The word *end* has at least two meanings in English: the point that marks the boundary or limit, such as the last point in a series, and the purpose or goal, such as when someone says that happiness is the end of our existence. Of course, these two meanings are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

When speaking of the end, Latter-day Saints often use a phrase that is worded in a somewhat unusual way: we speak of knowing the beginning from the end, though that is not a scriptural phrase. The closest scriptural phrase is “knowing the end from the beginning.” (See, for example, Isaiah 46:10 and Abraham 2:8.) Nevertheless, the meaning of the phrase we use is significant. It says more than we may notice. There are various ways of understanding it, but one is that we know the beginning by means of or because we know the end: the end defines and gives meaning to what comes before it.

If we remember that in numerous places in scripture the Lord identifies himself as both the beginning and the end (e.g., Revelation 21:6), we can understand the phrase to imply that we understand who Christ is as Creator by understanding him as the Being who will be revealed at the second coming. With that understanding, the book of Revelation is important to us because, as the first verse of the book says, it is a “Revelation of Jesus Christ,” meaning not only a revelation that he gave but a revelation in which he is revealed.
Rather than a manual for discerning the events of the last days, Revelation is a book that intends to help us understand who Jesus Christ is by showing him as the End. Like the Gospels, Revelation is a testimony of Jesus Christ, but this testimony is given from an understanding of Christ as the End rather than from understanding his mortal ministry. (And it correlates with an understanding of who he is from the beginning, as Creator.)² As you read Revelation, ask yourself at each major point how it reveals Christ.

**Revelation 5**

**Verse 1:** What does Doctrine and Covenants 77:6 tell us about the book that John sees? What does “the revealed will, mysteries, and the works of God” (D&C 77:6) mean? To what kinds of things does that phrase refer?

The Doctrine and Covenants goes on to say that the book contains “the hidden things of his economy concerning the earth during the seven thousand years of its existence.” What does the word *economy* mean in that context? The original meaning of the word was “the management of a household.” Is that relevant to understanding what the D&C verse means?

What does D&C 77:8 tell us about the seven seals on the book?

**Verses 2–4:** What does it mean to be worthy? Is it just a matter of obeying the rules? If we are all disobedient, how can any of us be worthy?

Why does one have to be worthy to loose the seals? Why would the fact that no one was worthy to do so make John weep? Why is it important for that book to be opened?
Verse 5: Why is Christ described here as the Lion of Judah and the Root of David? Why is he the only one who can open the book and reveal its contents?

Verses 9–10: Why does Christ’s redemptive sacrifice make him worthy to open the seals? What is the significance of saying that the redeemed come “out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation” (verse 9)?

What does it mean to be kings and priests and, by implication, queens and priestesses to God? What priesthood does this verse refer to? How does the claim that they have been made kings and priests relate to the promise of Exodus 19:5–6?

Revelation 6

Before reading chapter 6, consider this chart from the Sunday School manual. (Compare it to the outline of Revelation in the study materials for lesson 45. It correlates the seven seals with seven periods of a thousand years (D&C 77:7). (Notice that these thousand-year periods are not the same as the dispensations of the gospel.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seal</th>
<th>Major Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>The creation and fall of Adam and Eve; the ministry of Enoch and the translation of his city into heaven (Revelation 6:1–2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Noah and the flood (Revelation 6:3–4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Ministries of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses; the Exodus; rule by “judges” (Revelation 6:5–6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Rule by kings; the division of the kingdom; the conquering of the kingdoms (Revelation 6:7–8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>The birth, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; the establishment of his Church and the ministry of the apostles; martyrdom of the apostles; the apostasy (Revelation 6:9–11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>Continuation of the apostasy; restoration of the gospel through the Prophet Joseph Smith; signs of the times manifest (Revelation 6:12–17; 7:1–8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>Wars, plagues, and desolation; second coming (Revelation 8:1–19:21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After the Seventh</td>
<td>The earth is celestialized (Revelation 21:1–22:6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revelation takes only 11 verses to cover the first five seals, 14 verses to cover the sixth, 226 to cover the seventh, and 33 to cover the events after the seventh. What is the significance of that emphasis?

Does each time period, each thousand years, represent a literal thousand years? Why or why not? If not, what does each thousand years represent?

**Revelation 19**

**Verses 1–4:** Who is singing this hymn of praise? What is being celebrated? The word *alleluia* is a transliteration of a Hebrew phrase meaning “Praise Yahweh.” How is that significant?
Who is the great whore? (See 2 Nephi 10:16.) Why is the image of whoredom and fornication used to represent those people?

**Verses 5–9:** Who is singing this hymn of praise? What are they celebrating?

Compare verse 7 to Matthew 5:12 and Luke 6:23. What promise do we see being fulfilled here? How is that promise relevant to us today?

Why is the second coming described as a marriage feast? (Compare Isaiah 25:6 and Matthew 8:11.) Why is marriage often used as a symbol of our relation to Christ? Who are the bride and groom in this wedding? How do the clothes of the bride compare to the clothing of the whore (verse 8)? Compare Revelation 17:4; 18:16; see also Matthew 22:11–13 and Revelation 7:14. Who are called to the wedding feast (verse 9)?

**Revelation 21**

**Verses 1–4:** What period of time is John describing here? (Compare Revelation 20:11.) How is knowing what will happen then relevant to us now?

What did the sea represent in the Old Testament? What does the absence of the sea represent symbolically?

**Verses 7–8:** How are these verses related to the two hymns that we saw in chapter 19?

**Verses 22–27:** Why is there no temple in the New Jerusalem (verse 22)? What does that tell us about earthly temples?
On this earth, Christ is *the* great secret. Why will he not be a secret in the New Jerusalem? Why aren’t the gates ever shut (verse 24)?

**Revelation 22**

**Verses 1–2:** Where else in scripture have we seen the tree of life growing beside a river? Is that the same image that we see here or a different one? If they are different, how?

**Verses 3–5:** What does it mean to say that nothing in the heavenly city will be *accursed*, in other words cursed (verse 3)?

What is the significance of being able to see God’s face (verse 4)?

What does it mean to say that the Saints will have the Lord’s name written on their foreheads? (See also Revelation 3:12; 7:2–3; and 14:1.) Is there a connection between this prophecy and the commandments in Exodus 13:1–10, 11–16 and Deuteronomy 6:4–9; 11:13–21? Does this have anything to do with us today?

Verse 5 tells us of the absence of darkness in the celestial kingdom. This has literal as well as symbolic meaning. Can you explain each meaning?

**Verses 6–7:** To what does “these sayings” (verse 6) refer, to the book as a whole or to the latest part of the revelation?

To which servants has God revealed these things?

Why does the Lord say “these things must shortly be done” (verse 6) and “I come quickly” (verse 7)? In our terms, his second coming has not come quickly after his first advent. Why does he speak here in his terms rather than ours?