Corinthians 6:3.) This is the saints' opportunity to reverse all the unfair judgments that happened on earth. They will review the books of record which contain even the thoughts of the wicked. (Ecclesiastes 12:14; Psalm 139:1, 2; Mark 4:22.)

- What will happen at the end of the 1,000 years? **Revelation 20:7, 8** "Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be _____ from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea."

After the 1,000 years, God will move His holy city, the New Jerusalem, from heaven to earth. The city of God will come down from the sky, and settle down on a great plain where the Mount of Olives is now. (Revelation 21:2; Zechariah 14:4.) That beautiful city is built with gold, pearls, and gemstones; and it is bigger than you can imagine. Read all about it in Revelation 21:9–21.



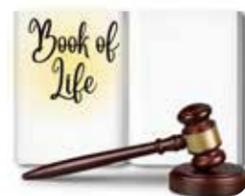
Amazing Facts

Then God will raise the wicked dead back to life so they can receive their sentence of condemnation. Satan will try to deceive them and make them think they can capture the city of God. But God will not let that happen.

- What will God do after all the wicked are alive again? **Revelation 20:11, 12** "Then I saw a great white _____ and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and _____ were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were _____ according to their works, by the things which were written in the books."

The resurrected dead will be judged by their works. Their selfish, wicked actions show that they would not be happy in heaven, and they would make heaven a miserable place if they were allowed to go there.

But before they are destroyed, God will show them why they can't go to heaven. They weren't willing to repent and accept God's free gift of salvation. In the end, all the wicked will agree that God's decisions are fair.



- 9** What will everyone acknowledge?
Philippians 2:10, 11 "That at the name of Jesus _____ knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that _____ tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Everyone will agree that God's way is better than Satan's way. Everyone will see that God really is love. His law is holy, just, and good. Satan will be fully exposed as a liar and murderer.

After the judgment finishes, it will be time for the execution of the judgment—the final punishment of the wicked.



- 10** What will that be like?
Revelation 20:14, 15 "Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second _____. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of _____."

Fire will come down from the sky. Satan, his evil angels, and all the wicked people will be burned up and turned to ashes. Not even one will be left alive. (Revelation 20:9; Malachi 4:3.)

Then God will create a new heaven and a new earth. (Revelation 21:1.) Sin will never, ever happen again. (Nahum 1:9.)

- 11** In the new earth, will there be anything to make us sad?
Revelation 21:4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be _____ more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more _____, for the former things have passed away."



Everything will be brand new and beautiful. The flowers will never fade and the grass will never turn brown and die. There will not be any fires, earthquakes, or terrible storms. No

one will grow old and die. No one will ever get sick or hurt. Everyone will obey God's law of love. Can you imagine living in such a wonderful place?

- 12** What will give light to this beautiful new world?
Revelation 21:23 "The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the _____ of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light."



- 13** What else will be in this beautiful city?
Revelation 22:1, 2 "And he showed me a pure _____ of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street,

and on either side of the river, was the _____ of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

Those who drink from the river of life and eat the fruit of the tree of life will never die.

Do you want to live with Jesus in this beautiful city someday, on an earth that is recreated into a paradise? _____ Will you decide right now to dedicate your entire life to Jesus? Choose, with His help, to spend time with Him every day. Ask Him to make you pure, holy, and loving, and willing to give up any sins and bad habits that would keep you out of heaven. (Revelation 22:14, 15.)

Why not stop right now to pray and make this commitment to God?

In these lessons, we have learned some characteristics of God's remnant people at the end of time.



Remnant: A small amount of something that remains at the end

- 14** How do we identify who God's remnant people are? The Bible gives us two very good clues:
Revelation 12:17
 1. They keep the _____ of God.
 2. They have the _____ of Jesus.

We have talked a lot about God's commandments. We have learned how Jesus wants to take our hearts of stone and exchange them for His beautiful heart, which has God's law written in it. (Ezekiel 36:26.) God's remnant people have let Jesus make that change. They happily keep God's commandments, including the fourth one.

But what about the second clue? What is the "testimony of Jesus?" John knew about this. That's why he was exiled to Patmos. (Revelation 1:9.)

- 15** What is "the testimony of Jesus"? What did the angel say?
Revelation 19:10 "And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, 'See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of _____.'"

John was a prophet. He spoke the messages Jesus gave him to share with other people. The Bible says that God's remnant people at the end of time will have this same gift of prophecy.

Since sin came into our world, the gift of prophecy has been the main way God has communicated with people. (Luke 1:70; Acts 3:21.) Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Daniel, and John were some of the many prophets God sent to help us.

At the end of time, God will still use the gift of prophecy to give His messages to people. (Acts 2:17.) There will be false prophets, too, so we need to be careful not to be deceived. (Matthew 24:24.) That's why Jesus tells us, "Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:20, 21).

How can we tell the difference between true and false prophets?

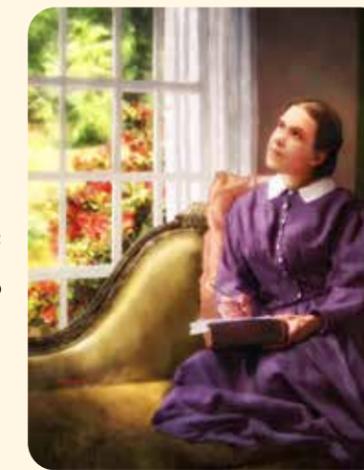
- Isaiah 8:20** A true prophet never contradicts the Bible or God's law.
- 1 John 4:2, 3** A true prophet directs people to Jesus for salvation.
- Jeremiah 23:16, 17** A true prophet will call sinners to repent and direct them

to Jesus for power to overcome sin. But a false prophet doesn't reprove sin; he makes sinners feel good about themselves.

- 1 Corinthians 14:3, 4** A true prophet builds up (edifies) God's church.
- Jeremiah 28:9** A true prophet's predictions will always come true.
- Matthew 7:15–20** A true prophet will live a godly life.

There is only one church that claims to keep all of God's commandments and have the spirit of prophecy: the Seventh-day Adventist church. Let's look briefly at what they say about the gift of prophecy.

The Seventh-day Adventist church believes that a woman named Ellen White meets the Bible's tests for a true prophet.



- Everything she wrote lifts up the Bible. She said she was a "a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light," which is God's Word, the Bible.¹
- Her writings always direct people to Jesus.²
- Her writings reprove sin and lead people to Jesus as the only hope for sinners.³
- Her writings brought hope to the Adventist believers after the great disappointment. They helped to strengthen and build up the Seventh-day Adventist church.⁴

5. Her predictions were accurate. For example, she talked about the dangers of tobacco, tea, and coffee at a time when doctors actually prescribed tobacco for their patients! She advocated a plant-based diet and taught people to get exercise, fresh air, and plenty of water, at a time when these things were not popular.

6. Finally, her beautiful life, showing the fruit of the Spirit, is such an inspiration to many.

You'll want to study this more for yourself. You can do that by reading some of her books and comparing them with the Bible. Test the gift of prophecy, just like Jesus says. A good place to start is with her book *Steps to Christ* which tells us how to be saved, how to be like Jesus, and how to have a closer walk with Him.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that God, in His mercy, has sent the gift of prophecy to help guide people through this darkest time in earth's history: the time right before Jesus comes. We need all the help Jesus sends us so we can safely go through this time of wickedness and deception!

- 16** Do you want to commit to seeking God's light and truth every day? _____

Answers

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. White horse | 5. bound | judged | 13. river / tree |
| 2. All the armies of heaven | 6. judgment / first / reign | 9. every / every | 14. commandments / testimony |
| 3. They will be killed. | 7. released | 10. death / fire | 15. prophecy |
| 4. rise / caught up | 8. throne / books / | 11. no / pain | |
| | | 12. glory | |

Sources

- Evangelism*, p. 257
- The Desire of Ages*, p. 83
- The Atlantic Union Gleaner*, August 19, 1903
- A Word to the Little Flock*, May 21, 1847