

“The best gift anyone could give mom”

Revelation 21:1-5 NIV

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ⁽²⁾ I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

“⁽³⁾ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁽⁴⁾ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’”

“⁽⁵⁾ He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’ Then he said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.’”

This text refers to a bride and a husband, but not to mothers.

In any event, a reading from *Revelation* might seem unusual on Mother’s Day.

Few people and few churches follow the Bible these days, so what makes this text worthwhile?

While looking for something else, I found a letter from an old friend—not a girlfriend, by the way.

This friend earned a PhD in religion from a prominent university.

He is conscientious, compassionate and caring, but he never went into ministry.

In his note, he compared my attitude toward Scripture with his.

This friend accurately described my position of full faith in the Bible’s truth.

He doubted the Bible’s full credibility because of inconsistencies he found.

Bible critics often point out so-called errors.

My friend referred to the ten plagues, which God brought on Egypt.

At the time, the Egyptians enslaved the Israelites.



Exodus 9 tells of the plague which killed Egyptian’s livestock.

Exodus 9:6 NIV reads: “All the livestock of the Egyptians died, but not one animal belonging to the Israelites died.”

Next, the Lord afflicted the Egyptians with boils.

Then a hailstorm killed every man and beast that was out in the field (see Exodus 9:25).

My friend and others saw an inconsistency because the hail struck Egyptian people and animals.

If the Lord killed all the Egyptians’ animals in the cattle plague, how could there be any left for the hail to kill?

Some ask that question by inserting the word “hell” in their sentences.

Bible skeptics raised this issue centuries ago.

Many scholars seem to have little acquaintance with the real world.

You don’t have to think very long or look far to find a logical explanation.

Imagine slaves living in an area adjacent to their wealthy owners.

Suppose the owners lose all of their livestock in a disaster, but the slaves don’t lose any.

How long before the slaves’ owners take possession of most of the slaves’ animals?

Most of the so-called *errors* in the Bible can be explained as reasonably.

Questions such as these raise lots of doubt in Bible students and definitely affected my friend.

“Bob,” you say “you still haven’t told us why you use a *Book of Revelation* text on Mother’s Day.”

Most people connect *Revelation* with end-time prophecies, Tribulation, Rapture and Apocalypse.

That too, is a misapplication of Scripture.

Did you know that one of *Revelation’s* major themes is success and victory for believers?

Jesus used parables to prepare his disciples for dealing with evil and conquering the devil.

The Lord similarly used frightening, mysterious symbols to help Christians overcome bad stuff.

In the late 1960’s, I rode a bus from Pocatello, Idaho, to Salt Lake City, Utah.

Norma and our four children had stayed an extra two weeks with the grandparents in Oregon.

A connecting train had been cancelled and the railroad jammed several passengers on this bus.

I found myself near the back pinned in rather tightly for that two and a half hour ride.



A mother and her daughter, a recent-graduate sat behind me.

She was accompanying the girl to Salt Lake City, where the daughter would be on her own.

She, a small town late-teen in the big city, Salt Lake would be making her own decisions.

For nearly the whole trip, the mother tried to prepare her daughter for situations she would face.

Because they were behind me, I can tell you nothing about the daughter’s reaction—neither facial expressions, nor body language.

I thought the mother’s advice well stated and I don’t recall her trying to extract any promises from the girl.

The mother knew human behavior and she earnestly-wisely prepared her daughter for tests she’d face.

She wanted her beloved foresee what might occur so she’d be ready.

Norma and I had been with the Hollywood church for only five years.



Yet we’d already seen scores of young people from other parts of the country come to Hollywood with stars in their eyes absolutely unprepared for the arrays of pimps and unprincipled ready to pounce.

They take advantage of the thousands of dreamy-eyed young people arriving in Hollywood.

Those who succeed probably represent a tiny fraction of 1%.

While with the Hollywood church, we received dozens of calls and letters from frantic parents, who’d heard nothing from their sons and daughters for weeks.

On the Salt Lake City-bound bus that day, that mother’s heart ached with concern for her daughter’s innocence and safety.

Every one of you mothers has felt that same apprehension for your child or children.

Families expect so much of mothers.

In the following, Erma Bombeck’s views of God were suspect, but she knew mothers’ special pain. **“When the good Lord was creating mothers, he was into his sixth day of overtime when an angel appeared and said, ‘You’re doing a lot of fiddling around on this one.’**

“And the Lord said, ‘Have you read the specs on this order? She has to be completely washable, but not plastic . . . have 180 movable parts - all replaceable - - - have a lap that disappears when she stands up . . . a kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair, and six pairs of hands.’

“The angel shook her head slowly and said, ‘Six pair of hands? No way.’

“‘It’s not the hands that are causing, me problems,’ said the Lord. ‘It’s the three pairs of eyes that mothers must have.’

“‘That’s on the standard model?’ asked the angel. The Lord nodded. ‘One pair that sees through closed doors when she asks, “What are you kids doing in there?” . . . when she already knows. Another in the back of her head that sees what she shouldn’t, but what she has to know.

“And, of course, the ones in front that can look at a child when he goofs up and say,

“I understand and I love you without so much as uttering a word.”

“‘Lord,’ said the angel touching his sleeve gently, ‘go to bed. Tomorrow is another . . .’

“‘I can’t,’ said the Lord, ‘I’m so close now, Already I have one who heals herself when she is sick, can feed a family of six on one pound of hamburger, and can get a nine-year old to stand under a shower.’

“The angel circled the model of a mother very slowly, ‘It’s too soft,’ she sighed.

“But tough!” said the Lord excitedly. “You cannot imagine all that this mother can do and endure.” “Can it think?”

“‘Not only think, but it can reason and compromise,’ said the Creator.

Finally the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek. ‘There’s a leak,’ she pronounced.

‘It’s not a leak,’ said the Lord. ‘It’s a tear.’ ‘What’s it for?’ ‘It’s for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, loneliness and pride.’



‘You are a genius,’ said the angel. The Lord looked somber, ‘I didn’t put it there.’”

Erma Bombeck

Remember what it was like for Mary, mother of Jesus?

When Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the Temple to dedicate him as a baby according to Mosaic Law, Luke’s gospel says:

“The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: ‘This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.’”¹

Moms, how many times has news of your family pierced your heart and soul?

How do you restore order to your faith?

How do you build on it?

How do you become strong, resolute and confident in God?

A few quick suggestions from God’s Word.

1. Mothers of most of the Bible’s great people reared families under adverse conditions.

¹ Luke 2:33-35 NIV

It'd be wonderful to have a responsible husband who worked a 30 hr week @ excellent pay.

- **Great status in the community.**
- **Listens when you feel like talking.**
- **Doesn't talk down.**
- **Disciplines the kids.**
- **Comes home every night bringing roses and perfume.**
- **Kisses your feet and rubs your neck.**
- **Picks up after self.**
- **Compliments you in front of your friends.**
- **Doesn't watch or play ball of any kind.**
- **Enjoys doing what you like to do.**

Will you wives who have husbands like that stand up so the other women can envy you?

2. Early believers suffered intense persecution. The *Book of Revelation* assures us that God always wins over malicious people and forces.

- **All evil powers and injustice will end.**
- **So will Satan and death.**

We can share eternity with God and with those who love righteousness.

Many first century Christians died believing that. Pray that we'll have that same loyalty to Christ.

When faithfulness to Christ is most difficult, it's the most needed.

God, our Creator promises us a new heaven and a new earth.

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The God we worship guarantees victory over separation and tears.

There will be no more angry mobs or violence.

“(5) He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’ Then he said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.’”

We can trust God, and we can rely on His word.

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Happy
Mother's
Day!

