

of Revelation, though we should note that it is the only book of the Bible that includes a special blessing for those who read it (Revelations 1:3) and the only one that includes a very solemn warning against adding anything to it or removing any part of it (Revelations 22:18-19).

It is sometimes asserted that Revelation is entirely a book of symbols, and that therefore nothing in it should be taken as literal. Such an approach would allow every interpreter to find anything he desires in the book and to exclude from it any idea that does not suit him. We must beware of coming under the condemnation of Revelations 22:18-19.

It should readily be admitted that the book contains symbols and that some of these are difficult to understand at this point in history, but that is no reason to ignore statements that are not symbolical to explain away symbols whose meaning is clear from the context or from other parts of Scripture.

THE COMING OF CHRIST

The latter part of Revelation 19 contains a symbol that should be quite clear. It describes the coming of a man on a white horse, with an inscription on his robe bearing the words "*KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*" He leads his forces into a great battle in which the opposing force is utterly destroyed and all the fowls are filled with their flesh. No Christian could reasonably doubt that this is a symbolic picture of Christ's coming to earth. It must be interpreted in one of two ways. Either it points to Christ's first advent and indicates that the preaching of the Gospel will be completely victorious in bringing to an end all the forces of evil, or it is a symbolic picture of His future return to earth and depicts a literal destruction of evil forces.

It seems to the present writer that the first of these interpretations is decisively ruled out by a figure that is used twice in the passage, that of the destruction being wrought through the agency of a sword that comes out of His mouth (vv. 15 and 21). In 2 Thessalonians 2:8 Paul gives us the inspired interpretation: "*And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.*" Even though Paul's words do not fully explain the meaning of the figure, they have two important