

## ***Who are the “kings of the earth”?***

(Excerpt from my book, “The Book of Revelation Decoded”, pages 27-39)

In Revelation 1:5<sup>c</sup>, Jesus is called, ***“the Ruler of the kings of the earth”***.

### **Explanation of verse 5<sup>c</sup>**

**Why did John call Jesus, “*the Ruler of the kings of the earth*”? Do the unbelieving (in Him) Pagan kings of the entire world recognize Jesus as their Ruler? The obvious answer is “NO!” Then, who are “*the kings of the earth*”?**

To understand who “*the kings of the earth*” are, we must explain what the symbolic term “*earth*” refers to in biblical prophecy.

When we study the book of Revelation, we observe that **the word “earth” is not always topical**, in other words, it does not always refer to a place (i.e., to the planet Earth); we observe that it also has another, **a symbolic meaning**. This fact becomes clear in Revelation chapter twelve where we meet both the literal, the topical meaning of the word “*earth*” and the symbolic. In verses 8 and 9 we meet the literal, the topical meaning of the word “*earth*”, in other words, we see the dragon being cast down from Heaven to the planet Earth because there was no “**place**” found for him in heaven, and in verse 16 we see the symbolic “*earth*” **opening its mouth to swallow the river which the dragon threw out of his mouth!** Thus, let us search the scriptures in order to identify the symbolic term “*earth*”:

1.

As the symbolic term “*sea*” refers to the unbelieving and **wicked mankind** (Isaiah 57:20; Luke 21:25; Matthew 4:18; 13:47; Jude 1:13), the “*earth*” symbolizes exactly the opposite.

In the Old Testament, the symbolic term “*earth*” applied to Israel only because of their faith in the True God while all other nations were Pagan (Psalms 66:1; 1 Chronicles 16:23, 24,31; Jeremiah 22:1,2,29). We will examine these verses in the following paragraphs. Today however, because the Christians from the nations have also come to believe in the True God of the Bible, they are included in the symbolic “*earth*”. For this reason, I conclude that in the New Testament the symbolic term “*earth*” refers to “**all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible; the Judeo-Christian community**” (Romans 11:16,17; 4:16; 10:12; Galatians 3:28,29).

Now, let us examine the verses we mentioned in the above paragraph; these verses support the conclusion that the symbolic term “*earth*” does not refer to the planet earth but **to people who know or who, at least, claim to know and worship the True God of the Bible:**

In Psalms 66:1,2 we read, “... *Make* (HOT: *ye* [plural]) *a joyful noise unto God, all the earth: Sing* (LXX: *ye* [plural]) *out the honor of His name; give glory to His praise.*”

From the words “*Make* (all of) *you*” and “*Sing* (all of) *you*” (in plural), it is clear that the “*earth*” which receives the command to make **a joyful noise** and **to sing out** the honor of His name **are the people who know Him because Pagans and Atheists will never do such thing!**

In 1 Chronicles 16:23,24,31 we read,

***“Sing unto Jehovah, all the earth; Show forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, His marvellous works among all the peoples ... Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; And let them say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth.”***

From the foregoing verses, we realize that **“the earth”** which is commanded to sing (in plural), to show forth (in plural) and to declare (in plural) **to the nations** God’s salvation and glory and to say (in plural) to them that Jehovah reigns, are His people --- those who know Him --- not the planet earth!

In Jeremiah 22:1,2,29 we read,

***“So says Jehovah, Go down to the house of the king of Judah and speak this Word there, and say, Hear the Word of Jehovah, O king of Judah who sits on the throne of David, you and your servants, and your people who enter in by these gates ... O earth, earth, earth! Hear the Word of Jehovah!”***

From the above words, it is easily understood that the symbolic **“earth”** which must **“Hear the Word of Jehovah”** was not the planet earth but the following specific entities:

- a) **The King of Judah,**
- b) **his servants, and**
- c) **his people.**

**Being Israelites, all of them knew the True God of the Bible!** For this reason, in verse 29, where the prophet refers

to all **three entities**, he repeats the word “*earth*” **three times** and says, “*O earth, earth, earth! Hear the Word of Jehovah!*”

Another verse which attracts my attention, as far as the “*earth*” is concerned, is Revelation 14:6. There, we observe that the writer has made a distinction between “*those dwelling on the earth*” and those who are in “*every nation and tribe and tongue and people*”. Let us read his words carefully:

*“And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people;”* (ASV)

If the “*earth*” of the above verse were the literal Earth, that is, the planet Earth, it wouldn’t be necessary for the writer to make a **distinction** between the two groups of people, that is, between:

- a) “*them that dwell on the earth*” **and**
- b) “*every nation and tribe and tongue and people*”,

because both groups are dwellers of the literal planet Earth!

When we study the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of Revelation, in verse 1 we see a “*beast*” coming out of the “*sea*”, while in verse 11 we see a “*beast*” coming out of the “*earth*”! Those who have studied the book of Daniel know that the “*beasts*” which came out of the “*Great Sea*” pictured “*kingdoms*” (Daniel 7:2,3,17,19,23). Thus, as the word “*beasts*” is a symbolic term, then, the words “*earth*” and “*sea*” where the beasts came out of, are also symbolic!

The foregoing understanding of the symbolic terms “*sea*” and “*earth*” helps us understand Revelation 10:1,2. There, we read:

*“And I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth;”* (ASV)

When we apply to the above verses the understanding we now have on the symbolic terms “*earth*” and “*sea*”, we realize the following: Since the strong angel placed one foot on the “*earth*” and the other foot on the “*sea*”, the things he is about to say will affect **the entire human race**, that is, those who believe in the True God of the Bible and those who don't!

Likewise, in Revelation 7:2,3, we observe that both symbolic elements, “*earth*” and “*sea*”, appear within the same sentence. Let us read these verses:

*“And I saw another angel coming up from the rising of the sun, having a seal of the living God. And he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to them to harm the earth and the sea, saying, Do not harm the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads.”*

From the above verses, we learn that there is **a sealing** that takes place. God seals His servants before His angels harm the “*earth*” and the “*sea*”. This event signifies that there is still time **for those who are part of the symbolic “*earth*”, that is, the Judeo-Christian community** but who have not

yet accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their God and Savior and **for those who are still part of the unbelieving** (in Jesus) “*sea*” of mankind,

- a) **to believe** in the True Jesus of the Bible who is God over all and blessed forever (John 1:1,14; Romans 9:5; John 3:16; 8:24), and the Creator of the heavens and of the earth (Hebrews 1:8,10),
- b) **to confess** with their mouth that Jesus is the “**Lord**”, the YHWH of Romans 10:13, **whose Name they must call upon** (i.e., they must pray to) **in order to be saved** (Romans 10:9,13,14),
- c) **to believe** in their hearts that God raised Him **bodily** from the dead, that His body did not see corruption (Acts 2:27,31; Romans 10:9; Psalms 16:10; Hosea 6:2), and
- d) **to repent** from their previous ignorance and unbelief (Acts 2:38; 17:30; Luke 24:47).

Those who fulfill the above requirements **are sealed** with the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30).

The understanding of the symbolic terms “*earth*” and “*sea*”, is necessary for the understanding of the message which God wishes to give us through the book of Revelation. **If we ignore the symbolic meaning of these terms, we will fall into interpretations which do not express biblical truth.** For instance, in chapter 21 and verse 1, we read:

***“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; because the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea is no more.”***

If we ignore the symbolic meaning of the words **“heaven”** (we will deal with this symbol shortly), **“earth”** and **“sea”**, we will come to the wrong conclusion that God will destroy today’s heaven, even the place where He Personally dwells, the whole universe, all of His creation including the planet Earth, and that He will create a new heaven, new galaxies and a new earth in which **“the sea is no more.”**!!! If the real, the literal sea will be no more, then, neither the fish nor any other kinds of life which God created on the planet earth from the beginning and for which He said, **“it was good”** (Genesis 1:10,20-22), will be no more.

The foregoing conclusion does not stand according to the Scriptures because in the book of Acts we read about **“res-toration”** of all things (3:21) --- not about destruction and recreation! The words **“and the sea is no more”** refer to **the destruction of the ungodly men** (2 Peter 3:7). The Scriptures show that when the ungodly **“heaven”**, that is Satan and his angels, **departs or separates** from the holy **“heaven”** (Revelation 6:14), a fact which according to Revelation 12:7-12 and Matthew 24:29 took place after the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in the year 70 AD, and when the wicked **“earth”** and the works in it will be **“burned up”** (2 Peter 3:10), the words of the apostle Peter,

***“... according to His promise, we look for "new heavens and a new earth," in which righteousness dwells”*** (2 Peter 3:13),

will be fulfilled.

Surely, at that time the symbolic “*sea*”, in other words, **the unrighteous mankind**, will not exist!

Now that we have fully understood what the symbolic term “*earth*” means, let us proceed to identify “*the kings of the earth*”.

In **Revelation 16:14** John mentions **two kinds** of “*kings*”:

- a) The “*kings of the earth*” and
- b) (the kings) “*of the whole world*”.

Let’s read that verse:

*“For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”*

We all understand who the kings “*of the whole world*” are. Therefore, the term “*kings of the earth*” refers to another group of people. Who are they?

As the term “*earth*” symbolizes “**all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible; the Judeo-Christian community**”, the term “*kings of the earth*” refers to two groups of people within that community **only**:

- a) **The leaders of that community** (whether they are regenerate or unregenerate), and
- b) **all the born-again individuals.**



The reason I apply the title “*the kings of the earth*” to the **born-again individuals** is based on the following verses:

Revelation 1:6

*“And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever ...»*

Revelation 5:10

*“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”*

Revelation 20:6

*“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”*

From the above scriptures, we learn that Jesus has made **all those who believe in Him** (Jews and Gentiles), “*kings*” and that they will reign with him **on the earth** for a thousand years. Because they **recognize His rulership** over them, He is known as “*the Ruler of the kings of the earth*” (Revelation 1:5) and as the “*King of kings*” (Revelation 17:14).

As far as the kings “*of the whole world*” are concerned, it is easily understood that Jesus **is not** their Ruler because **they do not recognize Him as their God neither do they recognize His rulership!** However, the title “*King of kings*” could also mean that Jesus **has authority** over all of them because in Matthew 28:18 the resurrected and glorified man Jesus said, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*”

Although Jesus is “*the Ruler of the kings of the earth*” (Revelation 1:5), **a number of the rulers of the “earth” have rejected Him as their King** (John 19:15) and they do not honor Him as one honors the Father (John 5:23). Instead, some of “*the rulers of this age ... crucified the Lord of glory*” (1 Corinthians 2:8; Greek text) and they preferred to be ruled over by the symbolic “*woman*” who is known as “*the great city*” and as “*Babylon the Great*”. This idea is found in Revelation 17:18. There it says,

***“And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”*** (KJV)

The above unregenerate “*kings of the earth*” remind me of people such as those who are mentioned in Matthew 7:22, 23. There, we read:

***“Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name we cast out demons, and in Your name we did many powerful works? And then I will confess to them that ‘I never knew you; depart from Me you workers of iniquity!’*** (Greek text)

***“I never knew you”*** means, “***I never had an intimate relationship with you***” (Meditate on Matthew 1:25)!

As these people **do not have a close personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ**, they only have “**religion**”. By accepting the rulership of the symbolic “*woman*” which is known as “*Babylon the Great*” or the rulership of one of her harlot daughters (Revelation 17:5) instead of the rulership of the Lord Jesus Christ, they are committing **spiritual fornication with these religious entities**. Let us read the following three verses which speak about their fornication:

Revelation 17:2

***“With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.”***

Revelation 18:9

***“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 ....”***

(From the above words, ***“And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication ... with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her”***, we realize that only part of the kings of the earth will commit fornication with her --- not all!)

Revelation 18:3

***“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 fact that they commit spiritual fornication proves that:

- a) They never were part of the ***“pure virgin”*** (2 Corinthians 11:2),
- b) they never were part of the ***“Lamb’s wife”*** (Revelation 19:7),
- c) **they never had an intimate personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, a relationship like the one that exists between a husband and his wife!**

For this reason, He will say to them, **“I never ‘knew’ you”!**  
(Matthew 7:22,23; compare with Matthew 1:18,19,25)

Truly, I am amazed about the fact that one day, in addition to committing spiritual fornication, the fore mentioned ***“kings of the earth”*** will join the kings ***“of the whole world”*** to actually fight against Jesus (Acts 9:4,5; Matthew 25:40,45; Revelation 13:7)! How sad! Let us read Revelation 16:14 again:

***“Because they are spirits of demons, working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the war of that great day of the Almighty God.”***

The end of those unregenerate ***“kings of the earth”*** will be the same as that of the ***“sons of the kingdom”*** of Matthew 8:12. There it says,

***“but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of the teeth.”***