

Your Comments and Questions

(Views expressed here are not necessarily those of the editor)

Hi, Terry and Beth. We have long mourned the lack of Gospel preaching in the pulpits of our country. We thank God for those men He has kept faithful to His Word... We have been blessed over the years by the 'Diakrisis' magazine, and more recently by the 'Diakrisis' TV series. We long to see God's Word honoured and His Son known and trusted; therefore we count it a privilege to plead for the Lord's blessing on your work for His name. In Christ's love,
(E&V.B. Qld)

'Questionnaires' and 'Debates' Sections (Website)

We have recently added more questionnaires to our website, including a new one 'Are You a True Christian?'. The 'Questionnaires' and 'Debates' sections are found in 'Other Resources'.

We include these questionnaires and debates in the hope that readers might be further *informed, taught and equipped* in the true faith and Gospel, and might learn to test beliefs by scripture alone.

Prayer Points

- Pray for clear direction in planning a future itinerary in these uncertain times.
- Pray for effective use of our latest books - see P.19.

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Diakrisis (Australia)

'But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern [diakrisis] both good and evil', (Heb.5:14)

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TA Ministries is a non-denominational faith ministry,
teaching, informing and equipping the church.
Editor: Terry Arnold (Dr.Th; MABS; Dip.Bib.&Min.)

The editor may not necessarily agree with all the views expressed by subscribers in this newsletter.

We welcome comments or items contributed by readers. Unless otherwise requested, these may be included in following newsletters at the discretion of the editor.

Articles in this newsletter may be copied or reproduced provided it is in context and proper credit and references are given. We encourage distribution of this newsletter that others might be *taught, informed and equipped*.

This newsletter is distributed bi-monthly *free* of charge. The cost to this ministry is approximately \$20.00 per subscriber annually. Any donation to help with these expenses is received with gratitude.

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New E-mail

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Latest Books - See P.19



Editor's Comment

Revelation chapters 17 and 18 have frightening accounts of the destruction of the final antichrist's world system in the period known as the 'Great Tribulation'. This system will influence and sway multitudes of people. We are warned to 'come out of her' (Rev.18:4), to abandon this system of the world whose ruler will impose 'the mark of the beast' to be able to buy or sell (Rev.14:11; 16:2; 19:20).

Could it be that the current world events which have come so *quickly*, including this 'pandemic' with its 'mandates' and 'passports', are a forewarning of what is in the end to come 'quickly' (Rev.3:11; 22:7,12,20)?

Several Christians have contacted the editor to seek advice on the current pandemic, the 'vaccine', the mandates and passports, etc. Firstly, what concerns the editor is the *lack of discernment* in so easily believing what we are hearing from the narrative of the governments and the mainstream media. Secondly, the concern is the *dulling or silencing of consciences*.

The issues here are not about vaccination, anti-vaccination or 'conspiracies'. But there is a need for *discernment in what we are hearing and believing*. Just as multitudes of professing Christians blindly follow false prophets and teachers who have the most extra-biblical mystical teachings (with new gospels), so the Covid Pandemic has brought with it a subtle attraction to too easily *believing what we have been told*. Many have not examined and tested the shrill narrative of the media and the governments of the world. On the other hand the same caution could be applied to some of the pandemic 'conspiracies', (although one wonders at times who is checking the 'fact checkers' who have been proved wrong in some cases).

In a previous editorial (*Diakrisis* Jan/Feb 2022) we examined some of the figures and numbers to do with this 'Pandemic' which are simply lost in the daily media reports of deaths from Covid. We were originally told by some experts that deaths would be in the hundreds of thousands, yet to date thankfully less than 4,000 have died. The fear mongering by the governments and media needs to be examined against a virus which has killed at a rate several times less than the flu and a host of other diseases - diseases now tragically given less attention due to the attention given to Covid. (Remember too, that 99.9% of those infected with Covid have mild symptoms; 0.1% have critical conditions). This pandemic will barely measure against historic pandemics (the Spanish Flu, Black Death, AIDS virus...).

Does the media report the rising number of reported deaths (many thousands worldwide) from the vaccines, or the list of world experts with their warnings and cautions? How many have asked the question as to why so many of the vaccinated are now getting the virus and a 'booster' is now required? How many have questioned why there is the pressure imposed to vaccinate young children against the latest strains of Covid - when deaths, if any, are rare, and less than 2% of those infected would need medical attention, most of those not serious?

The second concern is partly due to the first concern - easily believing what we have been told has arguably weakened *the conscience* of many. The freedoms of information, of speech and conscience, have taken a distinct turn in the last few



Latest Books

'Free Will or Free Agency - Killing Sacred Cows'

The latest publication 'Free Will or Free Agency? Kicking Sacred Cows' is a book that sees years of research and study come to fruition. The content in this book will shock many Christians who today are simply unaware of the history of, and what the Bible does or does not say about, the doctrine of 'Free will'. What is orthodox has been lost and a new modern gospel has been brought in.

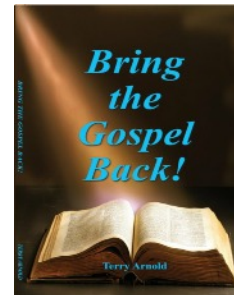
The issues documented in these pages will affect how the Gospel is understood and then how this is played out in methods of evangelism.

Does man have complete freedom of his will? Where did the term 'free will' originate? Is it in the Bible? How did evangelists of old use the term 'free will'? Why did many of them use another term, 'free agency'? What is the difference? *What can man do and what can he not do with his will toward his salvation?*

The book tests the terms 'free will' and 'free agency' with scripture and the testimony of historic orthodoxy from church leaders century by century (Charles Spurgeon is given special mention).

The importance of this issue cannot be understated as it *greatly affects the Gospel and salvation by grace!*

The book is available now for \$9.90 (postage included).



Bring The Gospel Back!

Our new book titled '*Bring The Gospel Back!*' is now listed with some leading bookstores in Australia. (Buying from bookstores does help us to have the book listed publicly). Also one can order from a distributor <https://chugley.blog/blog/>

The following is one of the endorsements from the book: '*Clarity on the Gospel, perhaps, is the greatest need at the moment. With the Church being assaulted every day with lies and errors, clarity on the Gospel needs many voices... 'Bring the Gospel Back!' Is a clarion call for truth, and especially the truth of the Gospel...In this primer you will find a clear articulation and promulgation of the gospel...a must read by every Christian and every Christian minister*'. (Todd Stanton, Pastor, St John's Park Baptist Church, Sydney)

This book is a passionate and urgent call for churches to *come back to the true Gospel and preach it accurately*. It will challenge even many conservative churches as to what has been added to the content and the delivery of the Gospel, and especially the response to it.

This book is available now for \$15.90 (postage included)

Dear Terry, have you any information on false prophet Kevin Zadai?

Editor's reply:

False prophets are now so prolific, we don't keep files on many. Zadai claims that during surgery he died, that he was transformed into his 'resurrected body', and that 'jesus' appeared to him and revealed that every person who knows the Lord has a 'God Package' inside them...This jesus encouraged him to 'speak in tongues'...that angels have 'briefing books'...He once claimed in an airplane that people would weep as he passed them because he had a 'presence'...and more nonsense. Zadai prolifically sells his books and tapes teaching people how to engage the supernatural and to be visited by jesus and angels...

For a general overview on 'after death' experiences see our website article 'Visions, Dreams, Near Death' in the Pentecostal section of 'Articles'.

There are two main ways this ministry has tested these false prophets: 1. By Scripture, test what they say and do 2. Ask for documentation/testimony of the events. Zadai contradicts scripture on several points and the words from this 'jesus' are extra biblical. There is also contrary evidence and no documentation that he was dead in surgery. These false prophets are numerous, but they all 'make merchandise of God's people' and are well described along with their judgement in Jude verses 8-13.

Dear Terry,

[Editor's reply in bold and brackets] *Thank you for sending the 'Diakrisis newsletter...It is good (though distressing) to be kept up to date with things happening in these troubled days and to read what the inspired Scriptures say about this. I felt moved to write...trusting we can both be Bereans...to search and study the scriptures to see whether these things are so (Acts 17:10-11). In the Jan/Feb/2022 issue P.3, I read 'The Lord may well be at the door'. This made me think of James 5:8-9...the judge is standing at the door (and that nearly 2,000 years ago)...I am not sure what you are saying when you use the phrase 'may well be'. [I was thinking generally of the soon or 'quick' coming of Christ, with no particular verse in mind...although, with present events...Christ's coming could be sooner than many think?]*

On P.13 on vs.5, I read about Babylon, both mystical and literal, but I am a bit mystified with your references here to Jeremiah chapter 44 as the whole chapter is about...Egypt...[Yes, it's the wrong scripture...I have mistaken Egypt for the religious practices of Babylon? Queen of Heaven, Ishtar, etc.]

On P.15, vs.9, I applaud your understanding of 'seven heads are seven mountains' as Ancient Rome was the only city in John's time with the reputation of being 'the seven-hilled city'. But then in vs.10,11 you say 'seven kings would imply seven kingdoms. Daniel ch.7 details seven kingdoms or empires'. But Daniel ch.7 has only 4 kingdoms [Yes, apologies - there are four. Babylon, Medo/Persia, Greece, Rome?]....[I will make the changes on our master copy]

years to one of controlling the masses. (Tens of thousands of nurses, medical staff, police, teachers and others have lost their jobs for not wanting for various reasons *by conscience* to not accept the terms of government vaccines, mandates and passports). Many experts outside of the mainstream media have been shut down, silenced and their media taken out.

Could it be that the current events could be *dulling and lulling consciences* into a coming world system which would control and enslave the conscience? Many would obey government laws even when they unlawfully restrict a higher law for assembling, worship and Christian liberties of conscience. Various governments have outlawed the church assembling and singing praises to God, and have banned unvaccinated pastors from pastoring their churches, while some churches and colleges have restricted their services and studies to vaccinated Christians only.

Many Christians have gone against their own conscience or have been pressured to accept vaccines, mandates and passports as necessary for living in this world. We must obey ruling authorities wherever we can (Rom.13:1-7), but it is dangerous to entrust absolute power to any government expecting it to keep us safe and happy. They are human at the best and demonic at the worst. Currently, governments around the world, acting in unison, may well be experimentally preparing the world for a *control and fear* that the antichrist in the end will himself impose. We are now being microchipped, (including Covid 'passports' injected in the hand), digitalised, surveilled, tracked, face-recognised, jabbed and controlled with restrictions *on a global scale*.

Caution and even resistance to such a world system should be built into Christians *now, rather than later*. This is not to say we purposely disobey the law of the land. If readers accept the vaccine, the mandates and the passports, then let them do so but with a *free and informed conscience*. Too often this author has seen Christians and churches give in to the world's authorities in this pandemic and accept that with which they would not necessarily by conscience agree. Could this arguably set a dangerous precedent for future conscience decisions? How would such people resist the 'mark of the beast' if they could not discern any government system with ungodly injunctions and restrictions?

We live in rapidly changing times. But our home and destination is not of this world system whose final headquarters will be quickly destroyed (Rev.18:10,17,19). Are we watching, ready, looking up and aware of His coming quickly? Do you long for Heaven and to be with the Lord; or has the world system and its benefits surrounded you and dampened your conscience? Are you thinking for yourself or just following what we are told? Now is the time to strengthen our consciences by the written Word, to be informed and discern the world we live in. God's Word gives discernment and warns of the events we see in the world today.

Many Christians are fearful of the events occurring today. But why would a born again Christian fear death which results in our being in the place He has prepared for us? When lies, uncertainty and chaos reign, there is one thing we must cling to - the apostle Peter said it all: '*...Lord, to whom shall we go? you have the words of eternal life*' (Jn.6:68).

Terry Arnold

What is the Biggest Killer in the World?

For the second year in a row, abortions have been the leading cause of death worldwide, with more than three times as many people losing their lives to abortion than the second leading cause of death...Approximately 42.6 million abortions were performed worldwide in 2021. By contrast, only 13 million people perished of communicable diseases, the second-leading cause of death last year. The other leading causes of death paled in comparison to abortion, with 8.2 million people dying of cancer worldwide, nearly 5 million deaths caused by smoking, approximately 2.5 million alcohol-related deaths, nearly 1.7 million people succumbing to HIV/AIDS, more than 1.3 million people dying in traffic accidents, and nearly 1.1 million suicides worldwide.

Additionally, water-related diseases caused approximately 850,000 deaths, the seasonal flu killed nearly half a million people, nearly 400,000 perished because of malaria, and over 300,000 mothers lost their lives during childbirth last year. A separate set of Corona virus statistics also compiled by Worldometer revealed that 3,524,139 people died with complications from COVID-19 in 2021.

Approximately 58.7 million people died in 2021. That figure does not include those who died from abortion. If abortion as a cause of death was included, the number of deaths last year would have surpassed 100 million!

(Ryan Foley for *The Christian Post*)

Gospel Quote

The Necessity of the Spirit in Salvation!

‘The scriptures cannot penetrate the fallen human soul without divine assistance’. Flavel wrote in ‘England’s Duty’ (1689) that ‘God’s law makes not more impression on the hearts of the fallen men than a tennis ball thrown against a stone wall...To men whose hearts are dead in unbelief the Gospel of free grace itself is nothing more than a sweet song to lull them to sleep all the more quietly in their sins...The word of the law and Gospel does not have this power in itself, nor from the preacher, but only from the glorious sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is sovereign over the word, the soul, and the times of conviction and conversion’ (Is.55:10,11; Ezek.36:26; Jn.16:8,9)...

Man is not born of the Spirit and of his own will. The new birth is monergistic, not synergistic...the believer can concur with the Spirit in his sanctification...but in the first production of this spiritual principle, he can do nothing...If human nature could concur in regeneration then the best natures would be soonest quickened [made alive], but we more often see the worst of men regenerated...In regeneration divine grace reigns, and human nature is passive. Grace works in nature to give it life; nature cannot and does not cooperate with grace’.

(John Flavel (Puritan), 1627-1691)

diseases are being kept away...Yet Covid is a killer in Australia *several times behind* other diseases, (including the flu since 2019)...Businesses have been destroyed or shut down, families parted...suicides and depression are beyond anything seen...And what governments should close churches and prevent worship in defiance of the scriptures and a higher law?

This vaccine is *not* the same as the vaccines for ‘*polio, whooping cough, measles*’, etc. It is an experimental mRNA vaccine...more correctly labelled (by research and doctors) as ‘gene therapy’.

It is also not ‘*successful*’ as you say...Israel is two years or more ahead of us - they are into their third ‘booster’ attempting to keep a level of ‘immunity’ that is *rapidly falling*...*Most people getting the virus are now vaccinated!*...Why should we not be ‘sceptical and critical of a govt. now pressuring to vaccinate young children when statistics show this is totally unnecessary?

Who is ‘*throwing the baby out with the bathwater*’ if one’s informed conscience rejects the vaccine, mandates and passports? Many have been vaccinated through pressure to keep jobs and freedoms.

You say ‘*do we let our country fall into poverty grind to a halt, missionary endeavours cease, etc, all because we are selfish enough to be so worried about our health...*’. But what has not taking the vaccine by conscience and choice got to do with our country ‘falling into poverty’? It is the restrictions and the govt. that is responsible for that, *not the (less than 10%) unvaccinated?*

I appreciate your concern for ‘*missionary endeavours*’...but have they ceased when God is in control? Many countries are seeing conversions where the pandemic and persecution have driven the church underground.

Are any thinking of themselves when they refuse an injection by health, conscience, scripture, prayer and God leads them not to inject into their bodies?

What ‘*scriptural basis*’ might Christians have for not being vaccinated? - ‘*Diakrisis*’ Jan/Feb (P.18) listed reasons. We should have freedom regarding what to put into our bodies which are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Our conscience should not be pressured to be vaccinated...with restrictions, mandates and passports. God speaks to the conscience; it should not be manipulated. Some Christians also are ethically or morally opposed to the aborted foetus parts used in some of the vaccine development stages (this not ‘conspiracy’, but as stated by the manufacturers).

You are correct that the virus is currently ‘raging’...However, relatively few are actually dying of it alone, with 99.5% having ‘other complications’; 99.8% having mild cold like symptoms or no symptoms at all...The flu and other diseases figures since 2019 still outstrip this virus many times over...

It is not about being ‘*selfish*’ but about the need for the *conscience* of every Christian to be free. *That has not been the case under govt./health laws.*

The possibility of this pandemic with its mandates and passports (which are now being stamped on the hand in several countries) leading towards a control by governments and even a future antichrist with his ‘mark’ - is not a ‘conspiracy’ but a real possibility...?

With much respect for any reader’s views on this issue...

Your Comments and Questions

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Covid Discussions

Dear Terry I could weep for joy when reading your editor's comment on P.5 [Jan/Feb/2020] regarding the 'SMBC Bans Unvaccinated'. How refreshing. You are right about the sheer stupidity and worldliness of their godless choice and draconian rule. The chasm of truth against lies grow wider by the day. May God continue to bless you with his wisdom, discernment, boldness and his compassion (and a thick skin against the enemy)...

(W.B., NSW)

Thanks Terry for your great 'Diakrisis' magazine. Just a thought - are Christians becoming too sceptical on Government endeavours to protect us from this raging virus. Instead of being grateful for a caring protective government who are spending billions doing so? ...It's good to be sceptical and the Bible tells us to be so, but conspiracy theories are rampant in Christian circles and putting a lot of unnecessary fear into people. There is nothing to fear about getting the injection. It's basic medical practice used for polio, whooping cough, measles, etc. and has been very successful...You and I know...things ARE winding up. However, to throw the baby out with the bath water calling it all conspiracy is wrong. Do we let our country fall into poverty, grind to a halt, missionary endeavours cease, etc, all because we are selfish enough to be so worried about our health, our reaction, our lives, not to take the 'plunge' and not willing to put our own lives at stake and get on with the job. This is NOT the mark of the beast, so what scriptural basis have we got? Life is not all about ME it's about how we can minister to others and if I need an injection so be it even if I am off colour for a few days. John 15:13

(W.R., Qld)

Editor's reply:

Thanks for your thoughts...Some facts I pray our readers will consider. I am not into 'conspiracies' and not 'anti-vax' as such. I just believe in the complete freedom of people by *conscience* to take or not to take any 'vaccine'.

Should we not be 'sceptical' and accept this government as 'caring and protective'?...when the same governments legalised abortion, same sex marriage, etc?...Under this govt. people are free to take a vaccine, but *not so free not to take*. We are not being told by the govt. and the media that in many areas more deaths (many hundreds in Australia) are now reported after the vaccine rather than from the virus (Govt websites TGA; U.S. Vars)...Doctors fear being shut down and de-registered by govt. and AHPRA if they raise issues. Hundreds of doctors, including immunologists, are currently silenced and banned from the mainstream media. Hospitals are struggling not always with serious cases of the virus, but because of short staff and those who have lost their jobs (tens of thousands) for refusing to take the jab...Serious

Where Are the Healers?

After more than two years of the Covid 19 pandemic, the reaction of the Pentecostal/Charismatic healers to the Covid 19 virus has been most telling. The simple question is: *where are their healers and their healings?*

In earlier years this ministry exposed false healings and the extraordinary claims of healings of cancers, tumours, AIDS and even Downs Syndrome - all proven lies and fraud (see our section 'Healing' on website in 'Articles' section). But where are these healers in the Covid 19 pandemic? Why did they implement all the same measures as the rest of society? What better way would there be to prove the doctrine of the healing gifts than to go to the victims and start healing people of this virus? Where were they? Why were they not in China and other countries in the beginning. Why are they silent?

Many who teach a healing gospel got the virus, were not healed, and some died! Why were the 35 people in Ark Assembly of God church in Kansas not healed? Why did one of them die? (He also had previous respiratory and cardiac illnesses which were never healed). Why did the NYC *Hillsong* leader Pastor Carl Lentz not get healed when he contracted the virus? Why did he make no mention of any possible healing? Why were not healers like Francis Chan, Todd White and Todd Bentley, healing Corona virus victims? Francis Chan has told stories of curing chronic and mortal diseases and of raising people from the dead. 'Every person I touched was healed' he told an audience at Moody Bible Institute. But he didn't tell them that nobody can testify to it and there is no video or medical documentation. Rodney Howard-Browne told people they are immune to the virus and encouraged bodily contact. Yet he spent \$100,000 on a purification system in his church to kill infectious microbes! Charismatic Gerald Glenn, contracted the virus and DIED after claiming he would not get the disease and that people in his church were healed of the virus! Kenneth Copeland claimed people were healed of the virus through their TV sets and his anointing oil. He prophetically commanded God to send an Easter heat wave to kill the virus (but a cold front arrived)! Andrew Gard and his wife Christina, lead pastors of Grace City Church in Lakeland, Florida, contracted the virus and announced their members would wear masks. No mention was made of any healing. Many more cases could be cited.

What about our local Pentecostal/Charismatic pastors? Why are they not healing people of Covid in their communities or in their own churches? This is no time to be soft on the hypocrisy of the healing gospel or those who with feigned words make merchandise of God's people (2Pet.2:3).

The Pentecostal teaching on healing in the Gospel is a lie. When Jesus healed, He healed 'all manner of diseases' (Matt.4:23,24); 'all' and 'every' disease (Matt.4:23,24; 8:16; 9:35; 12:15); 'immediately' (Matt.8:3; 20:34); 'completely' (Matt.12:13; 14:36; 15:28); 'at will' (Matt.8:3) and with *no failures*. The Corona virus should be easy for the faith healers! Jesus healed to prove He was *the Messiah* (Jn.20:30,31; Acts 2:22). Those claiming the gift and the same power as Jesus and those he ordained (Matt.10:1; Mk.3:14,15), are counterfeits.

Terry Arnold

General (Natural) Revelation What It Can Do and Cannot Do

In the Jan/Feb 2022 edition of ‘*Diakrisis*’, we explored the common fallacies which arise when considering the question: *What about those who have never heard the Gospel or of Jesus Christ?* In that article we exposed the common myth that people can be saved by general revelation or ‘the light they have been given’, apart from hearing and understanding the Gospel of Christ.

This article now further explores this fallacy through the understanding of the differences between *General Revelation* and *Special Revelation*.

Defining the Terms

General Revelation (sometimes called *Natural Revelation*) is the revelation God has given *of Himself in creation*. Romans chapter 1 clearly teaches ‘*that which may be known of God is manifest [shown] in them; for God has shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse*’ (Rom.1:19,20).

Special Revelation is that revelation by God which gives man a *saving knowledge* of Christ. It shows the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the sole mediator of a New Covenant that saves. This Special Revelation was given by ‘*God who at various times and in various manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...*’ (Heb.1:1,2). Note the ‘*various manners*’ - first natural revelation in creation; then the patriarchs; then the prophets in dreams, prophecies, visions, audible voices, tablets of stone and the law; then the apostles; and finally by ‘*His Son*’, *Jesus Christ* with the written Word in the 66 books of the Bible as the final written completed revelation. Note the phrase ‘*has spoken*’ is something that is *past* and done *once in time* (Greek aorist indicative). Christ’s Spirit guided certain ‘*holy men of God [who] spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*’ to write down this ‘*prophecy of the scripture*’ (2Pet.1:19-21). The early church called this the ‘*canon*’ [rule] of scripture. It was written and settled in the 1st century and sealed in the 2nd. The Scriptures themselves are clear that God has spoken *finally* in and through this written Word. *The early church allowed for no extra words from God by any means to be added to scripture. It is this Special Revelation which saves.*

The Purpose of General Revelation

The revelation in nature testifies that there is *a supreme creator*. The complex maze of galaxies, stars and planets in intricate orbits, with the earth having a delicate balance of gases just enough to sustain our next breath, would cause one to ask ‘Who keeps all this in such order?’. The human body is also a complex

There has been no repentance by earthlings (Rev.9:20,21; 16:9,11). The warnings to repent are now ended and destruction is imminent...

Vs.21-23 ‘*And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in you; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in you; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in you; And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in you; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in you: for your merchants were the great men of the earth; for by your sorceries were all nations deceived*’.

Another ‘*mighty*’ angel casts a ‘*stone like a great millstone*’ into the sea. Similarly, Jeremiah cast a stone into the Euphrates as a symbol of the end of ancient Babylon (Jer.51:61-64; see also Is.13:19-22;14:22,23; Jer.50:13,39; 51:37). With a series of more ‘*double negatives*’ it is stated that Babylon will be ‘*found no more at all*’; music shall be heard ‘*no more at all*’; no craftsmen will be found ‘*any more*’; light will shine ‘*no more at all*’; and voices will be heard ‘*no more at all*’. The very same description is stated of ancient Babylon (Jer.25:10). It is clear that the prophecies for ancient Babylon are ‘*dual prophecies*’ referring to both the ancient and the end time Babylon.

The ‘*merchants*’ were considered ‘*great men*’ by the world’s standards but were only ever ‘*of the earth*’. By their ‘*sorceries*’ (‘*pharmakeía*’ - occult, magic and drugs) were ‘*all nations deceived*’.

Vs.24 ‘*And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth*’.

Many commentators again see this verse and others in Chapter 17 and 18 as referring to Rome. Rome under heathen emperors and then the later Popes, issued many edicts for bloody slaughters of saints. In the first half of the 16th century fifteen million Protestants perished in the Roman ‘*Inquisitions*’. Many other martyrs throughout the centuries could be added to this.

Matthew Henry wrote of this destruction of Babylon: ‘*Death, at any rate, will soon end their commerce, and all the riches of the ungodly will be exchanged, not only for the coffin and the worm, but for the fire that cannot be quenched*’.

The fall of Babylon will be an act of God’s final justice within the 7th Vial (bowl) judgement. It is one of the most horrific and graphic descriptions of the judgements of God upon this earth.

Let this chapter be a warning of the things of this world which can so easily entice and bring destruction, not just to the body but to the soul. Our affections must be on things above and not on the fleeting lusts and temptations of the world below, for we have been begotten *from above*, destined to be saved from the wrath to come (Rom.5:9; 1Thess.1:10; 5:9).

Fear God and read his Word for a blessing (Rev.1:3)!

Terry Arnold

Vs.12-14 *'The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine [a valuable citrus fragrant] wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, And cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that your soul lusted after are departed from you, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from you, and you shall find them no more at all'*

The long list of the merchandise bought and sold here represents that which is valuable and precious. The *'slaves, and souls of men'* is literally the *'bodies and souls of men'* and arguably reminiscent of the trafficking of slaves so common in early days. Many commentators again saw this spiritualised as the papal system with its indulgences and masses performed for the souls of the living and the dead, thus making *'merchandise of men'* (2Pet.2:3).

The phrase *'no more at all'* interestingly has two Greek *'double negatives'* (*'ouk éti ou me'* - *no more, not not*). Double negatives are also found in verses 21,22 and 23. This city will cease entirely, *never* to be resurrected.

Vs.15-19 *'The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to naught. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate'*

Much of this repeats verses 9-11, the repetition emphasising the shock and loss this will be to the world. The entire world money system will be devastated and come to a halt, in judgement being bankrupted by God!

The similarity to the *'Mystery Babylon'* religion (17:4) is also noted with the *'purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls'*. Shipmasters will stand *'afar off'* lamenting their loss and all will see the city burning. The thrice repeated cry of *'alas'* shows the intensity of the catastrophe, and the grief associated with it.

Vs.20 *'Rejoice over her, you heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets; for God has avenged you [literally 'judged judgement'] on her'*.

The contrast here is stark! Rather than with weeping and grieving, the Heavens with the apostles and prophets *'rejoice'*. They can do this because God has *'rewarded'* her with perfect and full justice in judgement for all the long running evil and injustices put upon God's servants throughout the ages.

Vengeance is never ours but God's alone (Lk.18:7,8; Rom.12:19; 1Thess.5:15).

organised system of organs, blood vessels and cells. The amount of information in the DNA on a pinhead would fill a stack of books 500 times the distance from the earth to the moon. The molecules of DNA contain threads with codes with *exacting* reproducible information - even for characteristics as hair shade and colour. The information is programmed with a *language with instructions*.

Despite the fall of Adam and Eve into sin, God keeps His revelation of Himself to all mankind in creation: *'that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse'* (Rom.1:19,20). There is a play on words between *'known'* and *'invisible'*. Although the knowledge of many *'invisible'* things of God is unknowable and invisible to the senses, still there is enough that is *'clearly seen'* and *'understood by the things that are made'*. The Greek words for *'being understood'* and *'clearly seen'* are in the present tense, the latter in the Greek indicative mood showing a present continuous action. This revelation is repeatedly declaring to sinful man that there is one creator God who has deemed *'invisible'* things to be *'clearly seen'*. Indeed, *'The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork...'* (Ps.19:1)

This Natural Revelation arguably gives man a rational meaning for the world that he knows according to his senses. So many today resort to drugs and even suicide to detach themselves from a world that does not make sense. But God has given this Natural Revelation that man might understand that there is a creator with a purpose behind everything that man senses.

Pagan philosophers such as Aristotle, Plato and Zeno (founder of Stoicism), by reason and logic (with their laws of *'change'*, *'causation'* and *'design'*), have long recognised a *'first mover'* in a supreme God. However, with their much added logic and wisdom of the world they were still left under the wrath of God (Rom.1:18,19). This Natural Revelation by God does not change its mind or theorise and fluctuate as science and philosophy so often do, but is *'shown'* and *'clearly'* to the senses of man. God would take the wise of the world back to the beginning in this revelation and ask *'Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if you have understanding...Have you entered into the springs of the sea? Or have you walked in the search of the depth?'* (Job 38:4,16).

This Natural Revelation shows God's *'eternal power and Godhead'* (Rom.1:20). To the pagan philosophers in Athens Paul testified of the *'God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and earth...'*. *'Atheists'* who deny the testimony of this revelation are declared by God's word to be *'fools'* (Ps.14:1). Countries that have tried to destroy any religion of God have been largely unsuccessful. Modern day China is an example where Christianity grows faster than in the west.

It is undeniable that humans are religious by nature as we were created *'in the image of God'* (Gen.1:26,27). That image has an awareness of a divine being and there is a moral responsibility built in to every person. This law of right and wrong is *'written in their hearts'* (Rom.2:14,15).

The *conscience* plays an important part in this Natural Revelation. The testimony of this ‘law written in their hearts’ is the *conscience* - ‘*the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts between themselves accusing or else excusing one another*’ (Rom.2:15). Even pagan tribes know right from wrong in regard to stealing, adultery, etc. However, it is possible for this conscience to be ‘*seduced*’ and ‘*seared*’, thus blunting the moral compass (1Tim.4:2). Nevertheless, God holds all accountable for Natural Revelation and the resultant law of the conscience written on hearts (Rom.2:14,15).

Finally, Natural Revelation is designed to show the ‘*wrath of God*’ to the unsaved ‘*for the wrath of God is revealed from heaven...Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has showed it unto them*’ (Rom.1:18,19). Again the Greek tense is present indicative showing a ‘manifestation’ by God that is a present continuous repeated action. Indeed, the ‘*whole creation groans*’ for the coming of the Lord to redeem it (Rom.8:22).

The ultimate end of all these purposes of General Revelation is to *declare the glory of God*.

The Purpose of Special Revelation

Special Revelation in the written scriptures, is revelation that is *redemptive* and clearly designed to *save man from sin* by revealing Jesus Christ as the Messiah and Redeemer, the One who can take them out from under the wrath of God.

Special revelation, although it shows and warns the sinner of the wrath of God and consequent judgement, is primarily given to provide the saving solution. This Gospel is spelt out in both the Old and New Testaments with the Messiah Jesus Christ being crucified as a substitutionary sacrifice to God for our sins.

What General Revelation Can and Cannot Do

General Revelation can be an introduction or an ‘ice breaker’ for Special Revelation and evangelism. Before preaching Christ and the resurrection, the apostle Paul spoke to his pagan listeners in Athens of the General Revelation of the ‘*God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands...he gives to all life, and breath, and all things*’ (Acts 17:24,25).

Some church fathers used Natural Revelation in attempting to bring pagans to a conviction of God, or to defend Christianity. Similarly, some Reformers and the Puritans also used it in a limited way.

Another use of General Revelation is to enhance *worship*. Many scriptures use God’s creation in praise and worship: ‘*O Lord our Lord, how excellent is your name...When I consider thy heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars...The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas. O Lord...*’ (Ps.8; see also Ps.ch.19,29,95,104,147).

However, this General Revelation is not designed to *save man from sin* but to *show that there is a God and then to leave man ‘without excuse’*, thus judged and

The longsuffering of God is shown in the figurative language of ‘*her sins have reached unto heaven*’ (cf.Jer.51:9), as well as Him being the perfect judge who ‘*has remembered her iniquities*’.

Again, many commentators saw this as papal Rome and that to remain in her communion would be partaking of her sins and would incur her ‘reward’ to come.

Vs.6 ‘*Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she has filled fill to her double*’.

The ‘*double*’ recompense is similar to what was seen in the Levitical law (see Ex.22). Here it is ‘*according to her works*’ as an overflowing of sins ‘*unto heaven*’, and with the imagery of the ‘*cup*’ (also in Revelation 14:10 and 16:19).

Vs.7,8 ‘*How much she has glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she says in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judges her*’.

The pride, sensuous living, self sufficiency and arrogant sureness that would expect to ‘*see no sorrow*’ cause ‘*her plagues to come in one day*’ with ‘*death, mourning and famine*’ and then her final destruction, being ‘*utterly burned with fire*’. This is similar to the total destruction of the Old Testament Babylon (Is.13:19-22; 14:22,23; Jer.50:13,39; 51:37).

It is the ‘*strong...Lord God*’ who judges this city. His judgements are always ‘*righteous*’ and brought in ‘*uprightness*’ (Ps.9:7,8)

Vs.9-11 ‘*And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is your judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buys their merchandise any more*’

Many again have seen this as papal Rome with the figurative language of ‘*fornication*’, and hence see the ‘*merchandise*’ as people’s souls. Even so, the word ‘*city*’ is mentioned five times (vs.10,16,18,19,21) which would argue for a literal city of luxury and the ‘*buying*’ of merchandise (vs.11).

The nations rulers will ‘*bewail*’ and ‘*lament*’ as they ‘*stand afar off*’ in ‘*fear*’ at the sight of her ‘*burning*’ and ‘*torment*’. The same description is given for Hell with its ‘*fire*’ (Matt.5:22; 18:9; Mk.9:43,45,47; Rev.19:20; 20:14,15); and its ‘*torment*’ Lk.16:23; Rev.20:10).

The judgement of this system is quick, as it was with ancient Babylon in one night. Here it is in ‘*one day*’ (vs.8) and even then in ‘*one hour*’ - a term used for a quickness or suddenness, a definite or short space of time (Rev.17:10) and used three times here (vs.10,17,19). (Some believe this suddenness could be caused by a nuclear holocaust).

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of every unclean and hateful bird'. This description resembles that of the ancient Babylon and as prophesied by Isaiah and Jeremiah to be utterly destroyed (Is.13:21,22; Jer.50:39). Most commentators following the Reformation saw this as papal Rome represented under the image of a city and having its seat of power there. Some believed it to be pagan Rome, others Jerusalem. But could it be a Babylon built in the last days? If so, according to prophecies it seems that such a Babylon could not be built on the same site as the previously destroyed Babylon (Is.13:19-22).

'Devils', 'spirits' and 'birds' here describe the utter decadence of this city. The words 'hold' and 'cage' here in verse 2 are the same Greek word ('*phulake*') and describe the containment of the evil in this 'city'.

'For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her' is similar language to the religious Mystery Babylon of chapter 17, yet the rest of the chapter clearly describes a commercial aspect - '*and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies [luxuries]*'. Babylon will seduce the world's leaders ('kings') and their 'nations'.

It does appear to the author that the 'mystery Babylon' of chapter 17 and the literal 'city' of Babylon are of the same system. Many commentators see Rome as having made merchandise of men in the various doctrines of pardons, indulgences and masses to get people out of their mythical 'purgatory', as well as the sale of crucifixes, statues and religious hardware. Certainly all religion was birthed in Babylon (see Part 12 Chapter 17 *Diakrisis* Jan/Feb 2020, P.13).

Vs.4,5 'And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities'

Babylon here is typical of the world system from which scripture clearly warns Christians to be unspotted and to which they are not to be conformed (James 1:27; Rom.12:2). The command is 'come out of her' (vs.4). The parallel for the Old Testament Babylon is strikingly similar: '*Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land...Flee out of the midst of Babylon, deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense*' (Jer.50:8; 51:6; see also Is.48:20; Jer.51:45).

The author distinctly remembers seeing these and other clear commands in scripture when the Lord had opened his eyes to the worldly religion of Rome in which he had been raised. At that time there were many voices who believed it best to stay in the system and try to reform and change it, but that clearly violates this imperative here to 'come out of her'. God is in the business of *taking us out* of unholiness - that is what 'holiness' and 'sanctification' literally mean. We are to be like Lot and 'come out' and not look back, unlike his wife who looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt (Gen.19).

To be 'partakers of her sins' literally is to 'fellowship with' ('*sugkoinonéo*'), and this would incur 'receiving her plagues' to come.

under the '*wrath of God*' (Rom.1:18-23; Eph.4:17-19). Romans chapter 1 says men and women who '*hold [back] the truth*' (vs.18) have become '*fools*' (vs.22); they have '*changed the truth of God into a lie*' (vs.25); and they have '*not like to retained God in their knowledge*' (vs.28). General Revelation here ends with a list of sins that are in *every heart* (read vs.29-31)! *Natural Revelation does not save, it damns!* Chapter 2 continues '*Therefore you are inexcusable, O man...But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things*' (Rom.2:1,2).

The context of Romans chapters 1-3 is not salvation but to *leave ALL without any excuse*. And it gets worse by chapter 3 - no human is left 'innocent' regardless of *whether they have had the opportunity to hear the Gospel or not*: '*They are all under sin...There is none righteous, no, not one...there is none that seeks after God...none that does good, no, not one...that...all the world may become guilty before God*' (Rom.3:9-19).

There is no encouragement in Natural Revelation to seek Christ as Saviour; no written or spoken words from God; no miracles to prove Christ's Messiahship. Some may think it unfair that those who have never heard the Gospel or of Christ are condemned by Natural Revelation, but what is important to realise is that all unsaved people are '*ALREADY condemned*' - *before* any might believe! '*He that believes on him is not condemned: but he that believes not is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*' (Jn.3:18). *Unbelief leaves people in their sinful state*. The very next verse states '*men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil*' (vs.19).

Only through the Special Revelation of the Gospel and the Word can man be saved. Jesus said He was '*the door*', the '*way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by me*' (Jn.10:9; 14:6); which confirms '*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*' (Acts 4:12). There can be no salvation without faith in Christ (Jn.3:16; 17:3; 1Cor.3:11; Heb.11:6) and in his Gospel (Rom.1:16,17; 10:17).

Belief in any General Revelation of God does not overcome the sinful heart. It does not reveal Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and 'Him crucified'. It does not show the necessary justification and sanctification given to us by God from the meritorious work of Christ. Without that knowledge of Christ being revealed to us, we are still '*without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*'. That gap can only be bridged by '*the blood of Christ*' (Eph.2:12,13). This Christ is revealed nowhere else but in the Gospel (Rom.1:16,17).

Why do many Christians resort to the lie that people can be saved without hearing the Gospel and believing in Christ? The reason at the core of this is that the understanding of, and the belief in, the *all sufficiency of scriptures* is at an all time low! Human reasoning and logic have been added. Such a foundation is sand, not the rock of only Christ as Lord and Saviour as in the scriptures. This is the very reason for evangelism and has historically driven the need for missions!

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A Fresh Look At Revelation - Part 13

In **Part 1** (chapters 1-4 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2019) the intent was to show that the book of Revelation *is to be understood* at least as far as *what John saw and described*. *What is figurative and what is literal can be determined by the language and referencing to other scriptures* ('scripture interprets scripture').

It is necessary to have studied the book of Daniel first, as much of Revelation is referenced in that book.

The *timing and the order of events* in the first three chapters are presented as events in John's day *with a divide in time and order at chapter 4* (see 1:19).

In **Part 2** (chapters 4,5 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2019) we continued to explore *what is 'literal' or 'figurative' and why*. This was done by searching the same *symbols, signs and wording* elsewhere.

In **Part 3** (chapters 6-8 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2020) we saw the first of three distinct judgements beginning with seven '*seals*' (ch.6), all increasing in intensity.

In **Part 4** (chapters 8,9 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2020) we saw the second set of seven judgements begin *the Trumpet Judgements* and an increasing intensity in three last graphic '*woes*'. A perfect God has a perfect judgement!

In **Part 5** (chapters 9,10 - *Diakrisis* November/December 2020) - The sixth trumpet judgement brings a more severe judgement - *death*. Over half the earth's population is destroyed in divine judgements! Those left alive are unrepentant.

In **Part 6** (chapter 11 - *Diakrisis* January/February 2021) - the 'two witnesses' preach and the antichrist arises amidst signs and wonders, the likes of which have never been seen before since the first coming of Christ.

In **Part 7** (Chapter 12 - *Diakrisis* March/April 2021) - Symbols, signs and figurative language refer to Israel and the great battle between God and evil. The war in Heaven becomes a war on earth against God's elect nation and his saints. This chapter summarises a part of what is called the time of 'Jacob's Trouble'.

In **Part 8** (Chapter 13 - *Diakrisis* May/June 2021) - The antichrist and the false prophet arise with their 'mark of the beast'. They are given power by God to do great signs and wonders. Authority is given to the beast to slaughter the saints. There will be false worship of the beast. Prophecy will reach a climax...

In **Part 9** (Chapter 14 - *Diakrisis* July/August 2021) - Chapters 12-14 are an interlude before returning to the judgements. A literal 144,000 Jewish evangelists from the *tribes of Israel* (7:4-8) preach a final '*everlasting Gospel*' to the whole world. Their redemption then comes with worship and singing a 'new song' (vs.8,9).

Armageddon is foreshadowed with God's fury to be finally poured out in full.

In **Part 10** (chapter 15 - *Diakrisis* September/October 2021) we see an introduction to the final horrific 'vial' (bowl) judgements. The angels stand ready. The saints stand in awe and sing in worship to a majestic holy God, but a God of wrath who has warned of such judgements (Joel 2:28-32; Zech.14:1; Mal.4:1-5).

In **Part 11** (chapter 16 - *Diakrisis* November/December 2021) the seven angels, by the authority of God, pour out the final vial (bowl) judgements upon the earth. God dries up the Euphrates to bring his enemies to a final battle. The will of God upon the earth will be '*done*' and the truth of the depravity of the heart of man is shown in the continued lack of repentance.

In **Part 12** (chapter 17 - *Diakrisis* January/February 2021) is a parenthesis between chapter 16 and 18, pausing to look at what happens during the 7th vial (bowl) judgement. It is a description of the end time world wide false religion, as a tool of the antichrist's (the beast's) kingdom and his master, Satan.

Part 13 Chapter 18

Ch.6-18 describe the future seal, trumpet and bowl judgements within the Great Tribulation. Chapter 18 describes more of the 7th vial (bowl) judgement and the commercial aspect of a future city called Babylon which is destroyed. Much of what is described matches Old Testament prophecies regarding this city; they are dual prophecies both for the Babylon of old and the one described in Revelation.

Vs.1 '*And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory*'

The phrases '*after these things*' and '*another angel*' show this is a new vision. This angel has '*great power*' ('*excousia*' - authority). The earth is lit up with this angel's luminous '*glory*'.

Some commentators have spiritualised this with various ideas including the 'glory' here being that of the Gospel. But chapter 18 can hardly be so easily spiritualised as figurative language when much detail is used to describe this particular '*city*' (mentioned five times) and its judgement of those within.

Vs.2,3 '*And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies*'

The words '*mighty*' and '*strong*' here describe the stature, strength and eminence of this angel.

The angel cries out '*Babylon, the great is fallen*', arguably referring here not to the mystery Babylon in the previous chapter but to a commercial Babylon which has '*become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage*