

## Booklets and Pamphlets by A.W. Pink The Meaning of "KOSMOS" in John 3:16

It may appear to some of our readers that the exposition we have given of John 3:16 in the chapter on "Difficulties and Objections" is a forced and unnatural one, inasmuch as our definition of the term "world" seems to be out of harmony with the meaning and scope of this word in other passages, where, to supply the world of believers (God's elect) [Obviously, we in Identity do not accept mere "believers" as constituting the ELECT, or REMNANT. The ELECT are, in fact, a very exclusive group of Israelites who OBEY Yahweh's commandments. (Rev. 12:17.)

Nevertheless, Pink's discussion of the proper and exclusive usage of the word 'kosmos' is very good. – Eli] as a definition of "world" would make no sense. Many have said to us, "Surely, 'world' means world, that is, you, me, and everybody." In reply we would say: We know from experience how difficult it is to set aside the "traditions of men" and come to a passage which we have heard explained in a certain way scores of times, and study it carefully for ourselves without bias. Nevertheless, this is essential if we would learn the mind of God. Many people suppose they already know the simple meaning of John 3:16, and therefore they conclude that no diligent study is required of them to discover the precise teaching of this verse.

Needless to say, such an attitude shuts out any further light which they otherwise might obtain on the passage. Yet, if anyone will take a Concordance and read carefully the various passages in which the term "world" (as a translation of "kosmos") occurs, he will quickly perceive that to ascertain the precise meaning of, the word "world" in any given passage is not nearly so easy as is popularly supposed. The word "kosmos," and its English equivalent "world," is not used with a uniform significance in the New Testament. Very far from it. It is used in quite a number of different ways. Below we will refer to a few passages where this term occurs, suggesting a tentative definition in each case:

"Kosmos" is used of the Universe as a whole: Acts 17: 24 - "God that made the world and all things therein seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth." is used of the Universe as a whole:

"Kosmos" is used of the earth: John 13:1; Eph. 1:4, etc., etc.- "When Jesus knew that his hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world He loved them unto the end." "Depart out of this world" signifies, leave this earth. "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." This expression signifies, before the earth was founded—compare Job 38:4 etc. [Here, I would suggest that the exact meaning is "this earthly plane," i.e., embodiment in the physical earth.]

"Kosmos" is used of the world-system: John 12:31 etc. "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the Prince of this world be cast out"— compare Matt. 4:8 and I John 5:19, R. V. "Kosmos" is used of the whole human race: Rom. 3: 19, etc.—"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to

them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

"Kosmos" is used of humanity minus believers: John 15:18; Rom. 3:6 "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." Believers do not "hate" Christ, so that "the world" here must signify the world of unbelievers in contrast from believers who love Christ. "God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world." [Again, 'believers' is way too vague. Rev. 12: 17 clearly states that the world hates those of us who KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. Christians, who are "believers" of a sort, hate us Identians just as much as atheists and Jews hate us. In fact, we are the ONLY ethnic that are universally hated by all and sundry in THIS WORLD. John 15:19: If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.] Here is another passage where "the world" cannot mean "you, me, and everybody".... So that here, too, it must be the world of unbelievers which is in view. is used of humanity minus believers: John 15:18; Rom. 3:6 "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." Believers do not "hate" Christ, so that "the world" here must signify the world of unbelievers in contrast from believers who love Christ. "God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world."

Here is another passage where "the world" cannot mean "you, me, and everybody," for believers will not be "judged" by God, see John 5:24. So that here, too, it must be the world of unbelievers which is in view. "

Kosmos" is used of Gentiles [Sic, nations.] in contrast from Jews [Sic, Judahites and Israelites.]: Rom. 11:12 etc. "Now if the fall of them (Israel) be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them (Israel) the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their (Israel's) fulness." Note how the first clause in italics is defined by the latter clause placed in italics. Here, again, "the world" cannot signify all humanity for it excludes Israel!

"Kosmos" is used of believers only: John 1:29; 3:16, 17; 6:33; 12:47; I Cor. 4:9; 2 Cor. 5:19. We leave our readers to turn to these passages, asking them to note, carefully, exactly what is said and predicated of "the world" in each place. is used of believers only: John 1:29; 3:16, 17; 6:33; 12:47; I Cor. 4:9; 2 Cor. 5:19. We leave our readers to turn to these passages, asking them to note, carefully, exactly what is said and predicated of "the world" in each place.

**Thus it will be seen that "kosmos" has at least seven clearly defined different meanings in the New Testament.**

THE 'WORLD' OF JOHN 3:16 DOES NOT MEAN 'ALL MEN WITHOUT EXCEPTION' by Rev. David J. Engelsma

When one confesses God's election of some persons to salvation, God's particular love for the elect, and God's exclusive desire to save the elect, his confession is immediately contested by an appeal to John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in

him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Indeed, this is almost the rule. The one who thus appeals to John 3:16 intends to assert that God loves all men without exception and that God desires to save all men without exception. It is unbiblical. It commits one to a teaching that deviates from the gospel, fundamentally. The word, world, in John 3:16 does not mean 'all men without exception.'

Proof: John 1:29: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Did Christ by His death take away the sin of all men without exception? If He did, all men without exception shall be saved.

John 6:33: "For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." Does Jesus give life (not, ineffectually offer life, but, efficaciously give life) to all men without exception? If He does, all men without exception have eternal life.

John 17:9: "I (Jesus) pray not for the world." Does Jesus refuse to pray for all men without exception? This last text points out that the word, world, in the gospel of John does not always have the same meaning. In John 3:16, the world is loved by God, with a love that gives the Son of God for its sake; in John 17:9, the Son of God refuses to pray for the world. The saints must not come to an understanding of the world of John 3:16 by a quick assumption, but by careful interpretation of the passage in the light of the rest of Scripture.

What then is the truth about the world of John 3:16? **The salvation of all the persons included in the world of John 3:16 is due solely to the effectual love of God and the redeeming death of Christ for them; whereas the persons who perish were never loved by God, nor redeemed by Christ, that is, they are not part of the world of John 3:16**

The love treated of in John 3:16. .. **cannot be universal towards all and every one, but special towards a few...** because the end of that love which God intends is the salvation of those whom He pursues with such love.. . If therefore God sent Christ for that end, that through Him the world might be saved, He must either have failed of His end, or the world must necessarily be saved in fact. **But it is certain that not the whole world, but only those chosen out of the world are saved; therefore, to them properly has this love reference...** (Theological Institutes)

The earth does not merely serve to allow the elect to be saved, in order then to disappear. No, the elect are men; these men form a whole, a collection, an organism; that organism is grounded in creation; and because now this creation is the reflection of God's wisdom and the work of His hands, God's administration of it may not come to nothing, but in the Great Day God's will with this creation shall be perfectly realized.

Contrarian Verses Which Prove that God Has No Intention of Saving All People

John 14:17 : Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you (the Elect of Israel), and shall be in you. John 17:14: I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Rev. 12:17: And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Rev. 22: 14-15. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Matt. 3:1-10: In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

**As in the Parable of the Wheat and Tares, it is obvious that the tares do not get saved. They get bundled and burned in the fires of hell.** And, lastly,

Matt. 13:10-17: And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For **whosoever** hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but **whosoever** hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: **For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.** But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That **many prophets and righteous men** have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

Clearly, Jesus is telling us that there are people in the “world” whom He dares not even attempt to convert. Why? Because many of them are tares.

The world hates us because we belong to HIM. We are always simultaneously living in two different worlds: the evil world of mammon and the good world of the righteous Saints. Between these two worlds is an unbridgeable crevasse; and the world of evil will be destroyed, never to be heard from again. The universalistic imagery imposed upon John 3:16 is a fanciful interpretation driven by false hopes for evildoers, by the false idea the "God loves everyone," or that "Jesus loves everyone." This is unscriptural nonsense.

Nowhere does the Bible say any such thing. The delusional, who believe and preach this falsehood, need to come to their senses. I John 3 "He that commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, THAT HE MIGHT DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL. Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: WHOSOEVER DOES NOT RIGHTEOUSNESS IS NOT OF GOD, NEITHER HE THAT LOVES NOT HIS BROTHER."  
- I John 3:8-10.