

no more secrets

Revealing Jesus - Discussion Guide #10



INQUIRY

1. What patterns or themes do you see in your life history?
2. What makes you feel out of your depth?
3. What meaning do you find in the Counselor's statement, "These events are more than just facts, just like you are more than photons?"
4. What in your life suggests that you're being led by something greater than yourself?

INQUEST

A rocky island. The last disciple. An extraordinary glimpse of ages to come.

Tradition says that the Romans exiled Jesus' disciple John, author of a gospel and three New Testament letters bearing his name, to the Greek island of Patmos. He would have been in his late eighties or early nineties. He had watched and worked for His mentor and Savior's return for over half a century. Now, God gave Him a vision of the past, present, and future—a "Rev. of Jesus Christ."

A dizzying fantasia of images and ideas, the book of Rev. has dazzled and confused readers for almost 2000 years. It testifies to a universe in which justice prevails and life has ultimate purpose and meaning, yet its tumult of numerals, angels, and beasts has spurred countless interpretations and distortions.

Its talk of a drunk Babylon, a new Jerusalem, a Lion and a Lamb—all draw from earlier Bible texts. And no imagery is more striking than that of Rev.'s false trinity: the dragon, the sea beast, and the land beast.

The dragon parodies God (Rev. 12:17; 13:1, 2). The sea beast is a false Jesus, receiving its authority from the dragon (Rev. 13:2) like Jesus had from His Father (Matt. 28:18). Like Jesus, the sea beast was fatally wounded, yet lived (Rev. 13:3). As Jesus' ministry lasted three and a half years, the counterfeit beast works for 42 months (Rev. 13:5)—the same length of time stated a different way. Lastly, the land beast is a satanic parody of the Holy Spirit, supporting the sea beast (Rev. 13:12, 14, 15) like the Holy Spirit's ministry promotes Jesus (John 16:13, 14). But instead of bringing comfort and persuasion like the true Holy Spirit, the land beast uses force and deception to compel and destroy (Rev. 13:12-17).

Revelation describes an end-time crisis over worship (13:4, 8; 12, 15; 14:7, 9-11), in which the devil uses supernatural power to deceive (13:13, 14). The first four of the ten commandments focus on worshiping God, and the unholy trinity explicitly breaks and counterfeits the first three—worshiping something in place of God (13:4, 8); worshiping an image (13:14, 15); and blaspheming (13:1, 5, 6).

When, in Rev. 14, an angel calls us to worship the true God, it quotes the fourth commandment (verse 7; see Exodus 20:11), which honors God as Creator by calling us to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. In contrast, the mark of the beast parodies the Sabbath's nature and blessings. While the Sabbath declares rest for son, daughter, servant, animal, and foreigner, the beast forces its mark on "everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave." Both the beast's mark and God's Sabbath restrict work, but the Sabbath offers rest, while the mark of the beast makes one restless.

John 16:2 shares one of Jesus' most striking predictions: "a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God." For Jesus Himself, that prediction came true just a few hours later. The New Testament tells of similar dynamics at the world's end: Of religious people so stuck on their rigid traditions that they seek to destroy those who stand for something greater.

CROSS-EXAMINATION

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be in different lands a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to strike in one night a decisive blow which shall silence dissent and reproof."

1. What motivates one group to destroy another? Why do people do such evil in the name of God?
2. What mental leap must we make in order to view another person as disposable?
3. In what ways do we dehumanize or belittle certain groups or kinds of people?

"At midnight God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow. The wicked look with terror on the scene, while the righteous behold the tokens of their deliverance. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying, 'It is done!'"

1. How do you imagine the voice of God?
2. How may God decide that it's time to wrap up human history?

"As the ransomed are welcomed to the city of God, there rings out an exultant cry. The two Adams are about to meet. The Son of God is to receive the father of our race—whom He created, who sinned, and for whose sin the marks of the crucifixion are on the Saviour's form. As Adam discerns the prints of the nails, in humiliation he casts himself at Christ's feet. The Saviour lifts him up and bids him look once more upon the Eden home from which he has so long been exiled."

1. How do you imagine Adam will feel in this moment? How will Jesus?
2. Why might Jesus retain the scars of His death?

"In this life we can only begin to understand the wonderful theme of redemption. With our finite comprehension we may consider most earnestly the shame and the glory, the life and the death, the justice and the mercy, that meet in the cross; yet with the utmost stretch of our mental powers we fail to grasp its full significance... The plan of redemption will not be fully understood, even when the ransomed see as they are seen and know as they are known; but through the eternal ages new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind."

1. What aspect of Jesus' work do you most appreciate now?
2. What are your biggest questions about God?
3. How would you describe God's love?

Chapter 10— *The Great Rescue*

When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be in different lands a simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the decree draws near, the people will conspire to strike in one night a decisive blow which shall silence dissent and reproof.

The people of God—some in prison cells, some in forests and mountains—plead for divine protection. Armed men, urged on by evil angels, are preparing for the work of death. Now, in the hour of utmost extremity, God will interpose: "Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth . . . to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel. And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones." Isaiah 30:29, 30.

Throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when a dense blackness, deeper than night, falls on the earth. Then a rainbow spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are arrested. The objects of their rage are forgotten. They gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant and long to be shielded from its brightness.

By the people of God a voice is heard, saying, "Look up." Like Stephen, the early Christian martyr, they look up and see the glory of God and the Son of man on His throne. See Acts 7:55, 56. They discern the marks of His humiliation, and hear the request, "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." John 17:24. A voice is heard saying, "They come, holy, harmless, and undefiled! They have kept the word of my patience."

Deliverance Comes!

At midnight God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow. The wicked look with terror on the scene, while the righteous behold the tokens of their deliverance. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying, "It is done!" Revelation 16:17.

That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, "such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." Revelation 16:18. Ragged rocks are scattered on every side. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of a hurricane like the voice of demons. The earth's surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness are swallowed up by the angry waters. "Babylon the great" has come in remembrance before God, "to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." Revelation 16:19. Great hailstones do their work of destruction. Proud cities are laid low. Lordly palaces on which men have lavished their wealth crumble before their eyes. Prison walls are rent asunder, and God's people are set free.

Graves are opened, and "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth . . . awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." "They also which pierced him," those that derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of

His truth, are raised to see the honor placed on the loyal and obedient. Daniel 12:2; Revelation 1:7.

Fierce lightnings envelop the earth in a sheet of flame. Above the thunder, voices, mysterious and awful, declare the doom of the wicked. Those who were boastful and defiant, cruel to God's commandment-keeping people, now shudder in fear. Demons tremble while men are supplicating for mercy.

The Day of the Lord

Said the prophet Isaiah: "In that day a man shall cast the idols of his silver, and the idols of his gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." Isaiah 2:20, 21.

Those who have sacrificed all for Christ are now secure. Before the world and in the face of death they have evinced their fidelity to Him who died for them. Their faces, so lately pale and haggard, are now aglow with wonder. Their voices rise in triumphant song: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Psalm 46:1-3.

While these words of holy trust ascend to God, the glory of the celestial city streams from the gates ajar. Then there appears against the sky a hand holding two tables of stone. That holy law, proclaimed from Sinai, is now revealed as the rule of judgment. The words are so plain that all can read them. Memory is aroused. The darkness of superstition and heresy is swept from every mind.

It is impossible to describe the horror and despair of those who have trampled upon God's law. To secure the favor of the world, they set aside its precepts and taught others to transgress. Now they are condemned by that law which they have despised. They see that they are without excuse. The enemies of God's law have a new conception of truth and duty. Too late they see that the Sabbath is the seal of the living God. Too late they see the sandy foundation upon which they have been building. They have been fighting against God. Religious teachers have led souls to perdition while professing to guide them to Paradise. How great is the responsibility of men in holy office, how terrible the results of their unfaithfulness!

The King of Kings Appears

The voice of God is heard declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The Israel of God stand listening, their countenances lighted up with His glory. Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour. In solemn silence the people of God gaze upon it as it draws nearer, until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Not now a "Man of sorrows," Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him, "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." Every eye beholds the Prince of life. A diadem of glory rests on His brow. His countenance outshines the noonday sun. "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." Revelation 19:16.

The King of kings descends upon the cloud, wrapped in flaming fire. The earth trembles before Him: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people." Psalm 50:3, 4.

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said 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: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" Revelation 6:15-17. Derisive jests have ceased, lying lips hushed. Nought is heard but the voice of prayer and the sound of weeping. The wicked pray to be buried beneath the rocks rather than meet the face of Him whom they have despised. That voice which penetrates the ear of the dead, they know. How often have its tender tones called them to repentance. How often has it been heard in the entreaties of a friend, a brother, a Redeemer. That voice awakens memories of warnings despised and invitations refused.

There are those who mocked Christ in His humiliation. He declared: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matthew 26:64. Now they behold Him in His glory; they are yet to see Him sitting on the right hand of power. There is the haughty Herod who jeered at His royal title. There are the men who placed upon His brow the thorny crown and in His hand the mimic scepter—those who bowed before Him in blasphemous mockery, who spat upon the Prince of life. They seek to flee from His presence. Those who drove the nails through His hands and feet behold these marks with terror and remorse.

With awful distinctness priests and rulers recall the events of Calvary, how, wagging their heads in satanic exultation, they exclaimed, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." Matthew 27:42. Louder than the shout, "Crucify him, crucify him!" which rang through Jerusalem, swells the despairing wail, "He is the Son of God!" They seek to flee from the presence of the King of kings.

In the lives of all who reject truth there are moments when conscience awakens, when the soul is harassed with vain regrets. But what are these compared with the remorse of that day! In the midst of their terror they hear the voices of the saints exclaiming: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." Isaiah 25:9.

Resurrection of God's People

The voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. Throughout the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live, a great army of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. From the prison house of death they come, clothed with immortal glory, crying: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Corinthians 15:55.

All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. But all arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal, corruptible form, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful and immortal. Blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. The redeemed will "grow up" (Malachi 4:2) to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory, the last

lingering traces of the curse of sin removed. Christ's faithful ones will in mind and soul and body reflect the perfect image of their Lord.

The living righteous are changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." At the voice of God they are made immortal and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. Angels "gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:31. Little children are borne to their mothers' arms. Friends long separated by death are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the city of God.

Into the Holy City

Throughout the unnumbered host of the redeemed every glance is fixed upon Jesus. Every eye beholds His glory whose "visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." Isaiah 52:14. Upon the heads of the overcomers Jesus places the crown of glory. For each there is a crown bearing his own "new name" (Revelation 2:17) and the inscription, "Holiness to the Lord." In every hand are placed the victor's palm and the shining harp. Then, as the commanding angels strike the note, every hand sweeps the strings with skillful touch in rich, melodious strains. Each voice is raised in grateful praise: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." Revelation 1:5, 6.

Before the ransomed throng is the Holy City. Jesus opens the gates, and the nations that have kept the truth enter in. Then His voice is heard, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:34. Christ presents to the Father the purchase of His blood, declaring: "Here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me." "Those that thou gavest me I have kept." Hebrews 2:13; John 17:12. Oh, the rapture of that hour when the infinite Father, looking upon the ransomed, shall behold His image, sin's blight removed, and the human once more in harmony with the divine!

The Saviour's joy is in seeing, in the kingdom of glory, the souls saved by His agony and humiliation. The redeemed will be sharers in His joy; they behold those won through their prayers, labors, and loving sacrifice. Gladness will fill their hearts when they see that one has gained others, and these still others.

The Two Adams Meet

As the ransomed are welcomed to the city of God, there rings out an exultant cry. The two Adams are about to meet. The Son of God is to receive the father of our race—whom He created, who sinned, and for whose sin the marks of the crucifixion are on the Saviour's form. As Adam discerns the prints of the nails, in humiliation he casts himself at Christ's feet. The Saviour lifts him up and bids him look once more upon the Eden home from which he has so long been exiled.

Adam's life was filled with sorrow. Every dying leaf, every victim of sacrifice, every stain upon man's purity, was a reminder of his sin. Terrible was the agony of remorse as he met the reproaches cast upon himself as the cause of sin. Faithfully did he repent of his sin, and he died in the hope of a resurrection. Now, through the atonement, Adam is reinstated.

Transported with joy, he beholds the trees that were once his delight, whose fruit he himself had gathered in the days of his innocence. He sees the vines his own hands trained, the very flowers he once loved to care for. This is indeed Eden restored!

The Saviour leads him to the tree of life and bids him eat. He beholds a multitude of his family redeemed. Then he casts his crown at the feet of Jesus and embraces the Redeemer. He touches the harp, and the vaults of heaven echo the triumphant song: "Worthy, worthy, is the Lamb that was slain." Revelation 5:12. The family of Adam cast their crowns at the Saviour's feet as they bow in adoration. Angels wept at the fall of Adam and rejoiced when Jesus opened the grave for all who should believe on His name. Now they behold the work of redemption accomplished and unite their voices in praise.

Upon the "sea of glass as it were mingled with fire" are gathered the company that have "gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name." The hundred and forty and four thousand were redeemed from among men, and they sing "a new song," the song of Moses and the Lamb. Revelation 15:2, 3. None but the hundred and forty-four thousand can learn that song, for it is the song of an experience such as no other company ever had. "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." These, having been translated from among the living, are "the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." Revelation 14:4, 5. They passed through the time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation; they endured the anguish of the time of Jacob's trouble; they stood without an intercessor through the final outpouring of God's judgments. They "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." "In their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault" before God. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Revelation 7:14; 14:5; 7:16, 17.

The Redeemed in Glory

In all ages the Saviour's chosen have walked in narrow paths. They were purified in the furnace of affliction. For Jesus' sake they endured hatred, calumny, self-denial, and bitter disappointments. They learned the evil of sin, its power, its guilt, its woe; they look on it with abhorrence. A sense of the infinite sacrifice made for its cure humbles them and fills their hearts with gratitude. They love much because they have been forgiven much. See Luke 7:47. Partakers of Christ's sufferings, they are fitted to be partakers of His glory.

The heirs of God come from garrets, hovels, dungeons, scaffolds, mountains, deserts, caves. They were "destitute, afflicted, tormented." Millions went to the grave loaded with infamy because they refused to yield to Satan. But now they are no longer afflicted, scattered, and oppressed. Henceforth they stand clad in richer robes than the most honored of the earth have worn, crowned with diadems more glorious than were ever placed on the brow of earthly monarchs. The King of glory has wiped the tears from all faces. They pour forth a song of praise, clear, sweet, and harmonious. The anthem swells through the vaults of heaven: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." And all respond, "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever." Revelation 7:10, 12.

In this life we can only begin to understand the wonderful theme of redemption. With our finite comprehension we may consider most earnestly the shame and the glory, the life and the death, the justice and the mercy, that meet in the cross; yet with the utmost stretch of our mental powers we fail to grasp its full significance. The length and the breadth, the depth and the height, of redeeming love are but dimly comprehended. The plan of redemption will not be fully understood, even when the ransomed see as they are seen and know as they are known; but through the eternal ages new truth will continually unfold to the wondering and delighted mind. Though the griefs and pains and temptations of earth are ended and the cause removed, the people of God will ever have a distinct, intelligent knowledge of what their salvation has cost.

The cross will be the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they behold Christ crucified. Never will it be forgotten that the Majesty of heaven humbled Himself to uplift fallen man, that He bore the guilt and shame of sin and the hiding of His Father's face till the woes of a lost world broke His heart and crushed out His life. The Maker of all worlds laid aside His glory from love to man—this will ever excite the wonder of the universe. As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer and know that His kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in song: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his own most precious blood!"

The mystery of the cross explains all mysteries. It will be seen that He who is infinite in wisdom could devise no plan for our salvation except the sacrifice of His Son. The compensation for this sacrifice is the joy of peopling the earth with ransomed beings, holy, happy, and immortal. Such is the value of the soul that the Father is satisfied with the price paid. And Christ Himself, beholding the fruits of His great sacrifice, is satisfied.

Sources

In the list below, under each chapter in the current work are listed the source chapters in *The Great Controversy* that correspond to it:

Chapter 1, “Why Is There Suffering?”

The Great Controversy, chapter 29

Chapter 2, “Hope for Triumph Over Evil”

The Great Controversy, chapters 30, 31

Chapter 3, “Dangerous Seductions”

The Great Controversy, chapter 32

Chapter 4, “Everlasting Life”

The Great Controversy, chapter 33

Chapter 5, “False Hope”

The Great Controversy, chapter 34

Chapter 6, “True Peace”

The Great Controversy, chapters 7, 27

Chapter 7, “Our Only Safeguard”

The Great Controversy, chapter 37

Chapter 8, “In Defense of the Truth”

The Great Controversy, chapters 3, 25, 26

Chapter 9, “Real Hope”

The Great Controversy, chapters 1, 17, 36, 38, 39

Chapter 10, “The Great Rescue”

The Great Controversy, chapter 40

Chapter 11, “Victory of Love”

The Great Controversy, chapter 42

A revealing
look at the
battle between
good and
evil — and
who wins.

The

Great

Hope





Younger Generation Church

YG is the vibrant young adult ministry of the Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church. Our mission is to deepen our devotion to Christ Jesus by pursuing INTIMACY with GOD, experiencing COMMUNITY with each other, and inspiring those around us with the HOPE of GRACE. www.YGchurch.com



How it all began

YG began just after the turn of the century as a high-energy, contemporary worship service highlighting multimedia, upbeat music, and timely, creative messages – all focused on reaching young adults. Today, YG transcends age and program boundaries, making authentic efforts to foster the great commandment and great commission in new generations. www.vimeo.com/channels/ygchurch



Intimacy

We are wholeheartedly pursuing a 24/7 experience of the living GOD. Our worship is for His fame. Each week Younger Generation Church offers a powerful worship experience, Saturday mornings, 10:15 am [Central], where we authentically gather to focus our attention and adoration on Christ Jesus. www.YGchurch.com



Community

We express best who GOD is by doing life together well. Our relationships express His love. Younger Generation Church enjoys LIFEgroups affording our members an opportunity to build inspiring community and foster healthy relationships. We love having fun and taking time to enjoy each other's company. www.facebook.com/ygchurch



Grace

We are compelled to share the hope we have with others. Our compassionate witness reveals His Good News as real. Younger Generation Church generously shares the grace of Jesus Christ with whomever we might serve. Feeding the hungry, encouraging the orphan, consoling the widow—being grace dispensers to the least of these bring us joy. @YGChurch