

Questions and Answer from Revelation study series.

- a. What do Jews believe of the coming of Jesus?
- b. What is a non threatening way to convince our friends or relatives who don't believe in God that they should be prepared as Jesus is coming?
- c. How do we explain about the torment (eternal) to Catholics who believe in purgatory?
- d. How to explain the 144,000 to Jehovah witness who believe that there are certain 144000 people ? Are they the Jewish people whom God first entrusted his words?
- e. Revelation reveals things in the future and some happening today. How can we advise brethren who think otherwise , follow all in revelation and lead many astray? I have heard of the tribulation where does t fit in revelation? Are we in the apocalyptic days? can we discern wrong teaching on the end times , especially when the falseness is based on the bible?
- f. In a book in NT it says animals don't have souls. is there any animal in heaven with Christians? (except the four living creatures)
- g. When we see disasters happen in the world today is this a fulfilment of the judgments we read about Revelation?
- h. If we know God is in control even of satan because God won at the end of the story , why did God create satan? how is God and satan marking people in earth?
- i. What does it mean that the 144000 were bought to be offered to God? Who/what does Babylon symbolise?
- j. In Revelation it says we will have new heaven and new earth and new Jerusalem. And God will give a new body to us. When God created the world , he has plan for human being to manage the world under God's authority. So after the judgement day we will be together with God we will manage the world on earth (or heaven)?
- k. Revelation 14:12 I thought faith alone was sufficient . Why does it say about commandments of God?
- l. How can we or what should we do to prepare for God's judgment?

- m. I am still not clear about the symbol of the winepress and grapes in Chapter 14.
- n. The bad people who are not parts of Holy one will be tormented in earth and hell as well?
- o. God's people are marked , their names are written on the book of life. Is it in God's plan since the very beginning ? Which means whether a person becomes a follower of Jesus was decided by God from the beginning or does it happen naturally ?
- p. The rest of the Bible says God loves all of us. But in Revelation , it turns out that God only loves those who are bought by Jesus. Is this a contradictory thing ? So all in all God only loves those who loves him?

The questions are answered below.

- a. What do Jews believe of the coming of Jesus?

The Jews do not believe in nor recognise Jesus as the Saviour. Therefore they do not accept the fact that Jesus will come back to judge. They believe that Jesus was just a man and they don't believe that he rose from the dead.

- b. What is a non threatening way to convince our friends or relatives who don't believe in God that they should be prepared as Jesus is coming?

Good question because we want to warn people about God's judgment but it is a very unpleasant thing to speak about. It is hard to talk about judgment in a way that doesn't sound threatening because judgment is a warning for us. Warnings are always hard to accept. But we should not speak of judgment as if Christians are better or superior than others. Instead, we should humbly recognise we are like everybody else deserving of judgment because of the way we rejected God. So the attitude we should have when we speak to someone is not to look down upon them but to come along side them and reason with them and plead with them (with tears) so that they see the futility and danger of rejecting God. We need to be sensitive when we speak and to speak in a way that people will listen to us. Never condemn but always offer them forgiveness and ask them to change the way they treat God. You also need to give people time, sharing Christ to someone is a process. So be patient and keep praying for them. If you want learn how to do this we can show you how to do it.

- c. How do we explain about the torment (eternal) to Catholics who believe in purgatory?
- d. How to explain the 144,000 to Jehovah witness who believe that there are certain 144000 people? Are they the Jewish people whom God first entrusted his words?

I have grouped these two questions together because they are about how to talk to other groups who call themselves Christian but believe very different things from us. When speaking to people of other beliefs try not to spend too much time and energy explaining or arguing about minor doctrines or different interpretations of scripture. You will find that it can be very frustrating and

draining. It is far better to spend your energy and time talking about the gospel and how people are saved. It is far better to argue about Gospel issues and try to agree on how people are saved. The issue of purgatory is more on where the Catholics get their doctrine from (The Bible or elsewhere). The question of 144000 is an issue on how to interpret Revelation. When talking to other groups about these things work out what the bigger underlying issues. Be careful too because they might be trying to convert you.

- e. Revelation reveals things in the future and some happening today. How can we advise brethren who think otherwise, follow all in revelation and lead many astray? I have heard of the tribulation where does it fit in revelation? Are we in the apocalyptic days? can we discern wrong teaching on the end times, especially when the falseness is based on the bible?

for those who lead others astray just point them to scriptures. They usually tend to ignore what the bible says. Listen to what Jesus says Matthew 24 (especially verses 23-25,36-44).

Regarding the tribulation, there are many views on this. It is a period of intense persecution or suffering the passages that it is based on passages like

Daniel 12:1

¹ "At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will stand up. There will be a time of much trouble, the worst time since nations have been on earth, but your people will be saved. Everyone whose name is written in God's book will be saved.

Matthew 24:21

²¹ because at that time there will be much trouble. There will be more trouble than there has ever been since the beginning of the world until now, and nothing as bad will ever happen again.

Revelation 11:2-3

"But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months. And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth." [\(NIV\)](#)

Some believe it to be a specific period of 7 years, others believe it to be part of the description of the last days, while others believe it will happen before the rapture, others believe it will happen after the rapture. Each of these different beliefs come from different ways of interpreting or explaining the symbols in Revelation and the bible. The Bible warns of persecution and trials and sometimes speaks of a period of intense suffering. The timing of when this suffering will happen is not important, what is important is the message i.e. stand firm and be ready.

How do we discern good or bad interpretations of the bible? This is a very good question because it involves studying our scripture well. We must understand that the bible is a collection of different literary works. We should read these documents according to its literature type and we must also read every passage in context. So we don't read and interpret stories like letters or we don't read and interpret commands like poetry. Most errors come from reading the bible in just one way, literalistically that is ignoring the type of literature and just go for the direct meaning. The second error people commit is to read their own meaning into the text. Some even ignore the meaning text when it is very clear. This is called proof texting. Always read a passage in context. If the meaning of the text is clear then there is only one way to understand it. If a text is not clear or if a symbol is given then we rely on the bible to explain the explain the symbol. This is called scripture interpreting scripture. In other words we use the clear parts of the Bible to explain the unclear parts of the bible. If we just attach any meaning to the text then there no control over the meaning of the text. When we read the bible or any other document we are trying to understand what the author is trying to say to the readers. So don't just believe someone just because the start quoting scriptures at you, check out those passages yourself and see for yourself if it really says what the person is saying.

- f. In a book in NT it says animals don't have souls. is there any animal in heaven with Christians? (except the four living creatures)

This is a strange question. I am not sure which passage you are thinking of but there is a passage in Isaiah 11:6-9 which says that in God's Kingdom

Then wolves will live in peace with lambs,
and leopards will lie down to rest with goats.
Calves, lions, and young bulls will eat together,
and a little child will lead them.

⁷ Cows and bears will eat together in peace.
Their young will lie down to rest together.
Lions will eat hay as oxen do.

⁸ A baby will be able to play near a cobra's hole,
and a child will be able to put his hand into the nest of a poisonous snake.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy each other
on all my holy mountain,
because the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD,
as the sea is full of water.

I think there will be animals in God's kingdom.

g. When we see disasters happen in the world today is this a fulfilment of the judgments we read about Revelation?

Yes, Listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 24: 9-35

⁹ "Then people will arrest you, hand you over to be hurt, and kill you. They will hate you because you believe in me. ¹⁰ At that time, many will lose their faith, and they will turn against each other and hate each other. ¹¹ Many false prophets will come and cause many people to believe lies. ¹² There will be more and more evil in the world, so most people will stop showing their love for each other. ¹³ But those people who keep their faith until the end will be saved. ¹⁴ The Good News about God's kingdom will be preached in all the world, to every nation. Then the end will come.

¹⁵ "Daniel the prophet spoke about 'a blasphemous object that brings destruction.'^[a] You will see this standing in the holy place." (You who read this should understand what it means.) ¹⁶ "At that time, the people in Judea should run away to the mountains. ¹⁷ If people are on the roofs^[b] of their houses, they must not go down to get anything out of their houses. ¹⁸ If people are in the fields, they must not go back to get their coats. ¹⁹ At that time, how terrible it

will be for women who are pregnant or have nursing babies!²⁰ Pray that it will not be winter or a Sabbath day when these things happen and you have to run away,²¹ because at that time there will be much trouble. There will be more trouble than there has ever been since the beginning of the world until now, and nothing as bad will ever happen again.²² God has decided to make that terrible time short. Otherwise, no one would go on living. But God will make that time short to help the people he has chosen.²³ At that time, someone might say to you, 'Look, there is the Christ!' Or another person might say, 'There he is!' But don't believe them.²⁴ False Christs and false prophets will come and perform great wonders and miracles. They will try to fool even the people God has chosen, if that is possible.²⁵ Now I have warned you about this before it happens.

²⁶ "If people tell you, 'The Christ is in the desert,' don't go there. If they say, 'The Christ is in the inner room,' don't believe it.²⁷ When the Son of Man comes, he will be seen by everyone, like lightning flashing from the east to the west.²⁸ Wherever the dead body is, there the vultures will gather.

²⁹ "Soon after the trouble of those days,
'the sun will grow dark,
and the moon will not give its light.
The stars will fall from the sky.

And the powers of the heavens will be shaken.' — *Isaiah 13:10; 34:4*

³⁰ "At that time, the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky. Then all the peoples of the world will cry. They will see the Son of Man coming on clouds in the sky with great power and glory.³¹ He will use a loud trumpet to send his angels all around the earth, and they will gather his chosen people from every part of the world.

³² "Learn a lesson from the fig tree: When its branches become green and soft and new leaves appear, you know summer is near.³³ In the same way, when you see all these things happening, you will know that the time is near, ready to come.³⁴ I tell you the truth, all these things will happen while the people of this time are still living.³⁵ Earth and sky will be destroyed, but the words I have said will never be destroyed.

- h. If we know God is in control even of satan because God won at the end of the story , why did God create satan? how is God and satan marking people in earth?

The Bible presents satan as someone who is in opposition to God but never really tells us how that opposition started. It is also clear from scriptures that satan is not equal with God in that he is a creature and has limited power (see Job 1&2). So we can't really say that God created satan, how satan became who he is remains a mystery to us. But the question still remains why did God let it happen? If God was so powerful why didn't he just stop satan from becoming evil? That is a very good question and a difficult one to answer. One might get an answer indirectly from a passage like

Mathew 5:43-48

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor ^[a] and hate your enemies.' ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you. ^[b]
⁴⁵ If you do this, you will be true children of your Father in heaven. He causes the sun to rise on good people and on evil people, and he sends rain to those who do right and to those who do wrong. ⁴⁶ If you love only the people who love you, you will get no reward. Even the tax collectors do that. ⁴⁷ And if you are nice only to your friends, you are no better than other people. Even those who don't know God are nice to their friends. ⁴⁸ So you must be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

God's love is perfect. We may understand this in theory if things in this world remained good but we understand God's perfect love much more fully now that we see his commitment to us because satan is unable to turn God's love away. The negative aspects of satan's evil helps us understand God's perfect love even more. Before satan existed God was creator and sustainer. After satan God became creator, sustainer and saviour. God's perfect love caused him to pay a heavy price to save us from punishment. That is why we can be assured of God's love, God's love is perfect because even satan cannot turn God's love away from us.

How does God and satan mark his people?

The book of Revelation speaks about people, being marked for God (14:1) or for satan (13:8). According to the images in this vision these marks are visible signs that can be seen by people. But we also know that these images are symbolic but are not explained by the passage. So we can only guess what

these marks mean. For this explanation we need to go to parts of the Bible which have clear explanation of who belongs to God and who belongs to satan.

John 3:36

³⁶ Those who believe in the Son have eternal life, but those who do not obey the Son will never have life. God's anger stays on them."

Ephesians 2:1-10

¹ In the past you were spiritually dead because of your sins and the things you did against God.² Yes, in the past you lived the way the world lives, following the ruler of the evil powers that are above the earth. That same spirit is now working in those who refuse to obey God. ³ In the past all of us lived like them, trying to please our sinful selves and doing all the things our bodies and minds wanted. We should have suffered God's anger because we were sinful by nature. We were the same as all other people.

⁴ But God's mercy is great, and he loved us very much.⁵ Though we were spiritually dead because of the things we did against God, he gave us new life with Christ. You have been saved by God's grace.⁶ And he raised us up with Christ and gave us a seat with him in the heavens. He did this for those in Christ Jesus⁷ so that for all future time he could show the very great riches of his grace by being kind to us in Christ Jesus.⁸ I mean that you have been saved by grace through believing. You did not save yourselves; it was a gift from God.⁹ It was not the result of your own efforts, so you cannot brag about it.¹⁰ God has made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which God planned in advance for us to live our lives doing.

So the symbols mentioned in Revelations are the marks of followers of Jesus and followers of satan. We know their master by who they put their trust in and who they are loyal to. Their loyalty and obedience is the 'mark' which shows us who the real master is.

- i. What does it mean that the 144000 were bought to be offered to God? Who/what does Babylon symbolise?

Not really sure what the 144000 and that they were offered to God means.

Options

- a. offered as sacrifices and martyrs to be killed?
- b. offered as saints ?

Sorry, I don't have a better answer.

Babylon usually symbolises any government or authority that is idolatrous or set against Jesus. In the OT, Babylon was an old enemy of the Jews.

- j. In Revelation it says we will have new heaven and new earth and new Jerusalem. And God will give a new body to us. When God created the world, he has plan for human being to manage the world under God's authority. So after the judgement day we will be together with God we will manage the world on earth (or heaven)?

I think this question is about heaven and what it is like? Also there seems to be some confusion about whether heaven is something spiritual or something physical. We often think that heaven and our world are separate. And the link between those ideas is that the world is physical and heaven is non physical. Unfortunately those ideas aren't really Biblical. Those ideas come more from Greek Philosophy than the Bible. The bible speaks of heaven as the place where God rules (see Matthew 6:9-10,19-24,25-34, 21) which is why it is also called the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven. When Jesus comes back he will bring God's rule upon the whole universe. The entire creation will be restored (or made new) to its perfect way. Our existence will be physical (we will still need to eat) but there will be no sin present (1 Corinthians 15). Our bodies will be like Jesus' resurrection body (Colossians 3:20-21). When Jesus returns just think of heaven coming to us or God's kingdom coming to the world and Jesus is the King, our world and our bodies will be transformed to be new again. Our existence in heaven will be a physical one and God will rule upon the whole of creation. There is no separation between the new heaven and earth and where God rules.

- k. Revelation 14:12 I thought faith alone was sufficient. Why does it say about commandments of God?

No, the bible is not contradicting itself. The bible is very clear that faith is necessary for salvation. It is also clear that the kind of faith that saves a person is the kind of faith that produces good works. Genuine faith is the kind of faith that will produce love and obedience. People who say they believe in Jesus but do not love and obey God do not have real faith (James 2:20,26). Whenever the Bible mentions only one aspect (like faith) the other aspect (like

obedience) is usually assumed even though it is not mentioned. If we read 14:12 carefully we see that both faith and obedience are mentioned. The ones mentioned are those who continue to put their faith in Jesus and who are obedient

l. How can we or what should we do to prepare for God's judgment?

A brilliant question! If you are not a Christian make sure you are right with God, admit your sin confess your guilt and turn to Jesus for forgiveness. Stop living for yourself and live for Jesus. Surrender your whole life to Jesus. If you are a Christian then make sure you stand firm to the end. Stand firm and do not be distracted by the worries of this world. Be concerned for other people's salvation.

m. I am still not clear about the symbol of the winepress and grapes in Chapter 14.

In ancient times, grapes were harvested, collected, and dumped into the wine press. There, they were crushed and the juice ran out and was collected in wine vats. The red stain of the juice and the staining of one's feet and garments comprise a picture of Divine judgment (See also [Genesis 49:10-11](#) and [Isaiah 63:1-4](#)). The "winepress of the wrath of God" symbolizes the severity of this judgment.

n. The bad people who are not parts of Holy one will be tormented in earth and hell as well?

I am not sure what this question is asking but I am assuming it is asking about where people will be punished (earth or hell or both). The question is referring to Chapter 14:9-12 where those who worship the beast will be tormented by God's anger. The question is where will this happen? Notice that verse 9-12 is not a description of what is happening but rather it is a warning about what will happen to those who worship the beast. It is also meant to encourage Christians by giving them hope that justice will come. It think it is a reference to judgement more than present time.

Sorry if I didn't answer the question. Please send me an email or ask me again at Focus.

- o. God's people are marked , their names are written on the book of life. Is it in God's plan since the very beginning ? Which means whether a person becomes a follower of Jesus was decided by God from the beginning or does it happen naturally ?

This question is about who is responsible for saving us. God or us? Who chooses who? Do we choose God or does God choose us? The simple answer is yes, both! We choose God because God chose us first. Eph 1:4-6

*⁴ That is, in Christ, **he chose us before the world was made so that we would be his holy people**—people without blame before him.⁵ Because of his love, God had already decided to make us his own children through Jesus Christ. That was what he wanted and what pleased him,⁶ and it brings praise to God because of his wonderful grace. God gave that grace to us freely, in Christ, the One he loves.*

it is very clear from this passage that God chooses us to be saved. But that does not mean that we are not responsible for responding to God's offer of forgiveness. Our hearts are deeply set against God and is dead towards God. God's Spirit changes or transforms 'dead' hearts into hearts that seek after him and love him. This was decided by God even from before creation.

How do you know you have been chosen by God ? We know we are chosen by God if we find that we are drawn towards God or we want to know Him personally. That desire to want to know God can only come from God. Our response is not robotic or artificial , it is a genuine response to God and truly expresses our desire to know him.

- p. The rest of the Bible says God loves all of us. But in Revelation , it turns out that God only loves those who are bought by Jesus. Is this a contradictory thing ? So all in all God only loves those who loves him?

The whole of the Bible is consistent with its message. It doesn't say one thing somewhere and then say another thing elsewhere. The most famous passage in the Bible about God's love says the same thing as the book of Revelation. We just need to read those passages carefully and properly.

"God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life. **John 3:16**

³⁶ Those who believe in the Son have eternal life, but those who do not obey the Son will never have life. God's anger stays on them." **John 3:36**

So, In answer to the first part of the question, no the bible doesn't contradict itself. Its message is consistent. It is us who need to read the scriptures carefully.

Does God only love those who love him back? This question potentially makes God look like a very petty or egotistical person. He will only love those who love him in return as if He craves for our love and attention. This is not true. Because of the Trinity, God was already sufficient and complete in His love because of the relationship between Father, Son and Spirit. He did not create humans because he was lonely. He did not need us because He needed to love someone. God was complete in his love because of the Trinity. So why did he create us? God created humans because it was very good and to bless us with His loving care. Everything that God intended for us is good. That is obtained by relying on God who himself is perfectly good. That's why when we reject God we are not only rejecting someone who loves us very much but we are also rejecting that which is good. When we reject God we do not replace it with something better instead we choosing something that is evil. Self rule and self centeredness is the wrong choice. But even in the face of evil God's shows his love by initiating forgiveness, Jesus' death on the cross is the ultimate expression of love because he died for his enemies. But love is not love if it ignores wrong doing so if God truly is good and loves what is right and proper he will punish those who reject his offer of forgiveness. The loving thing for God to do is to punish those who reject His offer of forgiveness and continue to reject God.