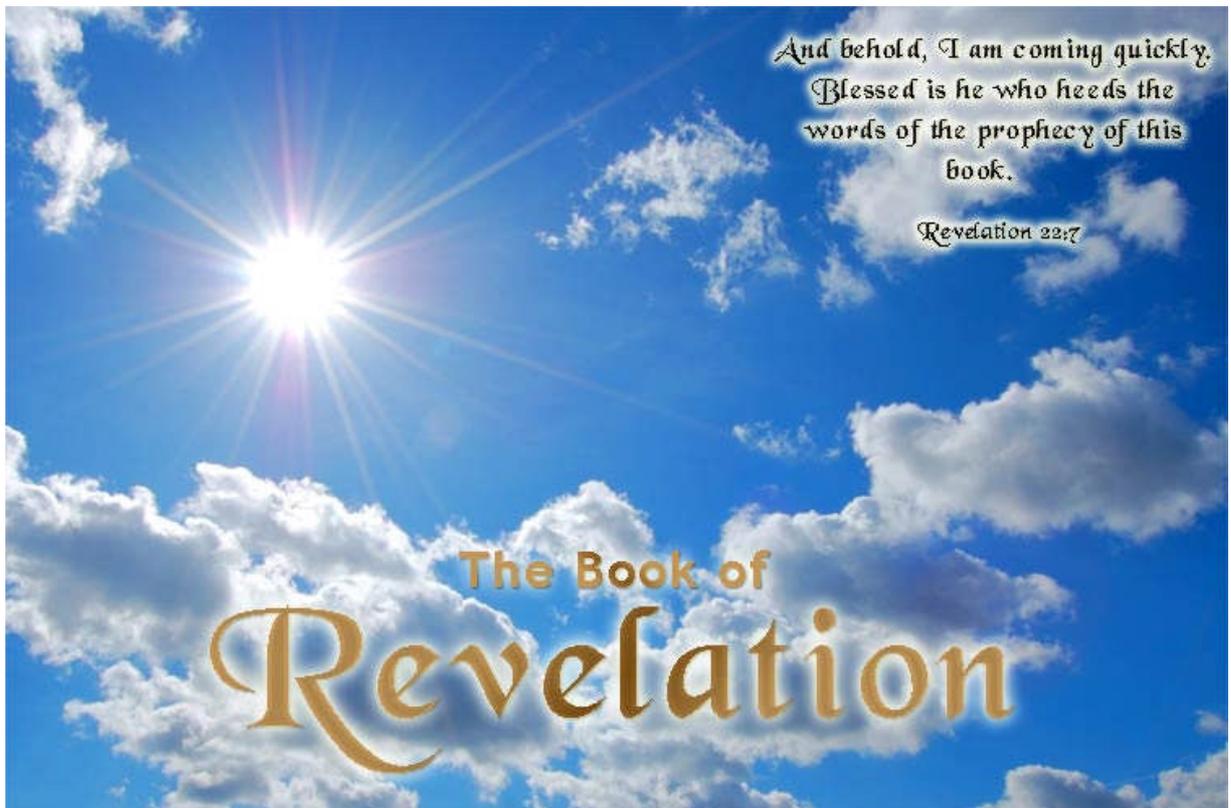


**CONCISE NOTES ON  
THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST**

**Dr. Stanford E. Murrell**



## **The Revelation of Jesus Christ**

Human Author: John  
 Divine Author: God the Holy Spirit  
 Early date prior to AD 70  
 Late date c. AD 90-95

Key word: Christ is Lord  
 Key Verse: Revelation 19:6

*“And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”*

### **The Story Behind the Revelation**

Between AD 66 and AD 70, the prophetic utterances of Jesus in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 began to be fulfilled. Briefly the known facts can be stated. In the summer of the year AD 66, a Jewish revolt broke out in Jerusalem. Led by fanatical zealots, this revolt took place against the overbearing Roman procurator named Gessius Florus. From May through November the Jews reacted against his oppressive reign. As a result, Neapolitanus, a Roman military tribune, was sent from Antioch by Cestius Gallus, the Roman governor of Syria, to try to calm the Jews. The Jews refused to be pacified, and in the battle that followed they actually gained an advantage against the troops of the governor of Syria. Cestius had to order a retreat, much to the delight of the Jews. It was not long before word finally reached the emperor Nero in Rome about the explosive situation unfolding in Israel.

After deliberation, Nero commissioned a seasoned general, Vespasian, to put down the revolt against imperial Rome and to restore the *Pax Romana* (the Roman peace). War against the Jews in Jerusalem was officially declared in February, AD 67, when Vespasian received his commission from Nero. In the Spring of AD 67, Vespasian finally arrived to take charge of the operations in Jerusalem. But the Jews proved to be a strong and resourceful people, not easily subdued. They desperately wanted to be free of Roman bondage and were willing to die for the cause of freedom. History records that Jerusalem did finally fall to Titus, the son of Vespasian, who took charge of the siege in the late summer of AD 70. For about forty-two months the Jewish people held out against the greatest military power on the face of the earth.

In broad strokes this was the terrible picture of death and destruction, violence and chaos, between AD 66 and AD 70. The words of Jesus in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 and the words of John in the Revelation can be used to paint in the details of this period. What will be seen is a historical fulfillment of the great tribulation that Jesus predicted would come upon the generation He ministered to. These were days of vengeance as God poured out His wrath on those who dared to kill His Son (Luke 21:22). For forty-two months, for 1,260 days, for three and one half years, the Roman army made war with Israel and during that awful period of time the four horsemen of the apocalypse rode. The evidence is compelling for a historical fulfillment of the Lord's prophetic utterances of great tribulation upon Israel, in particular in AD 70. The instrument of divine wrath and justice would be the Zealots of the Jewish community and the military might of the Roman government.

Though Rome would be a terrible instrument in the hand of God, the empire would also come under judgment. It is the way of the Lord to use evil to judge evil and then to administer justice on the instrument of wrath. The book of Habakkuk establishes this divine method of operation. Those who were present during the events of the first century testify to the judgment of God upon the earth. One of the leading eyewitnesses for the history of this time was the historian Josephus. His writings are helpful in reconstructing what happened in AD 70.

### **A Date to Remember**

Some Bible scholars place the dating for the Revelation c. AD 90. Other Bible scholars argue for an earlier dating of the Revelation, prior to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. The primary external witness for a late date is Irenaeus (AD 130-202). All other sources such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Victorinus, and Jerome simply quoted from him. The particular statement made by Irenaeus to date *Revelation* late is found in Book 5 of his *Against Heresies* (5:30:3.).

*"We will not, however, incur the risk of pronouncing positively as to the name of the Antichrist; for if it were necessary that his name should be distinctly revealed in this present time, it would have been announced by him who beheld the apocalyptic vision. For that was seen not very long time since, but almost in our day, towards the end of Domitian's reign."*

The name of the Antichrist is a reference to the Beast from the Sea of Revelation 13.

At first, the statement seems conclusive until it is remembered that the original work of Irenaeus does not exist any longer. His writings have come down the centuries from the Latin version with some exception. In the translation there is a question as to whether Irenaeus meant to say the vision of the Apocalypse belongs to Domitian's reign or John himself was seen *"not very long time since."*

The truth of the matter is that the Domitianic date cannot be established with absolute certainty from any external evidence. Furthermore, there is no direct evidence in *Revelation* itself to establish a late date for its writing.

However, John was told he was to see things that must shortly come to pass. This is significant for John was writing to seven churches that desperately needed a message from the Lord.

There is good reason to accept an early date for the writing of the Revelation in that comfort could be given to the people of God in the first century swept up in turbulent times that their four great enemies, the Dragon (satanic opposition), the Beast (political opposition), the False Prophet (religious opposition) and death (the final enemy), would soon be destroyed. And they were.

## REVELATION 1

### The Last Letter: Lord of the Church Chapters 1-3

#### The Prologue: A Preview of Coming Glory Revelation 1:1-4

#### Revelation Chapter 1 Summary

Chapter one is a general preface to the whole book. The purpose of the work is declared (Revelation 1:1-2). There is an apostolic blessing pronounced on all who shall read the book with a view to honoring its principles (Revelation 1:3-8). Finally, a glorious vision or appearance of the resurrected Christ is given to the apostle John (Revelation 1:9-20).

#### *Special Note.*

Each generation has struggled to understand the ultimate meaning of Revelation. Some prominent individuals have found it frustrating to discern. Martin Luther was one such person. In 1522, Luther wrote in the preface to his translation of the Revelation into German, "My spirit cannot accommodate itself to this book. There is one reason for the small esteem in which I hold it, and is that Christ is neither taught in it nor recognized." That is a remarkable statement from a Reformer mainly because it is untrue. The Revelation does set forth the majesty of Jesus and established a profound Christology as to His purpose and work. Therefore, look for Christ in every chapter, in every verse, and in every vision.

#### *Special Note.*

The Revelation does set forth a totalitarian, worldwide, demonically influenced, self-absorbed urban empire with incredible scope and power. However, a person does not need to catapult this state of existence into a dark future, for it was present during John's day when Rome ruled the world.

#### *Special Note.*

#### Genesis

#### Revelation

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • In Genesis the earth is created.         | In Revelation it passes away.                   |
| • In Genesis there is the first rebellion. | In Revelation there is the final rebellion.     |
| • In Genesis sin enters the human race.    | In Revelation sin comes to an end.              |
| • In Genesis the curse begins.             | In Revelation the curse is removed.             |
| • In Genesis death begins.                 | In Revelation there is no more death or sorrow. |
| • In Genesis man is forbidden to eat.      | In Revelation all may eat of the tree of life.  |

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant John:

1:1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ. The Unveiling of Jesus Christ. This is not the revelation about Jesus Christ, but the revelation which comes from Jesus Christ because God gave it to Christ. Standing back of the words of Revelation is the triune God, the Mediator, the angel, and the apostle. What an amazing book this is.

**The Revelation of God the Father**  
 to  
**God the Son**  
 to  
**An Angel**  
 to  
**John, the Lord's Servant**  
 to  
**The Seven Church of Asia**  
 to  
**Succeeding Generations**

***Special Note.***

The *Textus Receptus* (Latin, "received text") from which the KJV is translated, has as its opening title, The Revelation of John the Theologian. However, the correct title, if one is needed, is The Revelation of Jesus Christ. Historically, the *Textus Receptus* is the work of the Dutch Catholic scholar and humanist, Desiderius Erasmus. The *Textus Receptus* was first published in 1516.

1:1. Many truths about the ascended Christ will be unveiled to John, for this work is not about the anti-Christ, or end time matters. It is about the Lord Jesus coming to judge the nation that crucified Him, and vindicate the saints who follow Him. Matthew Henry notes "*These events (it is said) were such as should come to pass not only surely, but also shortly; that is, they would begin to come to pass very shortly, and the whole would be accomplished in a short time. For now the last ages of the world had come.*"

1:1. must come to pass. There is divine certainty that the events will happen. History is not haphazard but is made of events which must come to pass.

1:1. shortly come to pass.

***Special Note.***

1:1. shortly come to pass. To understand this thought, it has been suggested that these events have not yet come to pass and that is ok, for to God, human history is an eternal succession. God can see the beginning, the middle, and the end all at once. One day with the Lord is as a thousand years.

It has been suggested that the events spoke of here are spoken in a symbolic way and so contains a panoramic visual aid of important truths.

It has been suggested that John saw events that did shortly come to pass in His day, specifically between AD 66 to AD 70. It is possible that John meant it when he said, “*for the time is at hand*” (v. 4).

2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

1:2. the word of God. the purpose of God.

### **The Revelation Contains Three Dimensions**

- The purpose or intent of God.
- The testimony concerning Jesus Christ.
- What John saw.

3 Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time *is* at hand.

1:3. Blessed *is* he that readeth. Not everyone in the ancient world could read. There was an official reader in the church.

#### ***Special Note.***

A blessing was given to the person who read the Scriptures, and a blessing was given to those who heard the words of Scripture and took them to heart. One must not only hear the words of prophecy, one must keep them, which means to obey them. This book of Revelation is designed to be a moral directive for life.

#### ***Special Note.***

Why is Revelation not read?

- Circumstantial hindrances.
- Satanic distractions.
- Frustration about not understanding what is being said.

On Monday, August 17, 1964, at 4:05 pm, KIXL gave this thought over its radio program, Think it Over. “The world has forgotten, in its preoccupation with the left and the right, that there is an above and a below. Think it over.” (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson). In like manner, there is a blessing for all who read the Revelation and keep the words of this prophecy. Think it over.

1:3. the words of this prophecy. the words of this revelation.

1:3. this prophecy. John calls his apocalypse or revelation a “prophecy.”

***Special Note.***

A prophecy relates to the truth of God. By calling his apocalypse a prophecy, John is saying that he will unveil the truth about God’s plans for the immediate future. God revealed to John events which were shortly going to come to pass in his day. Therefore, audience relevance must always be kept in mind in studying the Revelation. Much harm has been done to the Christian faith by trying to interpret the words of the Revelation in light of contemporary world events and then asserting that “prophecy is being fulfilled.”

It is wiser, and safer, for a Christian to seek to interpret the Revelation in light of the repeated statement to John that the events are “at hand” (Revelation 1:1, 3; 22:10), and then proceed to find a way to apply the principles and events to the contemporary church. That should be the pattern, first the interpretation in light of the first century, and then the application in light of succeeding generations. The principles of Revelation are eternal.

For example, by way of application, the Beast from the Sea of Revelation 13, and the Beast from the Land, represents political and religious opposition to the church. In the Revelation these beasts are destroyed, and that is a comforting message for God’s people. The principle is established that any political or religious entity that moves to hurt the church shall be destroyed.

If a person would interpret Revelation with the audience relevance of John and his generation in mind, it would not be hard to remember that the early church would think of Nero and the Roman government, both which were beastly in nature, and both were energized by forced false worship in the form of emperor worship. When the church refused to worship Nero, or Rome, the saints were persecuted.

***Special Note.***

There are other blessings to be found in the Revelation.

- Revelation 14:13            There is a blessing for those who die in the sphere of faith.
- Revelation 16:15        There is a blessing for those who are holy.
- Revelation 19:9         There is a blessing for those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.
- Revelation 20:6         There is a blessing for those who have a part in the first resurrection.
- Revelation 22:14        There is a blessing for those who are obedient to the gospel.

Commenting on the blessings of Revelation, Matthew Henry observes the following.

- It is a blessed privilege to enjoy the oracles of God. This was one of the principal advantages the Jews had above the Gentiles.

- It is a blessed thing to study the scriptures; those are well employed who search the scriptures.
- It is a privilege not only to read the scriptures ourselves, but to hear them read by others who are qualified to give us the sense of what they read and to lead us into an understanding of them.
- It is not sufficient to our blessedness that we read and hear the scriptures, but we must keep the things that are written; we must keep them in our memories, in our minds, in our affections, and in practice, and we shall be blessed in the deed.
- The nearer we come to the accomplishment of the scriptures, the greater regard we shall give to them. The time is at hand, and we should be so much the more attentive as we see the day approaching.

1:3. the time *is* at hand. In the following verses it is revealed that God lifts the curtain of time to reveal a portion of the future to the Church (Read Amos 3:7; Daniel 2:28; Matthew 11:25; Luke 8:10).

4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

1:4. John. This John was the apostle John (1:1, 4, 9; 21:2). Once called the “son of thunder”, John became the apostle of love.

1:4. John, to the seven churches. The Revelation is an apocalypse, a prophesy, and an epistle to the churches. There were other churches in Asia, but John writes to these which are seven in number and thus signifies all the churches which speak of the complete church.

***Special Note.***

The seven churches were located in the providence of western Asia Minor, which is roughly equivalent to modern day Turkey. Because the Roman province of Asia included more churches than these seven the question arises as to why John singled out only seven. One possibility is that these seven cities may have been centers of seven postal districts. These seven churches all stand on the great circular road, which formed a rough circle around the west central part of the Roman province of Asia. As such, these seven cities served as good centers of communication for the surrounding districts. Letters in the first century had to be handwritten, and a letter sent to one assembly would be passed on to be read by Christians in other congregations.

***Special Note.***

The primary purpose and importance of Revelation is that it offers hope to God's people who are facing great tribulation, especially after the seizure of Jerusalem in the summer of AD 66. A great ordeal was to last about 42 months, until Jerusalem fell in AD 70. People need hope that the madness of men, and the judgments of God, will find a termination point.

The hope of people can only be found in the person and work of Jesus Christ, His death at Calvary, and His resurrection.

1:4. The letters to the seven churches called for the Christians to repent of sin and return to faithfulness and good works; encouraged them to stand firm for Christ against the temptations, trials, and persecutions of the Roman Empire; and promised specific rewards to the martyrs who faced death without denying Christ (*Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*).

1:4. Spirit. Holy Spirit.

***Special Note.***

Study Isaiah 11:2; Zechariah 3:9; 4:10.

1:4. Grace *be* unto you. John begins with a benediction from the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ (verse 5).

1:4. which is, and which was, and which is to come.

***Special Note.***

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson offers a literal translation of these words from the Greek text. "Grace be unto you, and from the One who Is, and the He was." Dr. Johnson recognizes this is an unusual rendering of the phrase much like the United States Constitution begins, "We the people..."

These words convey the eternity of God the Father.

1:4. from the seven Spirits which are before his throne. This is a benediction from God the Holy Spirit and is probably derived from the words of the prophet Isaiah. Here is a reference to the spheres of operation of the Holy Spirit. He operates in wisdom, power, understanding, counsel, knowledge and holy fear.

- *Isaiah 11:2 And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.*

**The Command to Communicate**  
**Revelation 1:9-20**

5 And from Jesus Christ, *who* is the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved, us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

1:5. And from Jesus Christ, *who* is. These words tell specifically who the Lord Jesus is.

- Jesus was tender without being weak.
- Jesus was strong without being coarse.
- Jesus was holy without Phariseesism.
- Jesus had conviction without intolerance.
- Jesus had enthusiasm without fanaticism.
- Jesus had passion without prejudice.
- Jesus never made a false step, and He never struck a jarring note.

***Special Note.***

**Three titles of Christ**

- Jesus is the Faithful Witness of God the Father.
- Jesus is the First Begotten of the Dead in that He never died again.
- Jesus is the Prince or Ruler of the kings of the earth.

1:5. *who* is the faithful witness. Jesus Christ told the truth about heaven, hell, sin, salvation, God the Father, and the way to have eternal life.

1:5. the prince of the kings of the earth. the ruler of the kings of the earth. Jesus Christ is the One Authentic Emperor over all the earth.

***Special Note.***

The Bible does recognize there are many “kings of the earth”.

- Some of the kings of the earth are hostile to God. *Psalms 2:2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.*
- Other kings of the earth will praise God. *Psalms 138:4 All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.*

1:5. Unto him that loved us. Unto him that loves us.

***Special Note.***

In the Greek text the love of God is in the present tense. In most passages in the Bible, if not all others, the love of God is spoken of in the past tense as per John 3:16. But here, the love of Christ is spoken of in the present tense.

1:5. loved us. loves us. The love of Christ is very specific. He “loves us” says John, referring to the church. His is the present tense.

- *Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*
- *Ephesians 5:25 ... Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*

***Special Note.***

One day C. H. Spurgeon was walking through the English countryside with a friend. As they strolled along, the evangelist noticed a barn with a weather vane on its roof. At the top of the vane were these words: GOD IS LOVE. Spurgeon remarked to his companion that he thought this was a rather inappropriate place for such a message. “Weather vanes are changeable,” he said, “but God’s love is constant.” “I do not agree with you about those words, Charles,” replied his friend. “You misunderstood the meaning. That sign is indicating a truth: Regardless of which way the wind blows, God is love.”

***Special Note.***

The death of Christ and His atoning work was limited to those whom He loves and washed “*in His own blood.*” If Christ had died for all sins of all men in the same manner, then there are people in hell for whom He has made atonement for sin. That is unthinkable for the Bible says that the Messiah was to “see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied” (Isaiah 53:11).

1:5. wash us. Greek, λου'ω, louo (loo'-o); to bathe (the whole person; to wash, cleanse garments exclusively). The idea here is that the Lord Jesus has loosened the believer from sin much like dirt is separated from the body in bathing. This is a reference to sanctification.

1:5. Unto him that loved (loves) us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. John breaks into a holy benediction as he thinks of him, of Christ, a living and real person.

- *Psalms 9:10 And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.*

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

1:6. And hath made us kings and priests. During the days of the Old Testament, nearness to God was ceremonially limited. But now, through Christ, every believer is royalty, every believer is a priest unto God. We can enter into the presence of God, offer our petitions to Him, and intercede on behalf of others. And notice that John is certain about these matters. It is not a potential, but an actual reality.

1:6. to him be glory. There are four glorious doxologies in *Revelation*.

- *Revelation 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*
- *Revelation 5:11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;*
- *Revelation 5:13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*
- *Revelation 7:12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

1:7. Behold, he cometh with clouds. Adoration awakes expectation. John is told that the Lord is coming, therefore, behold.

- *Daniel 7:13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.*

1:7. every eye shall see him. The meaning is that every eye without distinction shall see the Lord come in judgment upon Israel, not every eye without exception.

1:7. and they also which pierced him. Those who specifically and directly pierced the Lord were the Romans, and the Jews indirectly, who lived during the first century. Once more the timing of the Revelation seems to be established, and that is the first century AD, by way of interpretation.

1:7. and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Some will wail in gospel repentance. Others will wail as the various judgments, poured out upon Jerusalem, and then Rome, shall affect the merchants of the earth. There is a rippling effect when God judges the world.

***Special Note.***

The concept of the Lord dwelling, or coming in clouds to the nations of the earth, is taught in other passages of Scripture (Psalm 104:3; 18:7-15; Isaiah 19:1; Mark 13:26).

1:7. shall wail.

- *Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*

8 **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending**, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

1:8. Alpha and Omega. A reference to the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet.

1:8. the beginning and the ending. While this phrase is true, and explains “Alpha and Omega” it is not found in the oldest Greek manuscripts and could be omitted from the text. With that being noted, the *Textus Receptus* does contain the phrase.

**Prelude to the Vision of Christ  
Revelation 1:9-11**

9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

1:9. the isle that is called Patmos. The small, barren rocky island of Patmos is located in the Aegean Sea about 60 miles from Ephesus. It was about ten miles long and six miles wide. Christians were put on the island for political, economic and religious reasons. It is possible that John was no longer on the isle of Patmos when he wrote the revelation for he says that he “*was*” on the isle of Patmos. People that were put on the island of Patmos were put there for political punishment and hard labor.

***Special Note.***

John becomes an example to all believers to persevere in the sphere of saving faith. Those who endure to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22).

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lords day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

1:10. I was in the Spirit. The believer can be on earth and yet be “in Christ.” To be “in Christ” means, biblically and theologically, to be born again.

- *2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

***Special Note.***

The Lord’s Day refers to Sunday, the first day of the week. It is the new day of worship for the believers in honor of the resurrection of Christ (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; John 20:19-26). Many Bible scholars believe that the *Didache*, or the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, a brief early Christian treatise of the first or second century, affirms the practice of Christians worshipping on Sunday.

11 Saying, **I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.**

1:11. I am Alpha and Omega. The meaning is that Christ is the beginning and the end of all things.

***Special Note.***

The resurrected Lord does not hesitate to identify Himself through various titles as very God of very God. The Saviour of men’s souls is the Almighty One (cf. Revelation 1:8). Christ is able to save to the uttermost those who come to Him.

**Seven Churches**

- The church at Ephesus
- The church at Smyrna
- The church at Pergamos
- The church at Thyatira
- The church at Sardis
- The church at Philadelphia
- The church at Laodicea

**A Heavenly Portrait of the Resurrected Christ  
Revelation 1:12-16**

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

1:12. seven golden candlesticks.

- *Exodus 25:37 And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it.*

***Special Note.***

There are 22 chapters in Revelation consisting of 404 verses of which 278 verses come from the Old Testament, even though John never quotes directly from the Old Testament. The passages are all woven together as a mosaic. Therefore, it is important to be familiar with the whole of the Bible.

- Chapter 1           20 verses
- Chapter 2           29 verses
- Chapter 3           22 verses
- Chapter 4           11 verses
- Chapter 5           14 verses
- Chapter 6           17 verses
- Chapter 7           17 verses
- Chapter 8           13 verses
- Chapter 9           21 verses
- Chapter 10          11 verses
- Chapter 11          19 verses
- Chapter 12          17 verses
- Chapter 13          18 verses
- Chapter 14          20 verses
- Chapter 15          8 verses
- Chapter 16          21 verses
- Chapter 17          18 verses
- Chapter 18          24 verses
- Chapter 19          21 verses
- Chapter 20          15 verses
- Chapter 21          27 verses
- Chapter 22          21 verses

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

1:13. candlesticks. lampstands.

1:13. in the midst of seven candlesticks...clothed with a garment...with a golden girdle (belt). This was a symbolic representation of Christ as prophet, priest, and king who wore similar garments.

1:13. the Son of Man.

- *Matthew 16:13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

1:13. girt about the paps. girt about the breasts.

1:13. a golden girdle. in the robe of a judge.

14 His head and *his hairs were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire;

1:14. His head and *his hairs were*. John provides a spiritual and symbolic vision of our Lord Jesus.

1:14. His head and *his hairs were* white like wool, as white as snow. White may represent age, and therefore maturity. The image may also represent purity, for white is often described that way.

- *Daniel 7:9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.*
- *Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*

“Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole;  
I want Thee forever to live in my soul.  
Break down every idol, cast out every foe;  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow.  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Lord Jesus, let nothing unholy remain,  
Apply Thine own blood and extract ev’ry stain;  
To get this blest cleansing, I all things forego—  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

James L. Nicholson, 1872

1:14. a flame of fire. This is a symbol of penetrating judgment. There was a sense of majesty and authority in the eyes of Christ, for a father cried out to Jesus saying, “*Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son*” (Luke 9:38). Just a look and a child would be healed. Just a look, and Peter was broken over the sin He had committed. *Luke 22:61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.*

“Jesus! Cast a look on me!  
Give me true simplicity:  
Make me poor and keep me low,  
Seeking only Thee to know. Amen.”

John Berridge, 1877

15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

1:15. Fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace. Fine brass speaks of judgment. The rays of the fine brass speak of the swiftness of judgment. Judgment will be a major theme in Revelation.

1:15. the sound of many waters. The sound of many waters signified the sound of authority. The Aegean Sea surrounded the isle of Patmos. John would be familiar with the storms of the sea and churning water. Those who have been to Canada and listened to Niagara Falls can appreciate the sound of many waters made up from rivulets, streams, and great bodies of water. The voice of Christ which speaks to the Christian has in Him the combined voices of the rivulets, streams, and rivers of gospel truths given by the prophets of God before Him. Here is majestic power of the Son of God.

“I heard the voice of Jesus say, “Come unto Me and rest;  
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down Thy head upon My breast.”  
I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad;  
I found in Him a resting place, and He has made me glad.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, “Behold, I freely give  
The living water; thirsty one, stoop down, and drink, and live.”  
I came to Jesus, and I drank of that life giving stream;  
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived, and now I live in Him.

I heard the voice of Jesus say, “I am this dark world’s Light;  
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise, and all thy day be bright.”  
I looked to Jesus, and I found in Him my Star, my Sun;  
And in that light of life I’ll walk, till traveling days are done.”

Horatius Bonar, 1846

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength.

1:16 And he had in his right hand. The right hand of Jesus is the extended hand of power, strength, comfort, grace, love, and mercy. The hands of Jesus are scarred hands.

“Have you failed in your plan of your storm caused life?

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand.

Are you weary and worn from its toil and strife?

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand.

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand,

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand.

He will keep to the end He's your dearest friend,

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand.

Are you walking alone through the shadows dim?

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand.

Christ will comfort your heart put your trust in Him,

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand.

Would you follow the will of the risen Lord?

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand.

Would you live in the light of His blessed Word?

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand

Is your soul burdened down with the load of sin?

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand.

Throw your heart open wide let the Savior in.

Place your hand in the nail scarred hand.”

B.B. McKinney

1:16. and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. This is a reference to the piercing, stabbing, powerful Word of God when the Lord speaks it.

1:16. his countenance. his face. The pre-eminent glory of Christ is summed up in this last expression, “*and his face was as the sun shineth in his strength.*”

“Majesty, worship His Majesty.

Unto Jesus be glory honour and praise.

Majesty, Kingdom, Authority,

Flows from His throne,

Unto His own,

His anthem raise.

So exalt, lift upon high,  
The name of Jesus.  
Magnify, come glorify,  
Christ, Jesus the King.

Majesty, worship His Majesty.  
Jesus who died, now glorified,  
King of all kings.

Jesus who died, now glorified,  
King of all kings.”

Jack Hayford

### **Seven Symbolic Representations of Christ**

- His head and hair were white like wool.
- His eyes as flames of fire.
- His feet were like unto fine brass.
- His voice was as the sound of many waters.
- In His right hand were seven stars.
- Out of His mouth went a two-edged sword.
- His countenance was as the sun.

### **The Pronouncement of the Risen Christ to John Revelation 1:17-20**

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, **Fear not; I am the first and the last:**

1:17. I fell at his feet as dead. It is an awesome experience to see the glorified Lord.

#### ***Special Note.***

It is interesting that those who worship the Lord Jesus fell at His feet, while His enemies and those who would hurt him, fell backwards.

- *John 18:3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. 4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? 5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. 6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*

1:17. And he laid his right hand upon me. What a lovely image of grace and comfort.

“Shackled by a heavy burden,  
 'Neath a load of guilt and shame.  
 Then the hand of Jesus touched me,  
 And now I am no longer the same.

He touched me, Oh He touched me,  
 And oh the joy that floods my soul!  
 Something happened and now I know,  
 He touched me and made me whole.

Since I met this blessed Savior,  
 Since He cleansed and made me whole,  
 I will never cease to praise Him,  
 I'll shout it while eternity rolls.

He touched me, Oh He touched me,  
 And oh the joy that floods my soul!  
 Something happened and now I know  
 He touched me and made me whole.”

The Gaither Trio

1:17. I am the first.

#### Jesus Christ as First

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| • Jesus was before John                        | John 1:30          |
| • Jesus was before Moses                       | 1 Corinthians 10:4 |
| • Jesus was before Abraham                     | John 8:58          |
| • Jesus was before the foundation of the world | John 1:1, 14       |

18 *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

1:18. I *am* he that liveth and was dead. I *am* he that liveth and became dead. Jesus was no illusion, no phantom, no mystic experience. There is no need to wear a crucifix. The Lord is no longer on the cross, nor is He in the grave. Jesus is alive for evermore. Our experience is not to just remember Christ, but to commune with Him moment by moment.

1:18. hell. hades, the sphere of the dead. Christ rules death and hades.

1:18. and have the keys of hell and death. And have the keys of death and hell.

19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

1:19. Write the things.

#### A Simple Outline of Revelation

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| • John was to write of things seen.                        | Revelation 1:1-20    |
| • John was to write of things which are.                   | Revelation 2:1-3:29  |
| • John was to write of the things that shall be hereafter. | Revelation 4:1-22:21 |

20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

1:20. The seven stars are the angels. The seven stars are the messengers.

#### *Special Note.*

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; the seven candlesticks are the seven churches of Asia; the sharp two-edged sword is the word of God; and the keys of hell and death represent authority.

- *Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

#### *Special Note.*

#### How to Interpret the Symbols in Revelation

- Notice the context. Many symbols are interpreted by John. Let Scripture interpret Scripture and, when it does, believe it.
- Study the Old Testament. Revelation is filled with phrases, clauses, and allusions from the Old Testament Scripture. Study the Old Testament verses and find the sense of what was being said.
- Become familiar with local customs of the ancient world. Study Jewish culture.
- Remember the words of the Lord in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.
- Do not forget the principle of audience relevance.

- Be careful of over simplification. The interpretive principle that “if a passage makes plain sense, seek no other sense,” can be very subjective. What makes “sense” to one person can be absurd to another. As a guiding principle it can lead to crass literalism and misunderstanding much like the Pharisees misunderstood Jesus.

*John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. 52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?*

- Understand the nature, intent, and purpose of apocalyptic literature.
- Do not try and interpret the Revelation in light of modern headlines. Christians have been doing this in every generation for the past two thousand years, and they have been consistently wrong, with one exception, the generation of John’s day.
- Reject at once any novel teaching that is contrary to the historic Christian faith. For example, if someone teaches a third coming of Christ in veiled language, that teaching is contrary to the historic faith of the church.

*Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

*Jude 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

Do not become a victim of the clever cynic, who said,

“Wonderful things in the Bible I see,  
for they were put there by you and by me.”

### ***Special Note.***

The interpretation of Revelation belongs to the first century, while the principles of Revelation find universal and generational application. As you study the Revelation, seek your own vision of Christ.

“Open my eyes, that I may see  
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;  
Place in my hands the wonderful key  
That shall unclasp and set me free.

Silently now I wait for Thee,  
Ready my God, Thy will to see,  
Open my eyes, illumine me,  
Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear  
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;  
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,  
Everything false will disappear.

Open my mouth, and let me bear,  
Gladly the warm truth everywhere;  
Open my heart and let me prepare  
Love with Thy children thus to share.”

Clara Scott, 1895

## REVELATION 2

### Seven Messages to the Seven Churches

#### The Message to Ephesus

##### Revelation 2:1-7

#### Revelation Chapter 2 Summary

The apostle John, having in chapter 1 written about the things which he had seen, now proceeds to write about the things that are, according to the command of God (Rev 1:19). The text concerns itself with the present state of the seven churches of Asia, with which John had a special interest and for which he had a tender concern. The apostle was directed to write to every one of the churches according to their present state and circumstances, and to inscribe every letter to the angel of that church. In this chapter we have the following.

- |                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| • The message sent to Ephesus  | Revelation 2:1-7   |
| • The message sent to Smyrna   | Revelation 2:8-11  |
| • The message sent to Pergamos | Revelation 2:12-17 |
| • The message sent to Thyatira | Revelation 2:18-29 |

#### The Things Which Are

1 **Unto the angel of the Church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;**

2:1. the Church of Ephesus. The city of Ephesus was an important commercial and religious center in Asia Minor. The temple of the goddess Artemis (Diana) was in Ephesus. The other churches in Asia Minor looked to the bishop of Ephesus for spiritual guidance.

#### A Discernable General Pattern of Address to all the Churches

- There is an address to the angel of the church.
- There is a description of our Lord which is usually derived from the vision of Revelation 1.
- There is usually a commendation of the church by the Lord.
- There is a complaint or some difficulty the Lord finds with the church.
- There is an exhortation.
- There is a threat as to the response in the relation of the church to Christ.
- There is a promise to each church which closes out the message.

2:1. Unto the angel. The word “angel” is used often in the New Testament, but not as a term for a pastor. The word is used in Revelation in reference to a heavenly being created by God. It is possible here that the word “angel” has reference to the angelic guardian of the church, of which we know little about, but which the Lord knew about.

***Special Note.***

While it is common for Bible teachers to think of the “angel” here as a synonym for “pastor” or “presiding elder”, there is no compelling need to do so. Those who wish to teach that the angel is a reference to the pastor appeal to other Scripture for support.

The prophet Haggai was called a messenger (angel) of the Lord.

- *Haggai 1:13 Then spake Haggai the LORD’S messenger in the LORD’S message unto the people, saying, I am with you, saith the LORD.*

The priests are also called “messengers” (angels).

- *Malachi 2:7 For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.*

2:1. the seven stars in his right hand. The seven stars are the seven angels.

2:1. seven golden candlesticks. The seven golden candlesticks are the seven churches.

2:1. who walketh. Notice that the Lord walks in the midst of His churches. He walks in the present tense as a High Priest attending to the lampstands. Like the priest in the Old Testament, the Lord removes that which might prevent the lamps from shining brightly. He pours in the oil into the lampstand. The picture of the Lord walking in the midst of His churches is a glorious picture of the resurrected, living Lord. This means that the churches are precious to the Lord because He gave His life for the church.

### **The Commendation**

**2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:**

2:2. I know thy works. The Lord is not blind to the beauties of the church which He has created. The Lord praises those things which are acceptable to Him even though He is responsible for all that is good.

2:2. thou canst not bear them. thou canst not tolerate them.

3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my names sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.

**A Sevenfold Commendation  
What the Lord Says He Knows About the Church in Ephesus**

- I know thy works. I know thy aggressive activity for the Lord.
- I know thy labour. I know how hard you work.
- I know thy patience.
- I know how thou canst not bear them which are evil.
- I know thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.
- I know thou hast borne, and hast patience.
- I know that for my names sake thou hast labored, and hast not fainted.

***Special Note.***

Paul remembered the works, labor, and patience of the Thessalonians.

- *1 Thessalonians 1:3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;*

Works were found in Ephesus by Christ, but not a “*work of faith.*” Labour was found by Christ in Ephesus, but there was no “*labour of love.*” Patience was exercised in Ephesus and found by the Lord, but no “*patience of hope.*” When a local church considers all that it has, it must also consider what it does not have.

2:2. thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not. Here was a church with discernment. Here was a church that could tell who had a true spiritual gift and a person who did not have a true spiritual gift.

***Special Note.***

It is interesting that even after being in existence for about forty years at the time of Revelation, there was still a discussion about who the true apostles were. Some people were being persuaded that individuals were apostles because the sense was changed of the meaning of what it was to be an apostle. For example, Barnabas was called an apostle for convenience sake. He was sent by the church for a specific task. So Barnabas was an apostle of the church, but not of Christ like John was an apostle, or even Paul. Do apostles exist today? Some, like Dr. Jim Feeney, a Pentecostal pastor, believes there are apostles today. So this issue is a lingering concern.

### Leaving One's First Love

4 Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.

2:4. I have *somewhat* against thee. I have this against thee. Despite the Lord's commendations, there is a problem. While Christ was the center of the church, He was not the center attraction of the church. He walks in the midst of His people but He walks almost alone.

***Special Note.***

The words in italics in the Authorized Version are words not found in the original Greek text. These are words that have been inserted by the translators of Scripture to try to smooth over the wording or help understand the sense of what is being said. Sometimes the inserted words are helpful. But sometimes they are not. Here, the word "*somewhat*" suggests that what the Lord is saying is a minor thing. It is not. The Lord considers this a very serious matter for He speaks of being "fallen" and calls upon individuals to "repent."

2:4. thou hast left thy first love. The love for purity, the love for simplicity, the love of submission, the love of evangelism, the love of Bible study, the love of wanting to be with the saints, and the love for communion with Christ was left.

***Special Note.***

Paul had prayed that the church at Ephesus would continue in sincerity.

- *Ephesians 6:24* Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

But the church had fallen.

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

2:5. Remember therefore.

"The things that I love,  
I hold dear to my heart,  
They are borrowed and  
Not mine at all.

Jesus only let me use them,  
To brighten my life,  
So remind me, remind me dear Lord.

Roll back the curtain of memory now and then.

Show me where you brought me from,  
And where I could have been.

Just remember, I'm a human, and humans forget.  
So remind me, remind me dear Lord

Nothing good have I done,  
To deserve God's own Son,  
I'm not worthy of the scars  
in His hands.

Yet He chose the road to Calvary,  
To die in my stead,  
Why He loved me, I can't understand

Roll back the curtain of memory now and then,  
Show me where you brought me from and  
Where I could have been.

Just remember, I'm a human and humans forget,  
So remind me, remind me dear Lord

Just remember I'm a human and humans forget,  
So remind me, remind me dear Lord"

Alison Krauss

### **The Divine Remedy**

- Remember the love of thy espousal. *Jeremiah 2:2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the Lord; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.*
- Repent. Engage the mind.
- Perform the first works. This is what C. S. Lewis called, "The pilgrim's regress (return)."

2:5. and will remove thy candlestick. It is possible for a local church to lose its testimony.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans which I also hate.

2:6. thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans. The teaching of the Nicolaitans included the belief that it was lawful to self-indulge and worship idols. They also taught that God was not the creator of the world. Immorality was permissible in order for the grace of God to flow more freely.

**7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.**

2:7. unto the churches. Notice the plural. The Revelation was addressed not simply to the historical church, but to all the churches, and by way of application, to all the churches today.

***Special Note.***

Genesis 3:24 records how God set a cherub to guard the way of the Tree of Life. The guardian angel was placed there in grace lest men eat of the tree in an unregenerate state and be confirmed in evil. Now, through Christ, individuals are invited to freely eat of the Tree of Life.

2:7. the paradise of God.

**In the Garden of the King**

- Luke 23:43                      Paradise is where Jesus went after death with the thief on the cross.
- 2 Corinthians 12:4            Paradise is where Paul went.
- Revelation 2:7                Paradise is where the Tree of Life is found.

2:7. to him that overcometh. There are two classes of people. There are those who overcome and enjoy victory of self, sin, the world, the flesh, and the devil. Then there are those who are overcome by the world, the flesh, and the devil.

**The Message to Smyrna  
Revelation 2:8-11**

**8 And unto the angel of the Church in Smyrna write;** These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

2:8. the Church in Smyrna. Located in the Roman province of Asia on the Aegean shore, Smyrna (40 miles N of Ephesus) was a jewel of prosperity and culture. A temple dedicated to the Emperor Tiberius had been erected in the city. As a result, emperor worship was embraced which led to a period of persecution for Christians who would not show their political loyalty by acts of emperor worship. Polycarp, a former disciple of the apostle John, and bishop of Smyrna, became the twelfth martyr. The modern Turkish city of Izmir has been built over the ruins of Smyrna.

***Special Note.***

Smyrna is named for the myrrh plant.

**Doctrine of Myrrh**

- Genesis 37:25                      Myrrh was a valued plant.
- Genesis 43:11                     Myrrh was used as a special gift.
- Exodus 30:23-33                 Myrrh was a costly plant used in the anointing oil.
- Esther 2:12                        Myrrh was used by Esther to prepare for her meeting with the king.
- Psalm 45:7                         Myrrh was a sweet smelling plant.
- Proverbs 7:17                      Myrrh was used as a perfume.
- Song of Solomon 1:13          Myrrh was used as an aphrodisiac.
- Matthew 2:11                      Myrrh was one of the gifts given to the baby Lord Jesus.
- Mark 15:23                         Myrrh was mixed with wine and given to Christ at Calvary.
- John 19:39                         Nicodemus used myrrh when burying the Lord.

In the three times we find myrrh mentioned in association with Jesus, it is in the context of suffering. At Calvary, myrrh was mixed with wine, called in Genesis 49:11, the blood of grapes, and was offered to Jesus to drink during His hours of suffering.

***Special Note.***

The word “church” refers to a called out assembly. Dr. Mark Dever suggests that a true church will be characterized by the following. Like the Lord, the church at Smyrna was destined to suffer.

- Expository preaching.
- A commitment to a biblical theology that seeks to understand God's character and His ways.
- The Gospel, which is the message of salvation based on Jesus Christ.
- The necessity of conversion.
- Evangelism.
- An active membership in a local church.
- Biblical church discipline.
- A concern for discipleship and spiritual growth.
- Biblical church leadership (*Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*).

2:8. the first and the last. This description of the Lord speaks of His eternity. The terms applied to Yahweh (Hebrew, Yehovah; English, Jehovah) are the terms applied to Christ. The Doctrine of the Trinity teaches that there is one God who subsists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The term Yahweh may be used of each person of the trinity: the LORD the Father, the LORD the Son, the LORD the Spirit.

**Special Note.**

In the KJV of the Bible, whenever the sacred name Yahweh is used, notice it is in capital letters: LORD. This term for God speaks of the self-Existent or Eternal One; Jehovah. When the term “Lord” is used in lower case letters, it indicates another name for God.

- *Isaiah 41:4 Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he.*
- *Isaiah 44:6 Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.*
- *Genesis 18:31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.*

2:8. which was dead, and is alive. The death of Christ was an episode. Christ died for our sin. But now, He is alive forever more. God the Father never intended for Jesus to stay dead.

- *Acts 2:27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*

**Special Note.**

Historically, Smyrna had a death and a resurrection. Six hundred years before Christ, Smyrna was an important city. A large earthquake destroyed the city. However, in 200 BC, from under the rubble of the past, Smyrna rose again to be an important and beautiful commercial city.

**9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan.**

2:9. I know. The Lord knows the good, the bad, and the ugly about the church at Smyrna.

**The Good, The Bad, The Ugly**

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| • The Lord knows the good. | I know thy works.                                     |
| • The Lord knows the bad.  | I know thy tribulation and poverty.                   |
| • The Lord knows the ugly. | I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews. |

**Three Types of Jews**

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| • The Racial Jew     | Someone with the genes of Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob |
| • The Religious Jew  | Someone who has embraced Judaism                   |
| • The Regenerate Jew | Someone who has trusted Christ as Savior           |

***Special Note.***

The most important Jew, in biblical terms, is not the racial or religious Jew, but the regenerate Jew. Biblically, anyone, Jew or Gentile, who has the faith of Abraham, is recognized as God's children for we are all in Christ where racial and ethnic distinctives disappear in the divine economy. All who are in Christ are heirs according to promise. The true "Jew" is the person, Jew or Gentile, that has been "circumcised in the heart."

- *Galatians 3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.*
- *Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*
- *Romans 2:29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

Because this is true, it is important for the church not to exalt a nation, especially one in unbelief and under divine discipline. The "nation" that God will honor most is the church, for the church is in the sight of God "an holy nation", having received the covenantal blessings.

- *1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*

2:9. tribulation. Any System of theology which teaches people that those who are in Christ shall escape tribulation or persecution teaches that which is contrary to the historic faith, and that which is contrary to the words of Christ.

- *John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

2:9. and poverty, (but thou art rich). The Parable of the Rich Man which Jesus gave reflects that a person can be rich in material goods, but poor in spiritual matters (Luke 12:16-21). It is also possible to be poor in material goods and yet be rich toward God. The glorious parenthesis would have encouraged the hearts of the people in the church of Smyrna.

2:9. the synagogue of Satan. The contrast John draws is between a called out, or gathered out people in the church, verses a gathered together people, in the synagogue. A spiritual truth is established. Satan has a counterfeit part for all that God has, for the overarching objective of Lucifer is to be like God.

10 **Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.**

2:10. which thou shalt suffer. Nowhere in the New Testament is it taught that Christians shall escape suffering for the sake of Christ by being raptured or transported to heaven. “Thou shalt suffer” has been the teaching of the church and the experience of the church to the present hour.

- *Acts 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*

***Special Note.***

Life under Nero was horrendous for the saints. During his reign many Christians were crucified, put into the public arena with wild animals, or wrapped in garments to be set on fire and burned while Nero laughed at their cries. The words of Revelation 2:10 may refer to a literal short and specialized period of persecution. It is instructive to note there were more official edicts of persecution against Christians following the death of Nero.

2:10. I will give thee a crown of life. Other crowns in Scripture are recognized.

2:10. ten days. There is no historical record of this particular persecution for ten days, but since Jesus said it would happen, faith believes it did happen. Many great moments, and many terrible events have been lost to history in the providence of God.

2:10. I will give thee a crown of life. There is no complaint leveled against the church of Smyrna, but there is the promise of a reward. The crown of life is the full experience of eternal life. Eternal life is the gift of sovereign grace. It is the gift of God, apart from works, by virtue of faith in the Lord Jesus. Crowns were well known in the ancient world. Crowns were given to, and worn by kings, athletics, and political leaders.

***Special Note.***

There is a crown of righteousness to be given to all who love the appearance of Christ (2 Timothy 4:9). There is a Crown of Life to believers that endure temptation because they love the Lord (James 1:12). There is a Crown of Glory, which shall be awarded faithful ministers (1 Peter 5:4). Christians are to guard their crowns so that “*no man take thy crown*” (Revelation 3:11). God does not ask how many talents one has; He asks for faithfulness.

11 **He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.**

2:11. the second death. The second death is mentioned four times by this name in Scripture.

- Revelation 2:11                      The second death cannot hurt those who overcome.
- Revelation 20:6                     The second death has no power over those in the first resurrection.
- Revelation 20:14                    The second death is defined as being cast into the Lake of Fire.
- Revelation 21:8                      The second death includes fire and brimstone.

***Special Note.***

It is easy to question the goodness of God. When in the midst of difficulties, Jacob said, "...all these things are against me" (Genesis 42:36). Later, Jacob blessed the Lord and spoke of "the God which fed me all my life long unto this day" (Genesis 48:15).

**The Message to Pergamum  
Revelation 2:12-17**

**12 And to the angel of the Church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;**

2:12. Pergamos (thoroughly married). Located in Turkey about 50 miles north of Smyrna and 15 miles inland from the Aegean Sea, the city of Pergamos, better known as Pergamum, was the capitol of the Roman province of Asia. Pergamos became the center for emperor worship after a temple had been erected in 29 BC in honor of Rome and Caesar Augustus. The modern Turkish town of Bergama stands over the historic site.

***Special Note.***

The Christian is thoroughly married to Christ.

- *2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

2:12. the sharp sword with two edges. The messages to the seven churches are united to the vision of the resurrected Christ. The two edged sword speaks of the piercing nature of the Word of God.

- *Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

**The Two-edged Sword in the Revelation**

- Revelation 1:16                      Found coming from the mouth of Christ
- Revelation 2:12                     Identified with the church of Pergamos
- Revelation 2:16                     Used by Christ to fight against the church that will not repent
- Revelation 19:15                    Used by Christ to smite the nations of the earth in order to rule

- Revelation 19:21                      Used by Christ without mercies upon His enemies

#### **Other Swords in the Revelation**

- Revelation 6:4                      A great sword was given to the Rider on the Red Horse
- Revelation 6:8                      A sword was given to the Rider on the Pale (Green) Horse
- Revelation 13:10                    He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword
- Revelation 13:14                    The Beast from the Sea was wounded in the head by a sword

13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

#### **The Commendation of the Church at Pergamos**

- The church held fast to the name of Christ, which meant that the church stood strong for the deity of Christ who claimed that He was the great "I AM" (John 10:31-33). The church affirmed His name as the Alpha and Omega, and His royal name of King of kings.
- The church did not deny their faith in Christ. The faith of the Christian is the hope of the believer. To have hope is to have faith.

"My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly trust in Jesus' Name."

Edward Mote, 1834

- The church did not flinch in the hour of suffering and martyrdom.

2:13. Antipas (against all). It is possible that Antipas was a man who stood against all in the church who wished to unite with the world and embrace false doctrine. The mention of Antipas reminds the Christian community of all the unsung heroes of the faith who have been faithful to the Lord even unto death. The Lord knows those who are His (Revelation 7:3). A high accolade is paid to Antipas, for he is called by the same title ascribed to Christ in Revelation 1:5, "faithful witness" (martyr).

2:13. Satan's seat. The reference to "*Satan's seat*" may refer to the throne like altar that the city had built in honor of the god Zeus. Pergamos had a throne like altar to Zeus. There were other temples as well, including those dedicated to the worship of the Roman emperor.

2:13. where Satan dwelleth. Satan is not omnipresent, nor is he omniscient, nor omnipotent.

***Special Note.***

It is instructive to know that the city of Pergamum became the place of refuge for the religion of the Babylonians. The great high priest of the Babylonian religion was called “*Pontifex Maximus*” meaning “the great bridge builder.” Today, this title is associated with the pope in Rome.

14 **But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.**

2:14. doctrine of Balaam. The Doctrine of Balaam refers to the selling of one’s spiritual gifts for personal profit. The Doctrine of Balaam also embraces idolatry and fornication, spiritual and physical. Wanting money from the king of Moab, Balaam tried to curse the Israelites but could not. So he encouraged the Moabites to entice the women of marry the men of Moab thereby corrupting Hebrew culture. The beautiful young women began to commit whoredom with the men of Moab. For the evil he did Balaam was killed with a sword (Number 31:8).

***Special Note.***

The church is not to tolerate those who lower the requirements of the Word of God and His standard of truth. Correct Bible doctrine is essential because belief will dictate behavior. Correct behavior is essential because we must give an account someday for the things done in our bodies, good or evil. Sometimes, it is taught that behavior is more important than creeds. The poet Alexander Pope (1688-1744) thought that.

“For creeds and forms  
Let senseless bigots fight,  
He can’t be wrong,  
Who life is in the right.”

But Mr. Pope was wrong on two accounts. He dismissed Christian creeds and he over emphasized the works of men. Men are not saved by a good life but by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is through faith alone, apart from works, that a person is justified in the sight of God.

15 **So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.**

16 **Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth**

2:16. Repent. The way to repent is to change one’s belief and behavior.

***Special Note.***

It has been said that if a person will fear God they will have nothing else to fear.

17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth *it*.

2:17. hidden manna. The reference to manna is a reference to spiritual food. During the days of the wilderness journey manna was the main sustenance of life. Manna became a symbol for Christ (cf. John 6:48-51). For a Jew, to eat of manna was to enjoy life itself and beyond that the blessings of the reign of the Messiah including fellowship with the Lord (study Exodus 16:11-15, 33, 34).

2:17. a new name written. This refers to a symbolic way of referring to God's favorable verdict in a court case. A black stone was given in a guilty verdict. Stones were also used for admittance to the temple for attendance. The Christian will have access to the kingdom of God and the blessing in it.

***Special Note.***

It was not uncommon in the ancient world to carry a stone on which was written the name of a deity. To know the name of a god was to have power. The Lord was telling the Church of Pergamos that if they repented and rejected false doctrine they would have renewed spiritual power with Him. The believers would also have fellowship with the Lord for the Church would know the name of the Savior. He is the Lord God Omnipotent.

2:17. which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. There are intimate names that those who are close to one another enjoy. Each Christian will have a special name with the Lord.

- *2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.*

The message to Pergamos is that belief and behavior are to be united.

**The Message to Thyatira  
Revelation 2:18-29**

18 And unto the angel of the Church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass;

2:18. the church in Thyatira. Located 20 miles southeast of Pergamos, Thyatira (continual sacrifice) was the hometown of Lydia (Acts 16:14). It was famous for a purple dye and cloth industry. One pound of the purple dye was worth more than \$200.00 in modern current currency.

2:18. the Son of God. As the Son of God, Jesus has the authority to speak. The church in Thyatira was a church under authority.

2:18. his feet *are* like fine brass. Fine brass speaks of a fierce and fiery judgment.

**19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last *to be* more than the first.**

2:19. I know thy works. The characteristic of the Christian life is that Christians are individuals who live lives not bent on sin” (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson). However, in the church in Thyatira individuals were compromising the holy truth of our Lord Jesus Christ with the erroneous teaching of a woman named Jezebel.

***Special Note.***

“When a person believes in Jesus Christ there is a definitive break in sin” (John Murray).

**What the Lord Knows**

- The Lord knows the works of the church in Thyatira.
- The Lord knows the love of the church in Thyatira.
- The Lord knows the faith of the church in Thyatira.
- The Lord knows the patience of the church in Thyatira.
- The Lord knows how many good works the church in Thyatira performs.

**20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.**

2:20. I have a few things against thee. I have against thee. The words “a few things” are not found in the better Greek manuscripts.

2:20. because. The Lord explains why He is justified in having something against the church in Thyatira. The Lord is never unreasonable in His judgments.

2:20. Jezebel (chaste, pure). The irony about this Jezebel was that she was no virgin and was sexually insatiable and encouraged others to commit fornication.

***Special Note.***

Sometimes churches are misled by men, such as Joseph Smith, William Miller, Charles Taze Russell, Garner Ted Armstrong, and many others. Sometimes God’s people are misled by women such as Mary Baker Eddy and Ellen G. White. The objective of these people is to mingle their thoughts, words, and writings with the Bible and the Christian church, all the while

keeping their peculiar distinctive. Protestant Liberalism wants to be part of the Christian church, as do those in the homosexual community. It is not possible. “To touch pitch is to be tarred by it” (A German Proverb).

- *Matthew 18:6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.*

***Special Note.***

The historical Jezebel was a Phoenician princess who married Ahab, king of Israel (c. BC 883). Being a weak man, Ahab became a puppet of her will (1 Kings 21:25). Of all the sins which Jezebel committed, the worst was the establishment of the Phoenician worship on a majestic scale in the court of Ahab. No less than 450 prophets of Baal, and 400 prophets of the groves, sat at her table (1 Kings 16:31; 18:10). The prophets of God were attacked on her orders and was slaughtered without mercy (1 Kings 18:13; 2 Kings 9:7). Jezebel was allowed to do many wicked deeds until the Lord arrested her behavior. In the end the chariot-horses of Jehu trampled her to death. Her body remained to rot in the open in a place called “the mounds” where offal was thrown from the city walls and dogs came to eat her flesh (2 Kings 9:30-37).

**The Sins of the Woman Named Jezebel**

- Jezebel called herself a prophetess.
- Jezebel was allowed to teach things contrary to the Word of God.
- Jezebel was allowed to seduce God’s servants.
- Jezebel encouraged the saints to commit fornication, both physically and spiritually.
- Jezebel encouraged the saints to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

***Special Note.***

Sin is not hurtful because it is forbidden, but is forbidden because it is hurtful. Those who encourage others to think and act contrary to sound doctrine and the known will of God must be challenged and stopped.

**21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.**

2:21. And I gave her space to repent. God’s grace always precedes discipline. This pattern was established in the Garden of Eden.

***Special Note.***

The divine principle of grace preceding discipline helps to explain why the conscience does not feel any guilt, nor is a wrong action arrested prior to deliberately committing an act of transgression against the known will of God, but feels guilty afterwards. Where there is no

transgression there is no punishment or affliction of the conscience. But, after a transgression is committed, the moral gage, or compass, which God has instilled in the soul, will be engaged, provided the conscience has not been seared.

- *1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.*

2:21. and she repented not. and she does not want to repent of her immorality (New American Standard).

***Special Note.***

There are many reasons why individuals do not wish to repent of sin.

- A person may not feel any sense of moral guilt.
- A person may enjoy the feeling associated with a transgression. There is pleasure in sin.
- A person may think that God will not really carry out any harsh punishment.
- A person may believe that others do not know and will never find out.
- A person may be encouraged to continue in a transgression by a loved one.
- A person may be enamored with an authority figure and not want to displease them.
- A person may believe they will lose someone they love if they cease from certain sins.
- A person may not wish to repent of sin because they are incapable of thinking for themselves having lost their individuality. Nothing they do will change anything.
- A person may not wish to repent of sin because they feel they are helpless to change.
- A person may not wish to repent of sin because of the beauty of evil, as when Eve saw the fruit lovely to look at and was to be desired.

**22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.**

2:22. Behold. The word “Behold” is a strong word that demands attention be given to what is being said next.

2:22. I will cast her into a bed.

2:22. I will cast...them that commit adultery...into great tribulation.

2:22. except they repent. There is a way to escape divine tribulation or judgment and that way is by gospel repentance.

- *1 Corinthians 11:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

***Special Note.***

The harvest of judgment is sure, as soon as the seed of sin is sown. For those who might try to justify inappropriate activity, the words of Tertullian are appropriate. In the third century AD, Tertullian wrote against Christians who made idols by using the excuse, "We have to live." Writing in Latin, Tertullian asked, "Do you have to live?" The answer for the Christian is, "No, we do not have to live if it means compromising one's convictions and character." Nor should we live. Tertullian went on to say, "There are no musts where faith is concerned." Ultimate loyalty belongs to Christ.

23 **And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.**

2:23. And I will kill her children with death. And I will kill her children with pestilence.

2:23. I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts. I am he which searcheth the minds and hearts.

24 **But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.**

2:24. which have not known the depths of Satan. which have not known the doctrines of Satan.

25 **But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.**

26 **And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:**

2:26. and keepeth. and maintains.

***Special Note.***

The nations of the earth need righteous leaders in the highest echelons of government. One day the church shall have power over the nations, and over the angels of the universe, to judge both.

27 **AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON; AS THE VESSELS OF A POTTER SHALL THEY BE BROKEN TO SHIVERS:** even as I received of my Father.

2:27. BROKEN TO SHIVERS. BROKEN INTO SMALL PIECES.

- *Psalms 2:8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. 9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

***Special Note.***

The rise and fall of emperors and empires, the constant outbreak of plagues, the raging of nature, the universal guilt, shame or blame that is manifested when the commandments of God are broken testifies to the rule of God in the affairs of men. This is a moral universe. God does not wait until eternity to judge the nations, but rules them with a rod of iron as Nazi Germany, Communist Russia, and Islamic Iraq have discovered in more recent times.

**28 And I will give him the morning star.**

2:28. the morning star. This may be a reference to Venus, called the Morning Star, because it symbolized authority. The Roman Legions had Venus' symbol on their banners to signify their authority.

***Special Note.***

The world crowns success; God crowns faithfulness.

**29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**

2:29. let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. The heart of a Christian should rejoice that it does not understand the Book of Mormon, or Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures. Nor do Christians need to understand godless works. What is needed is to hear the voice of Jesus. Jesus said of Himself as the Good Shepherd that, "when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers" (John 10:4-5).

***Special Note.***

There is one final word about Jezebel. "Any doctrine, any philosophy that makes it easy to sin, whether by excusing it, minimizing its enormity, or denying its existence is of hell. Not only are those held guilty who teach the doctrine and practice the sin, but that church also, which is not clear and outspoken in its protests against sin is culpable. The church that suffers the woman is guilty. Let us, as believing Christians, remember that no compromise with Jezebel's doctrine is acceptable to our Lord" (G. Campbell Morgan).

## REVELATION 3

### The Message to Sardis Revelation 3:1-6

#### Revelation Chapter 3 Summary

In this chapter there are three more of the letters of love of Christ to the churches:

- Sardis                      Revelation 3:1-6
- Philadelphia            Revelation 3:7-13
- Laodicea                 Revelation 3:14-22

**1 And unto the angel of the Church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.**

3:1. the Church in Sardis. Sardis was the ancient capital of the kingdom of Lydia, which was known for its wealth. Sardis was located about 30 miles south of Thyatira. The city lay in an important river valley and was a focal point for both trade and military.

#### ***Special Note.***

The person and work of the Holy Spirit is vital to effective Christian living. Without the Spirit there is only spiritual death reflected physically in the vast cemetery seven miles from Sardis but able to be seen from the city.

3:1. the seven stars. In the first vision the interpretation of the seven stars was given as the seven angels of the seven churches.

- *Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.*

**2 Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.**

3:2. Be watchful. Historically, the city of Sardis was conquered twice through military carelessness. The first time was by Cyrus, the Persian king. The second conquest came in the days of Antiochus the Great.

3:2. that are ready to die. Many local congregations are ready to die. Some should die because they are filled with so many mean and selfish people. But ideally, those that are ready to die should pray and ask God for a religious renewal and a visitation from on high.

3:2. I have not found thy works perfect. I have not found thy works complete. Some people like to say they are sound, when in reality they are sound asleep.

3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

3:3. I will come on thee as a thief. The Lord will come suddenly and in judgment.

#### **Five Spiritual Categorical Imperatives**

- Revelation 3:2 Be watchful.
- Revelation 3:2 Strengthen or establish the things that remain.
- Revelation 3:3 Remember how the truth has been received.
- Revelation 3:3 Hold fast to the faith.
- Revelation 3:3 Repent of all that one should be ashamed of.

4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

3:4. they shall walk with me in white. White is a symbol of righteousness and purity. The believer receives his purity by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ which is the believer's through faith.

3:4. they shall walk with me. There are great Christian statements of faith that are most honored when the rhetoric and the reality of Christian behavior are united. There were a few Christians like this in Sardis.

#### **Important Church Creeds**

- Apostle's Creed
- Nicene Creed
- Athanasian Creed
- Augsburg Creed
- Heidelberg Catechism
- Westminster Confession
- Thirty-Nine Articles of the Anglican Church
- London Confession 1689

#### **Undeclared Garments**

- Pray with the heart drawing near to God.
- Sing spiritual songs unto the Lord.
- Give cheerfully.
- Meet to observe the ordinance.

- Long to hear God's word.
- Give attendance to the Word of the Lord.
- Be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only.
- Obey those who have the oversight of the church.
- Pray for those in authority.
- Win souls to the Savior.
- Exercise one's spiritual gift.
- Do not be hypocritical.
- Keep thyself pure.
- Judge not.

5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

3:5. I will not blot out his name. In the ancient world it was a common practice for city officials to erase the names of the dead from the records. Those who are dead or unregenerate shall be removed by the Lord even though they have a name that they live.

#### **A Threefold Promise**

- The Lord will clothe His own with a white raiment.
- The Lord will not blot out a Christian's name out of the book of life.
- The Lord will confess a Christian's name before His Father, and before his angels.

#### **The Book of Life in Scripture**

- Philippians 4:3
- Revelation 3:5
- Revelation 13:8
- Revelation 17:8
- Revelation 20:12
- Revelation 20:15
- Revelation 21:27
- Revelation 22:19

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

**The Message to Philadelphia  
Revelation 3:7-12**

7 And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, **HE THAT HATH THE KEY OF DAVID, HE THAT OPENETH, AND NO MAN SHUTTETH; AND SHUTTETH, AND NO MAN OPENETH.**

3:7. Philadelphia. Located 30 miles southeast of Sardis and 70 miles east of Smyrna, Philadelphia [lit. “*Brotherly love*”] was founded in 189 BC by Attalus Philadeiphus, for whom it was named. The city was located on a mountain pass that provided a trade route to the Anatolian hill country. Philadelphia was destroyed in AD 17 by a massive earthquake. Today, the ancient city has become the Turkish town of Alasehir.

3:7. THE KEY OF DAVID. In the Bible a key is a symbol of authority. Jesus is represented as having ultimate and final authority. The Lord claimed all authority for Himself in Matthew 28:19. By referring to the key of David, John was drawing upon an Old Testament incident. There was a king named Hezekiah who ruled over Judah from c. 715-687 BC. Hezekiah had a faithful servant called Eliakim who was responsible for his entire house. Eliakim alone would admit those he wanted into the presence of the king. The prophet Isaiah heard God say of Eliakim, “*I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David, he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.*” (Isaiah 22:22; Jeremiah 23:5). For John, Jesus was Eliakim. Jesus alone has the authority to allow entrance into the New Jerusalem, the city of David.

***Special Note.***

Though Christians might have little strength, Christ keeps an open door for service and fellowship. Believers can be faithful, not because they are strong but because Christ will not let the enemies of the faith prevail.

**A Threefold Description of Christ**

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| • He is holy.                   | This refers to the Lord’s intrinsic holiness.     |
| • He is true.                   | The Lord is genuine as opposed to being spurious. |
| • He is the One with authority. | He has the key.                                   |

***Special Note.***

In the Old Testament the terms holy and genuine are applied to Yahweh. Therefore, when Jesus uses these terms for Himself, He is clearly identifying Himself as God. The Jews understood this and so must we. The Doctrine of Trinitarianism is the doctrine which teaches that there is but one God who subsists in three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit. Christians are justified in speaking of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. It is another way of speaking of Jehovah the Father, Jehovah the Son, and Jehovah the Spirit. The more correct and scholarly way would be to speak of Yahweh the Father, Yahweh the Son, and Yahweh the Spirit.

8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

3:8. I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it. The text does not say the Lord can open a door, or He can shut a door. This is not about the Lord's ability, but what He does. He is the sovereign Lord who acts.

***Special Note.***

This is a kind of activity that has sometimes been claimed by men. There may be an oblique reference in these words to the ancient god Janus, the god of doors and hinges, who was sometimes called Petucius and Clucius, the opener and the shutter. Janus was the god whose picture appears with two faces, a face looking one way and a face attached to that same face turning the other way. One head and two faces. That would be very convenient in certain situations, but rather strange.

Janus is pictured holding a key as a sign that he had the power to open the doors of heaven, or open the shut gates of peace and war upon the earth. This power was assumed by the pope later on in the history of the development of Roman Catholicism, and the privy counselors of the pope became known as cardinals.

The term cardinal comes from *cardo* which means "a hinge." Cardinals are taught to believe they are the ones who share the right of turning the hinge, which determines such things as we have just mentioned. So, our Lord then is one who possesses authority. He is engaged in the activity of shutting and opening and He is the eternal God (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

3:8. for thou hast a little strength. The little strength refers to the number of people in the church. Though a small congregation, they have kept the Word of the Lord and did not deny His name.

“In the harvest field now ripened  
There's a work for all to do;  
Hark! The voice of God is calling  
To the harvest calling you.

Little is much when God is in it!  
Labor not for wealth or fame.  
There's a crown—and you can win it,  
If you go in Jesus' Name.

In the mad rush of the broad way,  
In the hurry and the strife,  
Tell of Jesus' love and mercy,  
Give to them the Word of Life.

Does the place you're called to labor  
 Seem too small and little known?  
 It is great if God is in it,  
 And He'll not forget His own."

Kittie L. Suffield, 1924

3:8. hast kept my word. The church kept the Word of God. They believed in the Bible. They lived by the Word of God. They did not abandon creationism, salvation by grace through faith alone, or the blood atonement.

**9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.**

3:9. the synagogue of Satan. This is the second time the Lord refers to the synagogue of Satan (Revelation 2:9).

3:9. which say they are Jews. This is the second time the Lord refers to those individuals "which say they are Jews". In bold language the Lord says they lie. The principle is established that what a person is becomes as important as what a person confesses.

***Special Note.***

In the moral law of God, lying is a great sin. It is consider to be one of the seven deadly sins.

- *Exodus 20:16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*
- *Proverbs 6:16 These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

3:9. I have loved thee. The love of God is selective. It is exclusive. It is particular.

**10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.**

3:10. I also will keep thee from hour of temptation. I will keep thee from hour of trial. The Greek word *ek*, means to “come out of”. God will keep the church from trial, not by escape but by endurance in the same way that the elect “came out of” the flood in Genesis 6. The children of Israel “came out of” Egypt, the Land of Bondage, the place of their trial. The Hebrews “came out of” the Babylonian Captivity after seventy years. When Jerusalem fell in AD 70, Christians “came out of” that great tribulation period. The church emerged triumphant.

- *2 Peter 2:9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:*

***Special Note.***

It is easy to be animated about the Christian life in moments of spiritual victory. More often than not faith demands patient endurance. The church will not be removed from periods of tribulation on earth because Christ has prayed that the saints not be removed.

- *John 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.*

**11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.**

3:11. Behold, I come quickly. It would make no sense to believe that the word of the Lord that He was coming “quickly” really meant He was telling John (Revelation 1:1), and the church in Philadelphia, and all the other churches, that He was coming – in 2,014 years! John, and the church in Philadelphia, knew the Lord’s coming in judgment was near. Mid-City Baptist Church in New Orleans, Louisiana was established by John Paul Driscoll. Brother Driscoll coined a popular phrase for the church which many people had inscribed on the covers of their Bibles.

“God said.  
I believe it.  
That settles it for me.”

But there is something even better.

“God said it.  
That settles it.

***Special Note.***

The idea that the passages in Revelation, which speak of near events, really speak of far events that have no relevance to the spiritual and practical needs of the people of God in the first century makes the writing and the message of Revelation superfluous. God is not so cruel.

The Revelation was designed so that individuals who lived when the Revelation was written might hear it being read, be blessed by its message, and be nourished by its teaching. Christians would also have a great obligation to keep the words of this prophecy. However, if the Revelation has no audience relevance to the people and events in the first century, then the promises given are but a cruel divine mockery of hope for “quickly” does not mean “quickly” and “soon” does not mean “soon.”

***Special Note.***

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson, a godly and brilliant leading proponent for Dispensational Premillennialism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, interpreted the words “Behold, I come quickly” to mean that when the end time events began to happen, the Rapture, seven year tribulation period, Second Advent, then those events would happen rather quickly. Personally, I find that a sad and unfortunate interpretation of the plain sense of the words of Scripture here, but I offer it as an alternative understanding.

**Time Passages in Revelation**

**People in**

**Ephesus \* Smyrna \* Pergamos \* Thyatira \* Sardis \* Philadelphia \* Laodicea**

**Listen to me....**

- |                    |                                    |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Revelation 1:1   | “things must shortly come to pass” |
| • Revelation 2:5   | “I will come unto thee quickly”    |
| • Revelation 2:16  | “I will come unto thee quickly”    |
| • Revelation 3:11  | “I come quickly”                   |
| • Revelation 11:14 | “the third woe cometh quickly”     |
| • Revelation 22:7  | “Behold, I come quickly”           |
| • Revelation 22:12 | “behold, I come quickly”           |
| • Revelation 22:20 | “Surely I come quickly”            |

**12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.***

3:12. I make a pillar. A pillar is a great and honored support. On the pillar rests the weight of the building. Peter, James and John are declared to be the pillars of the early Church. Galatians 2:9 “*And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.*”

3:12. The reference to a new name may be found in Numbers 6:22-27 where God told Moses the blessing which Aaron and the priests were to pronounce over the people. *"They shall put my name upon the people of Israel"*. To have the name of God is to have it be known that one is the personal possession of deity. According to Ezekiel the name of the re-created city of God is, "THE LORD IS THERE" (Ezekiel 48:35). What the new name of Christ is no one knows at this time according to Revelation 19:12. The Church knows other names for Christ.

13 **He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**

**The Message to Laodicea  
Revelation 3:14-22**

14 **And unto the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;**

3:14. Laodiceans. The city was named for Laodice, the wife of Antiochus II (261 BC – 247 BC), who founded the city. This is the first church written to by John that does not have a commendation. Located 50 miles southeast of Philadelphia, Laodicea was in the Lycus River valley near Colossae and Hierapolis (Colossians 4:13-16). Despite being famous for its great wealth the city had to bring water by way of an aqueduct. By the time it arrived the water was lukewarm and produced nausea.

**Four Names for Christ**

- Jesus is the Amen.
- Jesus is the Faithful Witness. The Lord is the genuine witness.
- Jesus is the True Witness.
- Jesus is the Beginning of the Creation of God.

***Special Note.***

The title Amen was used by the prophet Isaiah. What the Lord is saying is that He will affirm the truth of Revelation. He is the One who will guarantee the truth of the message for He has given it.

- *Isaiah 65:16 That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth (amen); because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.*

3:14. the beginning of the creation of God. the source of the creation of God. Jesus Christ is the prime source of all of God's creation. He is the agent of the Father in the creation.

- *John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*
- *Colossians 1:16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

***Special Note.***

The Arians did not believe that Christ was eternally God. They did not accept the eternal generation of the Son or that He was a divine being. Like the Jehovah Witnesses of today, the Arians appealed to Revelation 3:14 to advance their view. However, men like Athanasius of Alexander (AD 296-373), and others, have pointed out that if Christ was the creator of all things, as the Scriptures say, then He himself was not a created being.

**15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.**

3:15. I know thy works. The Lord provides an evaluation of the church. The sin of the believers in the Church of the Laodiceans was that of luke-warmness. The people were neither spiritually hot nor cold.

**16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.**

3:16. thou art lukewarm. thou art worthless. The Laodiceans were spiritual chameleons.

***Special Note.***

Indifferent people do not change society. Indifferent people do not change anyone. Only people of passion are useful in the Kingdom of Heaven.

***Special Note.***

Interesting enough, Laodicea did not have its own water supply. It was dependent upon Colossae. When people are dependent upon others, they tend to be willing to compromise. There is a modern day analogy in Finland. A word has been coined to speak of those nations on the borders of Soviet Russia which are dependent upon the Bear of the north. That word is "Findlandization", and speaks of compromising, dependent.

3:16. I will spue thee out of my mouth. I will vomit thee out of my mouth.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

3:17. I am rich. So rich were the Laodiceans that when an earthquake destroyed the city in AD 60, the city refused financial aid from Rome for rebuilding.

#### **A Faulty Syllogism**

A syllogism is a logical argument that applies deductive reasoning to arrive at a conclusion based on two or more propositions that are asserted or assumed to be true. In a faulty syllogism the conclusion will be wrong if the major premise is proven to be false.

- Major Premise: I am rich.
- Minor Premise: I am increased with goods.
- Conclusion: I have need of nothing.

The church in Laodicea was wrong to believe it was rich in the sight of God. It was not.

#### **Five Unknown Facts**

- The Laodiceans did not know they were wretched.
- The Laodiceans did not know they were miserable.
- The Laodiceans did not know they were poor.
- The Laodiceans did not know they were blind.
- The Laodiceans did not know they were naked.

#### ***Special Note.***

Spiritual destruction is characterized by self-justification of evil, self-delusion and self-absorption.

3:17. knowest not. It is possible to be spiritually self-deceived. The Pharisees thought they were better than others. Many modern day religious leaders might be tempted by their wealth, buildings, and various ministries to have a good opinion of themselves. But the real question is, “What is heaven’s opinion of this church?” What some “sayest” might be linked to, “thou knowest not.”

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see.

3:18. I counsel thee to buy of me. It is only from Christ we are able to buy what we need in spiritual matters.

### **Buy from Me**

- |                                       |      |                                |
|---------------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|
| • Buy from Me gold tried in the fire. | Why? | “That thou mayest be rich.”    |
| • Buy from Me white raiment.          | Why? | “That thou mayest be clothed.” |
| • Buy from Me eye salve.              | Why? | “That thou mayest see.”        |

3:18. gold tried in the fire. From 1 Peter 1:7 we learn that gold tried in the fire has reference to the sphere of faith being tested by suffering. Through much tribulation the saints will be tested.

3:18. that thou mayest be clothed. The Laodiceans were very proud of the white robes they wore in public. The clothing from Laodicea was famous all over the known world. The Lord draws from this a spiritual lesson. The spiritual robe of righteousness is more important than the luxury articles being worn. It was a shame to Christ for the Church to be without spiritual garments despite their display of wealth. Christ would have His people clothed in righteousness.

The world watches and wonders at professing Christians caught in spiritual nakedness. God's threat to His people by the prophet Nahum was this: *"I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame"* (Nahum 3:5). God will let the world look upon the nakedness of the Church unless there is a clothing of righteousness put on.

3:18. eye salve. An eye salve is simply a solution to help the eyes stop burning or watering or itching. But the eye salve of old hurt when applied which meant that the people were hesitant to use it. Spiritually, the Laodiceans were hesitant to use the eye salve. It hurt too much. They did not want to see themselves as they really were.

Nevertheless Jesus said, *"I want you to see. I want you to anoint thine eyes with eye salve."* Spiritually, this means to apply the Word of God for it alone helps believers to see themselves not only as they are but also as they might be. Christians should look into the perfect law of liberty (James 1:25).

**19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.**

3:19. As many as I love. As many as I have affection for.



Warner Sallman  
April 30, 1892 – May 25, 1968

**20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.**

3:20. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. This verse is often used as an evangelist appeal for initial salvation. However, in context, the text is given to the church of Laodicea.

3:20. and will sup with him. The most important meal of the day was the supper meal. It was the dinner meal. This is the term used of the Lord's Supper. This is an invitation for personal fellowship with the Living Lord.

**21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.**

3:21. sit with me in my throne. It is easier to understand this verse when it is realized that the eastern throne was more like a couch than a chair. To sit with Christ is to share His victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. *"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."*

**22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.**

4:22. hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. We must also hear what the Spirit says about the churches.

*Special Note.*

One of the most dishonoring and disrespectful teachings in Christendom is advocated by those who believe the church is doomed for failure as an apostate organization. In contrast to that position, consider the intrinsic glory of the church.

**Doctrine of the Glory of the Church**

1. The glory of the Church is revealed in her Divine election.
  - *Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*
2. The glory of the church is revealed by the great price which was paid to redeem her from the penalty, power, and pollution of sin.
  - *Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;*
3. The glory of the Church is seen in the adoption of those who believe as children of God.
  - *Romans 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*
4. The glory of the Church is displayed in the glorious inheritance that awaits her. To the Church has been given the Kingdom of God, eternal life, and the promise of a new heaven and a new earth.
  - The Kingdom of God. *Luke 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom (Mark 10:30; Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:15)*
  - Eternal Life. *John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*
  - A New Heaven and a New Earth. *2 Peter 3:13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (Study Revelation 21:1)*
5. The glory of the Church is manifested in the purpose and place she has in the plan of God.

- *Ephesians 1:14 That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus,*
  - *Ephesians 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.*
6. The Church is no parenthetical afterthought in the mind of God. The Church occupies the pivotal place in the heart of God.
7. The glory of the church is reflected in the majesty of her Master, the Lord Jesus Christ who is King of kings and Lord of lords.
- *Colossians 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. 19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;*
  - *Ephesians 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.*
8. The glory of the Church may be seen in the fact that she is indwelt by God the Holy Spirit.
- *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, and shall be in you.*
9. The glory of the Church may be seen in her own intrinsic holiness.
- *Ephesians 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*
  - *Ephesians 5:26 That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That He might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.*
10. The glory of the Church may be seen in her nearness to the presence of God, for the Church has the ear of heaven.
- *Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*
  - *Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*
  - *Ephesians 3:12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*

- *Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

11. The glory of the Church may be seen in the fact that to her was entrusted the gospel.

12. God has not entrusted the gospel to business, nor to the government, or even to religious auxiliary organizations, or specialized ministries however good all of these things may be. The gospel is given to the Church. Only the Church has a right to say that God having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure “*which He hath purposed in Himself*” (Ephesians 1:9; 3:2-5).

‘I love thy Church, O God!  
Her walls before thee stand,  
Dear as the apple of thine eye,  
And graven on thy hand.

For her my tears shall fall,  
For her my prayers shall ascend,  
To her my cares and toils be given,  
Till toils and cares shall end.”

## REVELATION 4

## Lord of the Earth Chapters 4-20

### The Vision Unfolds from the Throne of God A Doorway to Heaven's Delight Revelation 4:1

#### Revelation Chapter 4 Summary

In this chapter the prophetic scene opens. As the initial part opened with a vision of Christ (Revelation 1), so this part is introduced with a glorious appearance of the great God, whose throne is in heaven, compassed about with the heavenly host. In this chapter John first records the heavenly sight he saw (Revelation 4:1-7), and then the heavenly songs he heard (Revelation 4:8-11).

#### *Special Note.*

There are four great movements in the Revelation and each one begins with a vision.

First Vision	John on the isle of Patmos	Revelation 1:10-3:25	A vision of the Lord and how He viewed the church.
Second Vision	John in the spirit in heaven	Revelation 4:1-17:2	A vision of the Lord's execution of judgment upon the cosmos, the world.
Third Vision	John in the spirit in heaven	Revelation 17:3-21:9	A vision of the overthrow of Babylon, the city of man.
Fourth Vision	John in the spirit	Revelation 21:10-22:21	A new city, a new heaven and a new earth.

#### *Special Note.*

While secular religions and false religions teach a cyclical view of history and civilizations, the Biblical view is that civilization moves from the original creation of Genesis to the new creation of Revelation 22. History and civilization is not cyclical but linear. The world, created for God's pleasure and glory, is moving towards a pre-determined end. The center of the narrative is the drama of the person of Jesus Christ and the salvation of souls.

“Whereof the man, that with me trod

This planet, was a noble type  
 Appearing ere the times were ripe,  
 That friend of mine who lives in God,

That God, which ever lives and loves,  
 One God, one law, one element,  
 And one far-off divine event,  
 To which the whole creation moves.”

In Memoriam  
 Alfred, Lord Tennyson

### **The First Voice The Voice of a Trumpet**

1 Behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, **Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.**

4:1. Come up hither. Here is a divine summons. This expression is used again in Revelation 11:12 in reference to the resurrection of the two witnesses.

#### ***Special Note.***

#### **The Church is Found Throughout the Revelation**

While John was not physically or literally lifted up from earth to heaven, he was given a fantastic vision of things to come. Being in the midst of tribulation himself and suffering for his love for and loyalty to the Saviour, John becomes a fitting example of how believers in every age can endure great tribulation. Throughout the vision, the people of God are constantly in view. Though the specific term “church” is not found until Revelation 22:16 the believers are represented by other biblical terms.

- |  |                   |  |
|--|-------------------|--|
| • “ <i>saints</i> ”                          | Revelation 14:12  | Romans 1:7                             |
| • “ <i>fellow servants</i> ”                 | Revelation 6:11   | Colossians 4:11                        |
| • “ <i>people washed in the blood</i> ”      | Revelation 17:14  | 1 Corinthians 6:11                     |
| • “ <i>called, chosen by God, faithful</i> ” | Revelation 17:14  | Ephesians 1:4;<br>2 Thessalonians 2:13 |
| • “ <i>His servants</i> ”                    | Revelation 19:2,5 | Ephesians 6:6                          |
| • “ <i>the dead who died in the Lord</i> ”   | Revelation 14:13  | 1 Thessalonians 4:14                   |

The whole purpose of the Revelation is to give courage to God’s people in the midst of great tribulation.

- *John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

**The Sovereign Creator who is Worthy of Worship**  
**Revelation 4:2-8**

2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one *sat* on the throne.

4:2. I was in the spirit. John had a mystical and spiritual experience on the isle of Patmos. His soul soared into the heavenlies but his body remained on earth.

***Special Note.***

It is instructive to observe that nowhere in the Revelation does the body of John leave earth though His spirit is transported into the heavenlies. Nor is John ever said to be a picture of the Church removed from the sphere of tribulation. John is a brother and companion in tribulation, not someone who is removed from it.

- *Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

4:2. a throne was set in heaven. It is possible that the throne which John saw was a temporary throne, a tribunal or judicial throne set for governmental purposes. The eternal throne of God is not set but is settled.

- *Psalm 45:6 Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.*

***Special Note.***

In England, there are two well-known thrones. Queen Elizabeth (b. April 21, 1926; Queen since February 6, 1952) has a throne in Buckingham Palace. She also has a throne in the House of Lords in Parliament. These two thrones are thrones of royalty. One throne establishes and symbolizes the Queen's right to sit upon the throne of England, while the other throne indicates she can be appealed to in order to sit in judgment upon a government, if her presence were required. There are seven other thrones as well.

3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

4:3. And he that sat was to look. John describes the majesty of God in gem like colors which would be fitting because He is light.

- *1 Timothy 6:16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*

4:3. jasper. quartz. This gem might suggest God's purity, and His great value.

4:3. sardine stone. sardius stone. The sardius stone is red in color. This gem might suggest His wrath.

4:3. and *there was* a rainbow...like unto an emerald. It is possible the emerald would speak of mercy. The reference to the rainbow would remind a person familiar with the Old Testament of two things. First, the rainbow would remind a reader or listener of the covenant God made with Noah after the flood (Genesis 9:11-17). In biblical terms a covenant is a gracious under-taking entered into by God for the benefit and blessing of men, in particular men of faith who had received the promises of God and committed themselves to the obligations which the undertaking involves. Genesis 9 records the covenant God made with Noah. The sign that God used to confirm this covenant was the rainbow in the sky.

***Special Note.***

Every rainbow today is a reminder of the faithfulness of God in keeping His word. When John saw the rainbow around the throne of God he was reminded of the God who keeps His word. John might also have been reminded of Ezekiel's vision as well, for that great prophet also saw the glory of God and a rainbow around His throne (Ezekiel 1:28).

**The Throne of God  
Revelation 4:2-3, 5-6**

**Twenty-four Elders and four Beasts  
Revelation 4:4-8**

4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

4:4. I saw four and twenty elders. While the identity of the twenty-four elders remains uncertain, it is possible they may be a symbolic representation of the church in all the ages in that there were twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles. The unity of the patriarchs and apostles is found again in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:12, 14). They wear white robes, which are promised to all who are faithful (Revelation 3:4). They wear crowns that are promised to all that are loyal unto death (Revelation 2:10). And they sit on thrones that Christ promised to all who love and follow Him (Matthew 19:27-29).

***Special Note.***

The book of Revelation does not specifically identify the twenty-four elders which has led some Bible teachers to suggest that the twenty-four elders are angels. However, it is unlikely the

twenty-four elders are angelic beings because they sit on thrones and reign with Christ. Only the Church, consisting of the saints of all the ages, is said to rule and reign with Christ.

- *Revelation 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*
- *Revelation 2:26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.*
- *Revelation 5:10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*
- *Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*
- *Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*
- *Luke 22:30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

[www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

“In addition, the Greek word translated here as “elders” is never used to refer to angels, only to men, particularly to men of a certain age who are mature and able to rule the Church. The word elder would be inappropriate to refer to angels, who do not age. Their mode of dress would also indicate these are men. While angels do appear in white, white garments are more commonly found on believers, symbolizing Christ’s righteousness imputed to us at salvation.

- *Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*
- *Revelation 3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see.*

- *Revelation 19:8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

The golden crowns worn by the elders also indicate these are men, not angels. Crowns are never promised to angels, nor are angels ever seen wearing them. The word translated “crown” here refers to the victor’s crown, worn by those who have successfully competed and won the victory, as Christ promised.

- *Revelation 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*
- *2 Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*
- *James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

4:5. lightnings and thunderings. The lightning and thunder and voices that emanated from the throne impressed John. Once again the mind turns to the Old Testament. Ezekiel saw lightening come out of the fiery veil around the throne (Ezekiel 1:13). The psalmist writes of the voice of the thunder of God being heard in heaven (Psalm 77:18). Job observed that God sends His lightening to the ends of the earth (Job 37:4). However, the most familiar scene is the description of Mt. Zion. When the Law was given the Bible says, "that there were thunders and lightning, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled" (Exodus 19:16).

4:5. seven lamps burning. Scripture will often interpret or explain itself. Here, the seven lamps which John sees are said to be “the seven Spirits of God.”

***Special Note.***

The seven Spirits of God are mentioned four times in Revelation.

- Revelation 1:4
- Revelation 3:1
- Revelation 4:5
- Revelation 5:6

In the book of Isaiah the seven Spirits of God are named.

**Isaiah 11:2**

**New American Standard**

- The Spirit of the Lord
- The spirit of wisdom
- The spirit of understanding
- The spirit of counsel
- The spirit of strength
- The spirit of knowledge
- The spirit of the fear of the Lord

***Special Note.***

The seven Spirits represent the sevenfold ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Messiah, the Lamb of God that was slain for the sins of the world.

- *Revelation 5:6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*

6 And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

4:6. a sea of glass. This sea of glass is mentioned three times in Revelation.

- Revelation 4:6 The sea of glass was like unto crystal.
- Revelation 15:2 The sea of glass was mingled with fire.
- Revelation 15:2 Many saints stood on the sea of glass holding the harps of God.

In Revelation 22:1-2 the sea of glass is identified as the pure river of water of life which has its origin from the throne of God and the Lamb.

- *Revelation 22:1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

4:6. four beasts. four living creatures.

7 And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle.

**The Four Beasts of Revelation  
Each having Six Wings and Full of Eyes**

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| • First Beast was like a lion            | Revelation 4:7 |
| • Second Beast was like a calf           | Revelation 4:7 |
| • Third Beast was like the face of a man | Revelation 4:7 |
| • Fourth Beast was like a flying eagle   | Revelation 4:7 |

### **The Message of the Living Creatures**

“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty,  
which was, and is, and is to come.”

8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, **Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.**

4:8. And the four beasts. And the four living creatures. The early church fathers found much symbolism in the four living creatures as they associated them with the four gospels. Augustine's identification became the most commonly accepted. The lion was viewed as representing the gospel of Matthew because in it Jesus is demonstrated to be the Lion of Judah, the One in whom all the expectations of the prophets came true. The man best represents the gospel of Mark because it is the nearest approach to a factual report of the human life of Jesus. The ox best represents the gospel of Luke because it presents Jesus as the sacrifice for all classes and conditions of men and women everywhere. The eagle best represents John. Of all birds the eagle flies the highest and is said to be the only living creatures that can stare straight into the sun. In the gospel of John the highest height of thought is reached (William Barclay, *Revelation*).

#### ***Special Note.***

The heart of every Christian should seek to soar to be with Christ.

#### ***Special Note.***

Much can be learned from the four beasts for they teach the Church the importance of being near the throne and the Lamb. The four beasts or living creatures, are always found near the throne (Revelation 4:6; 5:6; 14:4).

4:8. Holy, holy, holy.

- *Isaiah 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.*

“There is singing up in Heaven such as we have never known,  
Where the angels sing the praises of the Lamb upon the throne,  
Their sweet harps are ever tuneful, and their voices always clear,  
O that we might be more like them while we serve the Master here!

Holy, holy, is what the angels sing,

And I expect to help them make the courts of heaven ring;  
But when I sing redemption's story, they will fold their wings,  
For angels never felt the joys that our salvation brings.

But I hear another anthem, blending voices clear and strong,  
"Unto Him Who hath redeemed us and hath bought us," is the song;  
We have come through tribulation to this land so fair and bright,  
In the fountain freely flowing He hath made our garments white.

Then the angels stand and listen, for they cannot join the song,  
Like the sound of many waters, by that happy, blood washed throng,  
For they sing about great trials, battles fought and vict'ries won,  
And they praise their great Redeemer, who hath said to them, "Well done."

So, although I'm not an angel, yet I know that over there  
I will join a blessed chorus that the angels cannot share;  
I will sing about my Savior, who upon dark Calvary  
Freely pardoned my transgressions, died to set a sinner free."

Johnson Oatman, Jr. 1894

9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

4:9. those beasts. those living creatures.

4:9. give. Jesus taught that it is more blessed to give than to receive. It is a privilege to be able to give God gifts.

### **Three Gifts to God**

- Give God glory. To give God glory is to esteem Him for who and what He is. Glory in the Old Testament is associated with value, riches, splendor, and dignity. In the New Testament the glory of God is revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:14-18; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Hebrews 1:1-3). God is most glorified in His holiness. He is also glorified in His acts of salvation because they reveal His condescension, His love, and His power. The heart cries out in the wonder of it all to say, "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9).

- Give God honour. To give God honour is to recognize and appreciate the value He paid to redeem sinners. The most valuable item in the universe is the blood of Jesus Christ. God is most glorified when the redemptive price of Christ's blood is honoured by its application to the heart and the sinner says, "Thank you."

“Thank you Lord, for saving my soul,  
 Thank you Lord, for making me whole.  
 Thank you Lord, for giving to me,  
 Thy great salvation, so rich and free.”

- Give God thanks. The Greek word for “thanks” is “eucharistia” and means literally, “good grace.” Grace refers to something being bestowed on the unworthy. The Bible says that “*while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” (Romans 5:8).

“Down at the cross where my Savior died,  
 Down where for cleansing from sin I cried,  
 There to my heart was the blood applied;  
 Glory to His Name!

I am so wondrously saved from sin,  
 Jesus so sweetly abides within;  
 There at the cross where He took me in;  
 Glory to His Name!

Oh, precious fountain that saves from sin,  
 I am so glad I have entered in;  
 There Jesus saves me and keeps me clean;  
 Glory to His Name!

Come to this fountain so rich and sweet,  
 Cast thy poor soul at the Savior’s feet;  
 Plunge in today, and be made complete;  
 Glory to His Name!”

4:9. who liveth for ever and ever. The eternity of God is praised.

10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

4:10. and cast their crowns before the throne. A show of submission, humility, and the recognition of the authority of another person.

11 **Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.**

4:11. Thou art worthy.

*Special Note.*

**The Doxologies of Revelation**

- *Revelation 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*
- *Revelation 5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;*
- *Revelation 5:11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*
- *Revelation 5:13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*
- *Revelation 7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*
- *Revelation 7:11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, 12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*
- *Revelation 19:1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: 2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.*

### **Three Important Questions**

Question. What is the Lord worthy to receive?

Answer. The Lord is worthy to receive glory and honour and power.

Question. Why is the Lord worthy to receive glory and honour and power?

Answer. The Lord is worthy to receive glory and honour and power because He has created all things.

Question. Why has the Lord created all things?

Answer. The Lord has created all things for His own pleasure.

4:11. for thy pleasure they are and were created. for thy pleasure they were created.

4:10-11. The four and twenty elders. These twenty-four elders appear often in the Revelation.



### **Revelation Chapter 5 Summary**

In the previous chapter the prophetic scene was opened in the sight and hearing of the apostle. John had a sight of God as the Creator and ruler of the world and the great King of the church. He saw God on the throne of glory and government, surrounded with His holy ones and receiving their adorations. Now the counsels and decrees of God are set before the apostle as in a book, which God held in His right hand. This book is represented as sealed in the hand of God (Revelation 5:1-9), but taken into the hand of Christ the Redeemer to be unsealed and opened (Revelation 5:6-14).

1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

5:1. in the right hand. The right hand was considered to be the hand of power and authority. Whatever the scroll contained was safe and secure in the hand of the Sovereign.

5:1. him that sat on the throne. The person sitting on the throne is God the Father.

5:1. a book written within and on the backside. There is a lot of information on this scroll reflected by writing on both sides of the document.

5:1. sealed with seven seals. This is a reference to a will. Under Roman law the will of a person was sealed with seven seals observed by seven witnesses.

#### **The Seven Seals of Revelation Revelation 6:1-17; 8:1-5**

• First Seal	The rider on a white horse	Conquest	Revelation 6:1-2
• Second Seal	The rider on a red horse	War	Revelation 6:3-4
• Third Seal	The rider on a black horse	Famine	Revelation 6:5-6
• Fourth Seal	The rider on a pale (green) horse	Death, Hell	Revelation 6:7-8
• Fifth Seal	Souls under the altar	Martyrs	Revelation 6:9-11
• Sixth Seal	Earthquake, darkness, blood	Upheaval	Revelation 6:12-17
• Seventh Seal	Presentation of the seven trumpets		Revelation 8:1-5

#### **The Search for One Worthy Revelation 5:2-5**

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

5:2. And I saw a strong angel. What John meant by a “strong angel” is unclear. Perhaps he was referring to an archangel. This strong angel possessed a “loud voice” which attracted John’s attention.

5:2. Who is worthy. The question is more rhetorical in nature than a search for an answer, for the reality is that neither angels, nor man nor animal, nor any created thing is worthy to open the scroll, or even to look upon it. The secret things belong to the Lord.

3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

5:3. in heaven...in earth...under the earth. Throughout the New Testament, including the Revelation, the Doctrine of Soul Sleep is never taught. Those in the intermediate state between life and the resurrection are in a conscious state of existence.

### **Three Spheres of Existence**

- Heaven
- Earth
- Grave

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5:4. And I wept much. Despair is a terrible burden to bear.

“Days are filled with sorrow and care,  
Hearts are lonely and drear;  
Burdens are lifted at Calvary,  
Jesus is very near.

Burdens are lifted at Calvary,  
Calvary, Calvary;  
Burdens are lifted at Calvary,  
Jesus is very near.

Cast your care on Jesus today,  
Leave your worry and fear;  
Burdens are lifted at Calvary,  
Jesus is very near.

Troubled soul, the Saviour can see  
 Ev'ry heartache and tear;  
 Burdens are lifted at Calvary,  
 Jesus is very near."

5:5. No man was found worthy. John weeps over the universal inability to open the content of the scroll, or will, and execute the content of it.

***Special Note.***

What God is saying through John is that it is impossible for any human to be the heir of God in their natural state. A person must be born again and placed in the kingdom of God. The reason is simple. Individuals are sinners. We need someone to work on our behalf.

"He paid a debt He did not owe,  
 I owe a debt I could not pay,  
 I needed someone to wash my sins away.

And now I sing a brand new song,  
 Amazing grace all day long,  
 Christ Jesus paid a debt that I could never pay."

**Worthy is the Lamb**

**Revelation 5:6-7**

5 And one of the elders saith unto me, **Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.**

5:5. the Lion of the tribe of Juda. Jesus Christ is the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

- *Genesis 49:9 Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? 10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*

5:5. the Root of David. Jesus Christ is the Root of David and He has prevailed.

- *2 Samuel 7:16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*
- *Isaiah 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:*

- *Isaiah 11:10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.*

"Jesus' tremendous name  
Puts all our foes to flight:  
Jesus, the meek, the angry Lamb,  
A Lion is in fight.

By all hell's host withstood;  
We all hell's host o'erthrow;  
And conquering them, through Jesus blood  
We still to conquer go."

Charles H. Spurgeon

6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

6:6. And I beheld. John looked for a lion, and saw a Lamb. A lamb is associated with meekness, but not weakness. Twenty eight times in Revelation Jesus is referred to as a lamb. In addition to the majesty of the lion, the Scriptures add the image of a lamb, meek and gentle.

"Jesus, meek and gentle,  
Son of God most high,  
Gracious, loving Savior,  
Hear Thy children's cry.

Pardon our offenses,  
Loose our captive chains,  
Break down every idol  
Which our soul detains.

Give us holy freedom,  
Fill our hearts with love;  
Draw us, holy Jesus,  
To the realms above.

Lead us on our journey,  
Be Thyself the way  
Through our earthly darkness  
To the heavenly day.

Jesus, meek and gentle,  
 Son of God most high,  
 Gracious, loving Savior,  
 Hear Thy children's cry.  
 Hear Thy children's cry."

George R. Prynne, 1856

5:6. a Lamb as it had been slain. The word for "slain" refers to a sacrificial offering. The One worthy to open the book is the One who has been slaughtered.

- *Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*
- *Matthew 26:26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*

6:6. And I beheld...a Lamb. The Lamb is a symbol for Jesus, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). However, this Lamb is different from all other lambs for it has seven horns and seven eyes. These seven horns and seven eyes are symbolic, for John says they are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

- The seven Spirits are before the throne of God. *Revelation 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;*
- The seven Spirits are upon the Son of God. *Revelation 3:1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.*
- The seven Spirits are the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne. *Revelation 4:5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*
- The seven Spirits are the seven horns and seven eyes on the Lamb. *Revelation 5:6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*

**Special Note.**

A horn, in the Bible, stands for power and strength. Here, John sees the Lamb with seven horns which speaks of perfect and complete strength (Daniel 5). It is an expression of divine sovereignty.

Eyes in the Bible speak of wisdom, knowledge, and presence. The Lamb has seven eyes which speak of His perfections in wisdom, knowledge, and presence.

- *Psalms 34:15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.*
- *Proverbs 5:21 For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings.*

The Lamb is of the Root of David. He has accomplished the sacrifice having been slain. But the Lamb is also in possession of the attributes of deity.

- *Psalms 34:3 O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.*

5:6. stood a Lamb. A slain lamb does not stand, but lies in death. But here, the Lamb is standing and this speaks of the resurrection.

- *Revelation 1:18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

5:7. And he came. From Lion, to Lamb, to a Man, Jesus is made manifest. A simple act and the deed was done. The Lamb has come and He has taken the scroll and suddenly there is great excitement.

### **The Rejoicing of the Saints Revelation 5:8-14**

8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

5:8. odours. incense.

5:8. golden vials full of odours. golden bowls full of incense. Allowing Scripture to interpret itself, the golden bowls full of incense are symbolic of “the prayers of the saints.”

5:8. the prayers of the saints.

*Special Note.*

“God looks not at the elegancy of your prayers, to see how neat they are; nor yet at the geometry of your prayers, to see how long they are; not yet at the arithmetic of your prayers, to see how many they are; nor yet at the music, nor yet the sweetness, nor yet at the logic of our prayers; but at the sincerity of your prayers, how hearty they are” (Thomas Brooks, Works, II, p. 256).

“It is not the arithmetic of our prayers, how many they are; nor the rhetoric of our prayers, how eloquent they are; nor the geometry of our prayers, how long they be; nor the music of our prayers, how sweet the voice may be; nor the logic of our prayers, how argumentative they may be; nor the method of our prayers, how orderly they may be—which God cares for. Fervency of spirit [and fullness of faith are those] which availeth much” (Adapted from William Law).

“Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!  
 That calls me from a world of care,  
 And bids me at my Father’s throne  
 Make all my wants and wishes known.  
 In seasons of distress and grief,  
 My soul has often found relief  
 And oft escaped the tempter’s snare  
 By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!  
 The joys I feel, the bliss I share,  
 Of those whose anxious spirits burn  
 With strong desires for thy return!  
 With such I hasten to the place  
 Where God my Savior shows His face,  
 And gladly take my station there,  
 And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!  
 Thy wings shall my petition bear  
 To Him whose truth and faithfulness  
 Engage the waiting soul to bless.  
 And since He bids me seek His face,  
 Believe His Word and trust His grace,  
 I’ll cast on Him my every care,  
 And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!  
 May I thy consolation share,  
 Till, from Mount Pisgah’s lofty height,  
 I view my home and take my flight:  
 This robe of flesh I’ll drop and rise  
 To seize the everlasting prize;

And shout, while passing through the air,  
 “Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer!”

William Walford, 1845  
 A blind preacher in  
 Coleshill, Warwickshire, England

***Special Note.***

The Bible does not say that the twenty-four elders presented the prayers of the saints to God in an official capacity, for there is only one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5). The prayers of others, while recognized, need no assistance. The ear of God is open to catch the faintest whisper of any call for help. *Jeremiah 33:3 Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*

9 And they sung a new song, saying, **Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;**

5:8. And they sung a new song. And they sang a new song. Heaven is the homeland of music.

**Three Outbursts of Praise**

- |                      |                                  |                        |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Revelation 5:8-10  | The Song of the Elders           | Praise for the past    |
| • Revelation 5:11-12 | The Shout of the Angelic Hosts   | Praise for the present |
| • Revelation 5:13-14 | The Saying of the Whole Creation | Praise for the future  |

**Christ the Redeemer**

“For those burdened with sin, Christ provides deliverance as the sin-bearing Lamb. For the perplexed, Christ proves to be an omniscient guide. For the hungry, Christ gives heavenly manna. For the lonely, Christ is a loving companion. For the lost, Christ shows the way home to heaven. For the guilty, Christ can provide a cleansed conscience. For those without comfort, Christ offers communion with God Himself (Suggested by S. Lewis Johnson).

5:9. And they sung a new song. Only on earth do individuals shout, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” In heaven the songs about Christ are far different.

“Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon His throne.  
 Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own.  
 Awake, my soul, and sing of Him who died for thee,  
 And hail Him as thy matchless King through all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of years, the Potentate of time,

Creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime.  
 All hail, Redeemer, hail! For Thou has died for me;  
 Thy praise and glory shall not fail throughout eternity.”

Matthew Bridges, 1852

5:9. and hast redeemed us. The reference to the redeemed is not universal and indiscriminate but particular and limited, referring to the world of the elect.

*Special Note.*

The death of Christ was a penal death. He bore sin in his own body, the penalty of sinners transgressing the Law of God.

The death of Christ was a substitutionary death. He took the place of sinners.

The death of Christ was a redeeming death. He purchased souls by His blood.

The death of Christ was a satisfactory death. He propitiated the wrath of God.

“Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it!  
 Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;  
 Redeemed through His infinite mercy,  
 His child and forever I am.

Redeemed, redeemed,  
 Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;  
 Redeemed, redeemed,  
 His child and forever I am.

Redeemed, and so happy in Jesus,  
 No language my rapture can tell;  
 I know that the light of His presence  
 With me doth continually dwell.

I think of my blessèd Redeemer,  
 I think of Him all the day long:  
 I sing, for I cannot be silent;  
 His love is the theme of my song.

I know there's a crown that is waiting,  
 In yonder bright mansion for me,  
 And soon, with the spirits made perfect,  
 At home with the Lord I shall be.”

Fanny Crosby, 1882

5:9. hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. The Scriptures do not teach that Christ died to make every individual savable. Rather, Christ came to “seek and to save” those that are lost. The death of Christ secured the definite and particular salvation of the elect, not the salvation of everyone without exception. Christ has redeemed “us”, the elect of God, from every nation. From the sea of humanity the Lord is pleased to redeem some according to His own sovereign grace. *“If you want to know if you are among the elect of God, there is a simple way to find out. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved”* (Acts 16:31).

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

5:10. And hast made us. And hast made them.

5:10. and we shall reign. And they shall reign. The Church does reign now on earth by rendering judgments upon the world, the flesh, and the devil. The Church shall yet reign on the earth in a more visible manner following the Second Advent of Christ. One day the Church shall judge the angels (1 Corinthians 6:3). One day the meek shall inherit the earth (Matthew Psalm 37:11). One day the Church shall occupy the redeemed and renovated new earth (2 Peter 3:13).

***Special Note.***

This song says something wonderful concerning the death of Christ.

First, the death of Christ was a sacrificial death. Jesus was slain as a substitute for all who shall ever be saved. He literally took the place of you and me and all who shall be saved. Jesus was a perfect substitute for He was without sin.

Second, the death of Christ was a liberating death. Jesus came to deliver us from the power of sin, the domain of Satan, and the curse of the Law.

Third, the death of Christ was a definite redemption. One of the great theological questions of all times that has been endlessly debated is the question, *“For whom did Christ die?”* The biblical answer is that Jesus Christ accomplished something definite at the Cross of Calvary. He redeemed us. Jesus did not provide a potential redemption. He actually redeemed “us”, those who are the heirs of salvation (1 Pet. 1:19). The purchasing price was His own precious blood. Jesus has made us kings and priests. This is a spiritual reality. And we shall reign on the earth. Everyone who has been purchased has been made a priest and a king. The faith which allowed for this great confession was given to them (Ephesians 2:8-9). Faith is from God. Believing is from God. Salvation is from God. All of this does not come from free will but from God.

The Christian does reign on the earth even now by faith as the Church assists in the pulling down of bad governments, bad laws, and sets up a spiritual kingdom that circles the globe. The reign of the Church is spiritual, but real, with materialistic overtones, for the Church does own buildings and property. But these things do not constitute the essence of the reign of the saints. Rather,

there is the triumph that is found in victorious Christian living regardless of the circumstances of life.

- *John 16:33 In the world, said Jesus, you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

5:10. we shall reign on the earth. The hope of the church has always been that there shall be a bodily resurrection and a greater manifestation of the kingdom of God upon the earth. The basic area of disagreement is when the saints shall reign on the earth and in what manner. The Premillennialist insists on a fleshly reign whereby Israel is exalted above the nations of the earth, a temple is rebuilt, bloody sacrifices are offered, and people die at an old age, but they do die, and then, finally, Satan is freed up to wreak havoc.

The reign of Christ and the saints on earth, for the Amillennialist, is not so pessimistic. The church is the one to be exalted, not a godless natural nation. The Lord's reign is forever and ever and not temporary. The reign is also a present reality, though it will extend into the future. Death will not be part of the ultimate reign of Christ when He comes the second time and creates a new heaven and new earth, for death will have been abolished at His coming (1 Corinthians 15:26-58).

### **The Shout of the Angelic Host Revelation 5:11-12**

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

5:11. ten thousand times ten thousand. one hundred million. "Myriads of myriads and chiliads of chiliads;" that is, an infinite or innumerable multitude" (Adam Clarke's Commentary).

12 Saying with a loud voice, **Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.**

### **Worthy is the Lamb**

- The Lamb is worthy to receive power.
- The Lamb is worthy to receive riches.
- The Lamb is worthy to receive wisdom.
- The Lamb is worthy to receive strength.

- The Lamb is worthy to receive honour.
- The Lamb is worthy to receive glory.
- The Lamb is worthy to receive blessing.

13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, **Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.**

5:13. him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Praise and honor is given to the Father and to the Lamb, who is Jesus Christ.

***Special Note.***

Christians are commanded to worship God. In chapter 5 Christ is worthy of being worshipped. There is only one conclusion. Jesus is God.

- *Revelation 22:9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.*

**Who Will Bless the Lamb?**

- Every creature which is in heaven will bless the Lamb.
- Every creature on earth will bless the Lamb.
- Every creature which is under the earth will bless the Lamb.
- Every creature which is in the sea will bless the Lamb.

H.G. Wells wrote, “Christ is the most unique person of history. No man can write a history of the human race without giving first and foremost place to the penniless teacher of Nazareth.” Rabbi Stephen Wise said concerning Jesus, “You will find that He is divinely human. It is no mean joy to us of the house of Israel to recognize, to honor and to cherish among our brethren, Jesus the Jew, who has influenced the world more than any other man.” This person called Jesus lived on earth for only 33 years. He never traveled more than 100 miles from His home. Yet Charles Lamb was right in saying, “If all the illustrious men of history were gathered together and Shakespeare should enter their presence, they would rise to do him honor; but if Jesus Christ should come in, they would fall down and worship Him” (Billy Graham Evangelistic Association).

14 And the four beasts said, **Amen.** And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

5:14. four beasts. four living creatures.

**REVELATION 6**

**The Breaking of the Seals  
Revelation 6:1-8:5**



**Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse**  
Victory Vasnetsov, 1887

### **Revelation Chapter 6 Summary**

With the book of the divine counsels firmly in His hand the Lord loses no time but immediately enters upon the work of opening the seals and publishing the contents. However, the way Christ reveals the contents of the book is in such a manner as to leave the predictions very dark and difficult to understand. The prophecies of this book are divided into seven seals opened, seven trumpets sounding, and seven vials poured out.

Now, in chapter six, the seven seals are opened and the visions attending them are related.

• First seal	Revelation 6:1, 2	Rider on a white horse
• Second seal	Revelation 6:3, 4	Rider on a red horse
• Third seal	Revelation 6:5, 6	Rider on a black horse
• Fourth seal	Revelation 6:7, 8	Rider on a pale (green) horse
• Fifth seal	Revelation 6:9-11	The souls of martyred saints under the altar
• Sixth seal	Revelation 6:12, 13-17	Earthquake, darkened sun, blood moon
• Seventh seal	Revelation 8:1	Silence in heaven

#### ***Special Note.***

#### **Three Sets of Judgments in Revelation**

- |                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| • The Seven Seal Judgments    | Revelation 6:1 – 8:1   |
| • The Seven Trumpet Judgments | Revelation 8:2 – 11:19 |

- The Seven Vials (Bowls) Judgment      Revelation 15:1 – 16:21

***Special Note.***

The historian and philosopher Arnold J. Toynbee (April 14, 1889 – October 22, 1975) wrote that there are three basic views of Christianity in regard to civilization. The first view of which he wrote is that Christianity is the enemy of civilization. This was the view of the Roman Marcus Aurelius and the modern historian Edward Gibbon in his monumental work, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. This view is not completely wrong, for Christianity is an enemy to every empire that exalts itself and opposes God. Daniel the prophet had predicted that the Messiah, the “stone”, would crush the vision of ten toes symbolizing the Roman Empire (Daniel 2:34 - 35). History records that it happened.

A second view is that Christianity is the handmaiden of society. Certainly the Roman Catholic Church was united with Feudalism during the Middle Ages (AD 500 – 1500), as Protestantism is identified with capitalism today. The “Protestant Work Ethic” has been the intellectual fuel which has driven society and enabled civilizations which embrace capitalism to the highest level of personal and economic prosperity in history.

Despite the flaws of the first two views, Toynbee came to the conclusion that Christianity is the only hope of the world. While economic systems come and go, the Word of God, Christ, and the Church stand firm to survive every war, famine, government and economic system there is. Christianity is the arena in which God works His sovereign will in the affairs of men. That is the story of the seven seals. In the Revelation there is another arena, the Roman arena whereby the enemies of the church worked out their affairs in an attempt to kill Christians and silence the Lamb by persecuting the saints.

1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, [Come and see](#).

6:1. one of the four beasts. one of the four living creatures.

6:1. Come and see. This expression is used in verses 1, 3, 5, and 7.

**Four Heavenly Summons**

- Come and see the rider on a white horse.      Revelation 6:1
- Come and see the rider on a red horse.      Revelation 6:3
- Come and see the rider on a black horse.      Revelation 6:5
- Come and see the rider on a pale horse.      Revelation 6:7

**First Seal: A Rider on a White Horse  
Revelation 6:3**

**Conquest**

2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

6:2. behold a white horse. The first Rider on the White Horse is introduced by the first of the Four Living Creatures.

***Special Note.***

In the ancient world, it was not unusual for citizens to witness chariot races or teams of horses in four colors. Nor was it unusual for multitudes to sing praises to the Caesars. Many cultural experiences seem to be incorporated into John's vision including fantastic public processions and a great banquet at the end of the festivities. One of the purposes of the Revelation is to remind the church that the activities and customs of the world are but a cheap imitation of the authentic object of praise, adoration, and banqueting fellowship with Jesus Christ the Lord.

In the opening scene the reader finds a scene whereby the "games of heaven" begin with a race, an apocalyptic death race, a frightful game whereby the heavenly imperator (commander) mocks the defiant heart of the false Christ revealed in Chapter 13 as the Beast from the Sea is energized by the Beast from the Land.

**The Rider on the White Horse  
Christ**

**Come the Conquering Hero**

Irenaeus (d. c. AD 202), an influential Christian theologian of the 2nd century, was among the first to interpret this horseman as Christ himself, his white horse representing the successful spread of the gospel. Various scholars, such as William Hendriksen (*More Than Conquerors*), have supported this interpretation based on the later appearance, in Revelation 19, of Christ mounted on a white horse, appearing as The Word of God.

F. F. Bruce notes, "One long-established interpretation understands this of the victorious progress of the gospel, the rider on the white horse being Christ, as in 19:11 (*The International Bible Commentary* p. 1607).

Prior to the writing of Revelation, the book of Matthew, Mark, and Luke indicates that the advance of the gospel may precede, anticipate, and foretell the apocalypse (Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21). The color white represents righteousness in the Bible, and Christ is, in other passages, portrayed as a conqueror.

- White as a symbol of purity and righteousness. *Revelation 3:4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.*
- Christ is the Conquering Hero. *Romans 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

**The Rider on the White Horse  
Anti-Christ**

In contrast, Billy Graham believes the Rider on the White Horse is not Christ, but anti-Christ (*Approaching Hoofbeats*, Avon. p. 273). Mr. Graham argues that the two riders are described in significantly different ways.

**Revelation 6**

- Riding a white horse
- Carries a bow
- Wears a crown
- Able to conquer

**Revelation 19:11-16**

Riding a white horse  
 Called Faithful and True  
 Wears many crowns  
 Judges in righteousness and makes war  
 Eyes as a flame of fire  
 A name known only to Himself  
 Wore a vesture dipped with blood  
 “KING of KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” on vesture  
 Called, “The Word of God”  
 Accompanied by the armies of heaven also clothed in white  
 A sharp sword goes forth out of His mouth  
 He rules with a rod of iron

Mr. Graham argues that Christ's role as the Lamb who opens the seven seals makes it unlikely that He would also be one of the forces released by the seals.

***Special Note.***

While it might be unlikely that the Lamb who opens the seven seals is one of the released forces, it is not impossible. At no point does the text say in Revelation 6 that the Rider on the White Horse is not Faithful or True or that He wages an unjust war.

Moreover, the other three riders of Revelation 6 are independent of the first. Finally, the Revelation presents the Devil as a serpent, a red dragon, and the father of lies. The Scriptures do not portray the anti-Christ as riding a white horse.

**The Rider on the White Horse  
Holy Spirit**

A third understanding of the Rider on the White Horse is that the imagery is to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles at Pentecost after Jesus' departure from Earth. The Spirit

has come to subdue, conquer, overcome, prevail, and get the victory. Michael Fortner argues that, "All Christians will either overcome Satan and the world or be overcome by them, and Christ has sent the Holy Spirit to help us; in order that we might overcome. A far cry from "unjust" conquest!

The *New Living Translation* says the rider "rode out to win many battles and gain the victory." The appearance of the Lamb in Revelation 5 shows the triumphant arrival of Jesus in Heaven, and the white horseman in Revelation 6 could represent the sending of the Holy Spirit by Jesus and the advance of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Vos, Brian D. "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse", *The Outlook*, June 2006, vol. 56 no. 4, pp. 16-20).

6:2. was given. This expression is used in the Revelation to indicate that God is the One who sovereignly administers the affairs of earth. The agents of God, be they angels or demons, men or beasts, or nature itself, all are "given" power, authority, or permission to act. God is the initiator. In verse 4 this expression is used twice. It is found in verse 8 and in verse 11.

3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

6:3. An attempt is often made to identify the rider of the white horse as Jesus Christ. However, The White Horse rides with the other three, not in contrast to them. Together they convey calamities. Furthermore, the Lamb is the one who has opened the seal in distinction to the vision itself. The picture presented is not that of Christ the victor but of the terrors of the wrath of God being poured out.

### **Second Seal: A Rider on a Red Horse Revelation 6:4**

#### **Civil War**

4 And there went out another horse *that was* red: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

6:4. power was given...there was given unto him a great sword. Because of the Rider on the Red Horse internecine warfare breaks out. There is civil war.

6:4. take peace from the earth. In the turbulent time period following the ascension of Christ to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 peace was often taken from the earth. For all the fame of the *Pax Romana*, there were periods of great bloodshed and violence on a massive scale within the confines of the Roman republic reflected in the civil war in Rome. From AD 30 to AD 70 no fewer than eight men ruled the Imperial Empire.

***Special Note.***

The men who ruled came to the throne and kept the throne by keeping the edge of their sword whet with the dripping blood of their rivals. As Roman fought Roman so Jew fought Jew. Brother fought against brother, and neighbor against neighbor. There was religious unrest illustrated by the persecution of Jewish leaders toward Jewish Christians. There was political unrest as the general public wanted to be free from the rulers of Rome. They did not like the humiliating laws such as the one that compelled a Jew to carry the burden of a Roman citizen one-mile. Contributing to the religious and political unrest in Palestine was a group of nationalist called The Zealots. These violent fanatics were willing to assassinate any Roman they could kill. As the year AD 70 approached, it seemed as if peace was taken from the earth. People by the hundreds of thousands took a sword to kill one another. The Rider of the Red Horse heard the Divine summons and responded.

**Third Seal: a Rider on a Black Horse  
Revelation 6:5**

**Famine**

5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and *see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

6:6. the four beasts. the four living creatures.

6:6. A measure. One quart. A quart is about what one person consumed in one day.

6:6. three measures of barley. A person could choose to buy the cheaper and less tasty barley. Three measures of barley sold for a penny, so there was a little more grain for the same amount.

6:6. a penny. Greek, denarius. A denarius is what an individual would make for one day of labor.

6:6. oil and wine were foods that rich people used. John may suggest that the poor become poorer while the rich survive and are unharmed. This is the case in more forms of government such as Communism and in dictatorships.

**Fourth Seal: A Rider on a Pale Horse  
Revelation 6:7-8**

7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

6:7. And when he. And when the Lamb.

8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

6:8. Hell. Hades.

6:8. behold a pale horse. behold a pale green horse. A cadaverous hue. This is fitting because Death and Hades follows along. Hades is like a hearse to Death.

6:8. And power was given. As in verse 2, and verse 4, power is given. Power does not reside in the nature of creation apart from what God has given it.

### **Fifth Seal: The Souls of the Saints Revelation 6:9-11**

#### **The Vision Turns from Earth to Heaven**

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

6:9. I saw under the altar. I saw at the bottom of the altar. In the Temple and in the Tabernacle, when the priest sacrificed an animal, the blood would drain down the altar under it. The souls of the saints represent that they have given their life's blood for the Lord. Their death is a sacrifice received in heaven as an acceptable sacrifice.

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, **How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?**

6:10. avenge our blood. The souls of the saints were not crying out for vengeance. They were crying out for vindication as to why they had been martyred and why they lost their lives. They want to see the vindication of the truth for which they stood.

6: 9-10. In the vision John noticed that the souls of the saints went to heaven and resided under an altar. There are some *Bible* teachers that believe there is a literal altar in heaven and that the Tabernacle in the wilderness which guided the Old Testament church in its worship was patterned after the heavenly altar. What was a type on earth was a reality in heaven. Consider the following passages.

- *Hebrews 8:2 [Christ is] A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.*
- *Hebrews 9:23 It was therefore necessary that the patterns [of the earthly Tabernacle in the wilderness] of things in the heavens should be purified with these [bulls and goats]; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.*
- *Exodus 25:9 According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.*
- *Exodus 25:40 And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.*
- *Numbers 8:4 And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.*

6:9-10. The souls beneath the altar would remind one of the fact that the lifeblood of the saints had been poured out as an offering to God. The apostle Paul said of himself in sacrificial terms in Philippians 2:17. “*Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.*” The good life, the godly life in Christ is an offering to God.

11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

6:11. And white robes. These robes would speak of their doctrinal purity, their moral righteousness, and God’s pleasure with them.

6:11. were given. As God takes the initiative in judgment so He takes the initiative in comfort and the administration of rewards. White robes were given to those who suffered martyrdom.

6:11. and it was said unto them. and they were told. The saints were told their vindication would come with the completion of the Plan of God. Until then, they must rest and be patient.

***Special Note.***

Notice that the souls spoken of in Scripture are spoken of as being conscience, resting, articulate, and they look forward to the full deliverance which they had believed was theirs through the saving work of Christ.

- There is a Plan
- There is a Planner
- There will be a Consummation

6:11. should be killed...should be fulfilled. Once more the sovereignty of God over the lives of saints and sinners is affirmed. It is difficult to understand why God has ordained that some of the elect "should be killed." His staying hand of power does not always stop the evil that men do and so it has been foreordained that certain saints "should be killed" and nothing is to intervene until their deaths are "fulfilled." Here is divine certain of tribulation.

**Sixth Seal: Changes in the Universe**  
**Revelation 6:12-17**

12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

6:12-13. Both John and Jesus spoke of great cataclysmic events characterized by the heavens falling. History records that there was a time when symbolically the sun became black as sackcloth and the moon became as blood. There was a time when the stars of heaven fell upon the earth even as a fig tree will cast off untimely figs when shaken by a mighty wind. There was a time when the heavens departed as a scroll when it rolls together and when every mountain and island moved out of its place.

There was a time when the kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondsman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains. History records that these things happened not once but several times including AD 70. The poetic symbolic language of many other passages of Scripture indicates periods of universal upheaval from a divine point of view.

Notice the apocalyptic language of the following passages: Obadiah 1-21; Jeremiah 48:1-47; Jeremiah 9:26; 25:21; 49:6; Daniel 11:41; Amos 1:13; Zephaniah 2: 8, 9; Acts 2:16-21 cf. Joel 2:28-30; Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21. For John to appeal to earthquakes, the darkening of the sun, the falling of stars, and the folding of the heavens, was for him to appeal to familiar language to Jews.

The prophets had spoken of the great wrath of God in terms of earthquakes (Amos 8:8; Ezekiel 38:19; Joel 2:10; Haggai 2:6); a darken sun (Amos 8:9; Isaiah 13:10; 50:3; Ezekiel 32:7; Joel 2:31); falling stars (Isaiah 34:4); folding of the heavens (Isaiah 13:13; Psalm 102:25, 26).

6:12-13. Apart from the familiar, terrible language of the prophets representing God's strong dealings with the nations of the earth, history does record that during the time of AD 66 to AD 70 there were unusual events in the sky. There were earthquakes and the kings of the earth were afraid of what was happening to the world.

### Cosmic Catastrophe

14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

6:14. and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

#### *Special Note.*

The eruption of Krakatoa in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) began on August 26, 1883 and culminated with several destructive eruptions of the remaining caldera. On August 27, two thirds of Krakatoa collapsed in a chain of titanic explosions, destroying most of the island and its surrounding archipelago. It was one of the deadliest and most destructive volcanic events in recorded history, with at least 36,417 deaths being attributed to the eruption itself and the tsunamis it created. Significant additional effects were also felt around the world (1883 Eruption of Krakatoa, Wikipedia).

15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

6:15. every bondman. every slave.

#### **Who Among the Unconverted Shall One Day Pray?**

- The kings of the earth shall pray.
- The great men shall pray.
- The rich men shall pray.
- The chief captains shall pray.
- The mighty men shall pray.
- Every bondman shall pray.
- Every free man shall pray.
- Those who have hid themselves in the dens shall pray.

#### **The Prayer of the Non-Repentant**

16 And said to the mountains and rocks, **Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:**

17 **For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?**

6:16. The prayer of the non-repentant. *“Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.”*

6:17. The twofold rationale for the prayer of the non-repentant. First, *“for the great day of his wrath is come.”* Second, *“who shall be able to stand?”* The question is rhetorical and implies the answer.

***Special Note.***

Instead of praying to the Living Lord, the ungodly insist on praying to dead rocks and dumb mountains. They know the truth. They know the wrath is come because of the Lamb. They know it is the day of Divine wrath. But they still pray to nature. Oh how foolish, how stupid, how hard is the heart of man.

**A Comparison of Revelation 6 with the words of Jesus in Matthew 24**

**What Jesus said would happen,  
John saw would happen.**

First Seal. Jesus said there would be wars and rumors of war (Matthew 24:6). John saw *“a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer”* (Revelation 6:2).

Second Seal. Jesus said that nation would rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom (Matthew 24:7). John saw *“another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat there on to take peace from the earth and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword”* (Revelation 6:3-4).

Third Seal. Jesus said that there would be famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes in different places (Matthew 24:7). John saw *“a black horse: and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, “A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see that thou hurt not the oil and the wine”* (Revelation 6:5-6).

Fourth Seal. Jesus said that there would be much sorrow during this period (Matthew 24:8-12). John saw a pale horse, *“and his name that sat upon him was Death and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth”* (Revelation 6:7-8).

Fifth Seal. Jesus said that the saints would be killed (Matthew 24:9). John saw the altar *“and under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony, which they held”* (Revelation 6:9-11).

Sixth Seal. Jesus said that in the days of great tribulation the sun would be darkened, and the moon would not give light, and the stars would fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens would be shaken (Matthew 24:29). John saw *“a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth even*

*as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind” (Revelation 6:12-13).*

6:17. and who shall be able to stand? Here is the unanswerable question for the ungodly. No one shall be able to stand. You will not be able to stand if you are an unbeliever and a non-Christian.

### **Those Who Will not be Able to Help**

- The kings of the earth shall not be able to help.
- The great men, individuals of importance and position shall not be able to help.
- The rich men, those individuals with wealth shall not be able to help.
- The chief captains, those who have great patriotism shall not be able to help.
- The mighty men, those with great power shall not be able to help.
- Every bondman, the common worker shall not be able to help.
- Every free man, every executive, the white collar worker shall not be able to help.
- Those who have hid themselves in the dens shall pray.

#### ***Special Note.***

There is an answer for those who believe. Let the good news go forth that those who are in Christ shall be able to stand before God.

- *Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
- *Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

If there are rocks that cannot save, there is one Rock that can save, and that Rock is Jesus.

- *Psalms 62:2 He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.*

“Jesus is a rock in a weary land  
A weary land, A weary land  
Jesus is a rock in a weary land  
A shelter in the time of storm.”

## **REVELATION 7**

### **Revelation Chapter 7 Summary**

The events contained in this chapter came in after the opening of the six seals which foretold great tribulation in the world and before the sound of the seven trumpets, which gave notice of great corruption arising in the church. Between these events there is comfort for the people of God in times of great tribulation. The chapter records an account of the restraint laid upon the winds (Revelation 7: 1-3); the sealing of the servants of God (Revelation 7:4-8); the songs of angels and saints on this occasion (Revelation 7:9-12); and finally a description of the honour and happiness of those who had faithfully served Christ, and suffered for him (Revelation 7:13-17).

***Special Note.***

Revelation 6 ends with a question in verse 17: “*For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*” Revelation 7 answers that question and reveals who shall be able to stand in the great day of God’s wrath.

**First Interlude**

Before the opening of the Seventh Seal, there was the first of Six Interludes. John is a witness to the sealing of the 144,000 Jews (Revelation 7:1-8) and a great multitude of Gentiles washed by the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:9-17).

1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

7:1. holding the four winds of the earth. The symbolism here presents a scene of judgment in abeyance, or suspension, on earth.

**Where the Winds Could not Blow**

- The winds could not blow on the earth.
- The winds could not blow on the sea.
- The winds could not blow on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

7:2. from the east. If the angel is ascending from the east he would be coming to John on the isle of Patmos from the general direction of Palestine.

3 Saying, **Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.**

7:1-3. till we have sealed. To seal something was to indicate source or possession. God sealed the saints. In the early Church the picture of being sealed by God was connected with the physical act of water baptism and the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the mark to be placed on the forehead was for the entire world to see. God has an easily identifiable mark for His own.

***Special Note.***

The sealing of the 144,000 speaks of the protection and security of the complete church. The seal was visible in the forehead (Revelation 7:3; 9:4). The seal contained the name of the Lamb and of the Father (14:1).

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were* sealed an hundred *and forty and* four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

7:4. And I heard the number. The number of those saved is not small, but great.

***Special Note.***

By referring to the twelve tribes by name, it must be kept in mind that the early Church saw itself as the real Israel. National Israel had lost faith. National Israel had been set aside (Matthew 21:43 cf. Romans 11:25). All the gospel privileges and promises belonged to the Church (cf. Romans 2:28, 29; 9:6, 7; Galatians 3:29; 3:3; 1 Peter 2: 9). Examining this passage as a whole, Dr. William Barclay observes three great truths in this section. First, there is a warning that sin brings judgment (Revelation 7:1-2). Second, there is a promise that God will avenge His own (Revelation 7:1). Third, there is an assurance that the saved are sealed (Revelation 7:3).

***Special Note.***

Are these 144,000 a symbolic number, a round number of the whole church?

Are these 144,000 to be taken literally and these to a particular group of redeemed Jews?

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson, a gifted professor for many years at Dallas Theological Seminary, believed there is an intended distinction between this definite number of 144,000 and the indefinite number of Revelation 7:9.

- *Revelation 7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;*

Moreover, Dr. Johnson continues, the term "Israel" is never used in the New Testament in any other way other than the ethnic sense.

Other, very gifted Bible students disagree with this assertion after studying Romans 9; Galatians 6, and Hebrews 8 in light of Jeremiah 31. There is room for understanding the 144,000 to be a symbolic number of completion.

“A Watchtower publication states that “the final number of the heavenly church will be 144,000, according to God’s decree” (*Let God Be True*, p. 113). The balance of saved humanity, they contend, will live on God’s glorified earth” (*Christian Courier*, Wayne Jackson).

If the 144,000 are to be interpreted literally then it must be taught that the 144,000 are Jews who have been redeemed from the earth, they are singers of a new song, and they are unmarried virgins for the group consists of those who have not been defiled with women.

- *Revelation 14:3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.*
- *Revelation 14:4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

Also, it must be taught that the 144,000 literally, and collectively, follow the Lamb wherever He goes.

#### **Representatives of the Elect of God The 144,000 of God**

5 Of the tribe of Juda *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad *were* sealed twelve thousand.

6 Of the tribe of Aser *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses *were* sealed twelve thousand.

7 Of the tribe of Simeon *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar *were* sealed twelve thousand.

8 Of the tribe of Zabulon *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph *were* sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin *were* sealed twelve thousand.



7:5-8. Of the tribe.

***Special Note.***

The 144,000 from the tribes of Israel are symbolic of the elect of God who are perfect in number, sealed, and protected. That the tribes are symbolic and not meant to be taken literally is revealed in the fact that the tribe of Levi is mentioned though it did not receive any portion of Canaan when the land was divided under Joshua. The Levites served as the priestly tribe, the most spiritual tribe of the nation, and so in the Revelation the original Tribe of Dan is omitted and replaced with Levi.

In addition, Joseph himself did not receive a tribal inheritance yet he is listed in the Revelation. What did happen historically is that the two sons of Joseph (adopted by Jacob) did receive an inheritance thereby giving, in principle, a double portion to Joseph. In the Revelation this double portion for Joseph is reflected in the fact that he is mentioned, and so is Manasseh. In Numbers 1:32-33 the tribe of Ephraim is referred to as the tribe of Joseph.

<b>Tribes of the Revelation Revelation 7:5-8</b>	<b>Twelve Tribes of Israel Joshua 14:1 - 16:10</b>	<b>Twelve Sons of Jacob Genesis 35:22-26</b>	
Juda	Judah	Judah	(Leah)
Reuben	Reuben	Reuben	(Leah)
Gad	Gad	Gad	(Zilpah) **
Aser	Asher	Asher	(Zilpah)
Nephtalim	Naphtali	Naphtali	(Bilhah) **
Manasses	Manasseh (Son of Joseph)	Dan	(Bilhah)
Simeon	Simeon	Simeon	(Leah) *
Levi	Dan	Levi	(Leah)
Issachar	Issachar	Issachar	(Leah)
Zebulun	Zebulun	Zebulun	(Leah)
Joseph	Ephraim (Son of Joseph)	Joseph	(Rachel) *
Benjamin	Benjamin	Benjamin	(Rachel)
* Wife and mother			
** Concubine and mother			
+ Bilhah was a servant to Rachel			
++ Zilpah was a servant to Leah			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reuben, the son of Leah, engaged in incest with Bilhah, the mother of his two half-brothers, Dan and Naphtali, “<i>and Israel heard of it</i>” (Genesis 35:22).</li> </ul>			
<b><i>Special Note.</i></b>			
The twelve sons of Jacob listed in Genesis 35:22-26, differ from those who formed the twelve tribes of Israel. Moreover, the historical list of the tribes of Israel listed in the book of Judges is different from the list of tribes listed in Revelation.			
In the Revelation the tribe of Dan is omitted though he was one of the twelve sons of Jacob and his descendants formed one of the tribes of Israel.			
In the Revelation the tribe of Ephraim is not mentioned by name. Though he was not a son of Jacob he was a grandson of Jacob through Joseph.			
In the Revelation Joseph is mentioned as a tribe though he is not listed as one of the twelve tribes of Israel in the book of Joshua.			
In the Revelation Manasses, another son of Joseph, is listed as a tribe. He too was a grandson of Jacobs as a son of Joseph. Manasses is credited with being among the official twelve tribes of Israel.			
Some Bible teachers think that Dan is not listed in the Revelation because the tribe of Dan became associated with apostasy. But, this is only speculation.			

9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

7:9. white robes, and palms. Both the white robes and the palms speak of victory. Roman generals would wear white garments during their victory parades and people would lay down palm branches for the horse to tread upon. The scene is one of great joy.

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, **Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.**

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12 Saying, **Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.**

7:11.

#### **Sevenfold Praises to God**

- Blessing
- Glory
- Wisdom
- Thanksgiving
- Honour
- Power
- Might

7:1. Amen...Amen. The word "amen" (am-ane'), is of Hebrew origin and means, firm, trustworthy, so be it. It is a word of affirmation so that the heart can say, "I believe it."

#### **Amen in Revelation**

- Revelation 1:6 I believe Christ is worthy of glory and dominion for ever and ever.
- Revelation 1:7 I believe Christ will come with clouds and every eye shall see him.
- Revelation 1:18 I believe Christ is alive for evermore.
- Revelation 3:14 I believe Christ is a faithful and true witness.
- Revelation 5:14 I believe blessing, and honour, and glory, and power belongs to Christ.
- Revelation 7:12 I believe blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, belong to God for ever and ever.
- Revelation 19:4 I believe that God should be worshipped.
- Revelation 22:20 I believe Jesus when he said, "I come quickly."
- Revelation 22:21 I believe the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is with the church.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, **What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?**

7:13. white. The color of white speaks of purity and righteousness (Revelation 19:8). It is a prominent color in Revelation.

#### The Color White

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| • The color of the Lord's head and hair.                      | Revelation 1:14              |
| • The elect are given a white stone.                          | Revelation 2:17              |
| • The elect shall walk with the Lord in white garments.       | Revelation 3:4,5, 18; 7:9,13 |
| • The twenty four elders are dressed in white raiment.        | Revelation 4:4               |
| • John sees a rider on a white horse.                         | Revelation 6:2; 19:11        |
| • Those who are martyred for Christ are given white robes.    | Revelation 6:11              |
| • John saw a white cloud upon which Christ sat.               | Revelation 14:14             |
| • John saw seven angels dressed in white clothing.            | Revelation 15:6              |
| • The bride of Christ shall be dressed in white.              | Revelation 19:8              |
| • John saw the army of heaven on white horses in white linen. | Revelation 19:14             |
| • John saw a great white throne as the place of judgment.     | Revelation 20:11             |

7:13. white robes. These white robes are mentioned four times in Revelation (6:11; 7:9, 13, 14).

#### The Interpreting Elder

14 And I said unto him, **Sir, thou knowest.** And he said to me, **These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

#### Two Questions Divinely Answered ...in Reverse Order

##### First Question.

*“What are these which are arrayed in white robes?”*

##### Second Answer.

These are they which have... *“washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”*

##### Second Question.

*“And whence came they?”*

##### First Answer.

*“These are they which came out of great tribulation.”*

7:13. These are they. From Genesis to Revelation the doctrine of election flashes forth from the pages of Holy Scripture.

7:14. came out of great tribulation. came out of the great tribulation. There is a definite article before "great tribulation" which indicates a specific period of time such as Israel experienced between AD 66 and AD 70.

*Special Note.*

There are other historical and biblical examples in which God has brought His people out of specific periods of great tribulation, not by translation into heaven, but by divine preservation and protection.

- Noah and his family were brought out of the great tribulation of the flood that fell upon the world, not by being translated into heaven but by being sealed inside the safety of an ark.
- When God delivered Lot and His daughters from the wrath that fell on Sodom and Gomorrah, He did not translate them but gave Lot and his family a word of warning and sent holy angels to guide them to safety.
- When the Jews were in the land of Egypt and God judged the land, the faithful were not translated but protected by being sealed with the blood of the Lamb.
- In AD 70, when Jerusalem fell to the Roman soldiers God delivered His people, not by translating them, but by helping them to flee as the Christians remembered the words of their Lord and obeyed His instructions.

7:14. robes, and made them white. Only by a divine alchemy or transformation can robes washed "in the blood of the Lamb" be made white.

"Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?  
Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?"

Are you washed in the blood,  
In the soul cleansing blood of the Lamb?  
Are your garments spotless? Are they white as snow?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Are you walking daily by the Savior's side?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?  
Do you rest each moment in the Crucified?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

When the Bridegroom cometh will your robes be white?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Will your soul be ready for the mansions bright,  
And be washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Lay aside the garments that are stained with sin,  
And be washed in the blood of the Lamb;  
There's a fountain flowing for the soul unclean,  
O be washed in the blood of the Lamb!"

7:14. These are they which ... washed their robes, and made them white. There is human responsibility in the plan of God. While salvation is of the Lord according to His sovereign will, power, and grace, there is human responsibility. We must wash our robes in the blood of the Lamb. The heart of the Christian must respond to the message of salvation with sanctification. The renewed heart is bent towards holiness.

### **Saved to be Sanctified**

- *1 Corinthians 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*
- *1 Thessalonians 4:3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;*
- *2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*
- *1 Peter 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*

**15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.**

7:15. and serve him day and night in his temple. This is a reference to the priestly functions of the redeemed reflecting the ministries found in 1 Chronicles 9.

7:15. shall dwell among them. shall tabernacle over them. The people of God are assured of divine protection. The vision is borrowed from the prophet Isaiah.

- *Isaiah 4:5 And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defense. 6 And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain.*

Here is the promise of Jesus.

- *John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

### **The Joy of Satisfaction**

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

### **The Joy of Eternal Shepherding**

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.



**The Lord as Shepherd**  
**Warner Sallman**

7:17. For the Lamb...shall feed them. For the Lamb...shall shepherd them. This is a pastoral scene of the life beyond the grave. The Lamb in the midst of the throne shall become a Shepherd. In the land of Palestine the Shepherd is always with the flock.

7:17. living fountains. There is not just one fountain but many fountains of living waters.

7:17. God shall wipe away all tears.

**Nine Remarkable Promises**  
**Revelation 7:14-17**

- There is the promise of dwelling before the throne of God.
- There is the promise of being able to serve God day and night in the heavenly temple.
- There is the promise that He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among the saints.

- There is the promise of never being hungry again.
- There is the promise of never being thirsty again.
- There is the promise of never having to suffer again in oppressive heat.
- There is the promise of being fed by the Lamb.
- There is the promise of being able to drink of the living fountains of waters.
- There is the promise that God shall wipe away all tears from eyes.

### **The Church in Revelation**

It would not be consistent to use the same terminology for the Church in Revelation 4-19 that is found in the rest of the New Testament and then deny that the Church exists on earth during the Great Tribulation period Jesus spoke of and John saw visualized.

Too much has been made over the absence of a specific term for the Church, *ekklesia*, while ignoring the many other references to the Church in Revelation 4-19. If the absence of the specific term for the Church, *ekklesia*, means that the Word of God does not speak of or to the Church directly, then the following books of the Bible must also be for someone other than the people of God because the specific terminology, *ekklesia*, is not found in them either.

The word Church is not found in Mark, Luke, John, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, or Jude! No one would suggest that these books be discarded as not speaking directly to the Church simply because a specific term is not found. The saints of the Church are indeed in view throughout the Revelation.

### **Is the Church found in Revelation 4-19?**

#### **Matthew through Jude**

##### **Saints**

Romans 1:7  
1 Corinthians 1:2  
Ephesians 1:1

##### **Fellow servants**

Colossians 4:11  
Colossians 1:7

##### **Brethren**

1 Thessalonians 1:4  
Colossians 1:2  
2 Thessalonians 1:3

##### **People washed in the Blood**

1 Corinthians 6:11

#### **Revelation 4 through 19**

##### **Saints**

Revelation 14:12  
Revelation 15:3  
Revelation 17:6

##### **Fellow servants**

Revelation 6:11

##### **Brethren**

Revelation 6:11

##### **People washed in the blood**

Revelation 17:14

**Called, Chosen by God, Faithful**

Ephesians 1:4

2 Thessalonians 2:13

**The servant of Jesus**

Ephesians 6:6

Philadelphia 1:1

**Those who sleep in the Lord**

1 Thessalonians 4:14

**Prophets**

1 Corinthians 12:28

1 Corinthians 14:29

1 Corinthians 14:32

Ephesians 2:20

**Called, chosen by God, faithful**

Revelation 17:14

**His servants**

Revelation 19:2, 5

**The dead who died in the Lord**

Revelation 14:13

**Prophets**

Revelation 16:6

## REVELATION 8

### Revelation Chapter 8 Summary

Having already seen what occurred upon the opening of six of the seals, John now comes to the opening of the seventh seal, which introduced the sounding of the seven trumpets. A dreadful scene opens. In this chapter there is the preface or prelude to the sounding of the trumpets (Revelation 8:1-6) and the sounding of four of the trumpets (Revelation 8:7-13).

The Seventh Seal was broken *Revelation 8:1 Then there was silence in heaven for the space of half an hour.* Divine preparations were made by seven angels which stood before God. They were given Seven Trumpets. Another angel was given a golden censer to offer incense, with the prayers of the saints (Revelation 8:3-5) offered upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

1 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

8:1. there was silence in heaven. The silence may be attributed to the terrible events that were about to be unleashed on earth much like the calm before a great storm, or the silence on the eve of a great military battle. The silence may be attributed to something else, namely, the importance of the place of prayer before God. The silence was designed to introduce the next events.

### Seven Angels with Seven Trumpets

2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

8:2. seven angels which stood before God. These are the archangels.

#### *Special Note.*

In Jewish literature, seven archangels were well known.

- Uriel
- Raphael
- Raquel
- Michael
- Sealtiel
- Barachiel
- Gabriel

3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

8:3. And another angel. An eighth angel joins the seven archangels.

8:3. the prayers of all saints. The incense from the golden altar speaks of the prayers of the saints. The church is reminded that prayer is the result of the sacrifice Christ made at Calvary. On the basis of the Lord's death there can be fellowship with the Father.

4 And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

8:2-4. the golden altar. Concerning this golden altar before the throne several things should be observed. First, the altar appears often in the vision of heaven (Revelation 6:9; 9:13; 14:18). Second, the altar must be identified as the altar of incense and not the altar of burnt offering. The altar of incense stood before the Holy Place in the Temple (Leviticus 16:12; Numbers 16:46), which indicates that God wants His people near to Him in fellowship. The altar of incense was a small piece of furniture measuring only 1 1/2 feet by 1 1/2 feet and 3 feet high being overlaid with gold.

The spiritual lesson is that it is not the length of a prayer that will avail much but the fervent prayer of a righteous man. The wood overlaid with gold speaks of the humanity of our Lord enhanced by His deity so that He is able to function as our great High Priest (Hebrews 7:25; 8:1). There were four horns on the altar of incense located at the four corners.

These were made of wood overlaid with gold. Horns are associated in *Scripture* with power which serves to remind the saints that there really is power in prayer. In addition, horns are associated with salvation (Luke 1:60; 2 Samuel 22:3). The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. The horns on the altar in the *Old Testament* were sprinkled with blood from the brazen altar once a year on the Day of Atonement. We must never forget the privilege of prayer comes through the shed blood of Christ. The altar of incense was hollow but covered over with a gold plate, and around it was a little railing to keep the burning coals from falling off. The believer is reminded that the Lord protects those prayers which are pleasing to Him so that, like His sheep, none are lost.

Finally, the altar of incense was placed according to divine plan in the Tabernacle. Our prayers are directed according to Divine sovereignty so that we always pray, "Not my will but thine be done, O Lord." The one major difference between the altar of incense in heaven and the altar of incense in the Tabernacle is that the altar of incense in the Tabernacle was before a veil. In heaven there is no barrier. The saints have direct access to God.

5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

8:5. took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar. When a burnt offering was made, the fire from the altar on which the offering was made was taken into the holy place and placed on the altar of incense to symbolize that a sacrificed life, a life of dying to sin and self, was to become a life of prayer and thanksgiving to God.

### **The Altar in Revelation**

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| • The altar was the place for the souls of martyred saints.            | Revelation 6:9   |
| • The altar was the place where an angel stood with the golden censer. | Revelation 8:3   |
| • The altar was filled with fire.                                      | Revelation 8:5   |
| • The altar was a golden altar with four horns.                        | Revelation 9:13  |
| • John was told to measure the altar.                                  | Revelation 11:1  |
| • An angel came out from the altar who had power over fire.            | Revelation 14:18 |
| • Another angel spoke from out of the altar.                           | Revelation 16:7  |

#### *Special Note.*

The blowing of the trumpets follows the prayers of the saints much like the scene in Revelation 6:10.

- *Revelation 6:10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

### **Results of Fire from the Altar Being Cast on Earth**

- Voices
- Thunderings
- Lightnings
- An earthquake

### **The Sounding of the Seven Trumpets Revelation 8:6-11:19**

#### **First Trumpet Hail, Fire, and Blood Revelation 8:6-7**

6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

8:6. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets.

**Seven Trumpets of Revelation**  
**Revelation 8:6-13 \* Revelation 9:12-21**

• First Trumpet	Hail, fire	Revelation 8:7
• Second Trumpet	Sea turned to blood	Revelation 8:8-9
• Third Trumpet	Meteorite affects streams, rivers	Revelation 8:10-11
• Fourth Trumpet	Darkness	Revelation 8:12
• Fifth Trumpet	Demonic locusts	Revelation 9:1-21
• Sixth Trumpet	A demonic army	Revelation 9:12-21
• Seventh Trumpet	Seven angels with the seven bowls of God's wrath	Revelation 11:15-19, 15:1-8

**Judgment Against the Earth**

7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

8:7. there followed hail...mingled with blood. There is a phenomenon in nature known in history as Blood Rain.

***Special Note.***

“Blood rain or red rain is a phenomenon in which blood is perceived to fall from the sky in the form of rain. Cases have been recorded since Homer's *Iliad*, composed approximately 8th century BC, and are widespread. Before the 17th century it was generally believed that the rain was actually blood. Literature mirrors cult practice, in which the appearance of blood rain was considered a bad omen, and was used as a tool foreshadowing events, but while some of these may be literary devices, some occurrences are historic.

Recorded instances of blood rain usually cover small areas. The duration can vary, sometimes lasting only a short time, others several days. By the 17th century, explanations for the phenomenon had moved away from the supernatural and attempted to provide natural reasons. In the 19th century blood rains were scientifically examined and theories that dust gave the water its red color gained ground. Today, the dominant theories are that the rain is caused by red dust suspended in the water (rain dust), or due to the presence of micro-organisms. Alternative explanations include sunspots and aurorae, and in the case of the red rain in Kerala in 2001, dust from meteorites and extraterrestrial cells in the water” (Wikipedia, *Blood Rain*). Blood Rain, known throughout history, became part of John's apocalypse.

**Second Trumpet: Pollution of the Seas and Destruction of Ships**  
**Revelation 8:8-9**

**Judgment Against the Sea**

8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

8:8. a great mountain burning with fire. Perhaps a meteorite.
---

**Third Trumpet: Pollution of the Rivers**  
**Revelation 8:10-11**

**Judgment Against the Tributaries**

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

8:10. and there fell a great star. This is a physical star which fell. Stars are made of the same material as the rest of the Universe: 73% hydrogen, 25% helium, and the last 2% is all the other elements.
--

11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

8:11. Wormwood. Absinthe. bitter.
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8:11. were made bitter. were made poisonous.
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***Special Note.***

In 1986, the city of Chernobyl (lit. wormwood), situated in northern Kiev Oblast, Ukraine near the border with Belarus, was evacuated owing to a disaster at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, located 9.0 mi north-northwest. It was a terrible accident and becomes a modern day illustration of how dangerous the world can be.
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**Fourth Trumpet: Sun, Moon, Stars Affected**  
**Revelation 8:12-13**

**Judgment Against the Sky**

12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

8:12. sun...moon...stars.

**The Third Part**

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| • The third part of the trees were burnt up.           | Revelation 8:7  |
| • The third part of the sea became blood.              | Revelation 8:8  |
| • The third part of the creatures in the sea die.      | Revelation 8:9  |
| • The third part of the ships were destroyed.          | Revelation 8:9  |
| • A great star fell upon the third part of rivers.     | Revelation 8:10 |
| • The third part of waters became wormwood.            | Revelation 8:11 |
| • The third part of the sun was darkened.              | Revelation 8:12 |
| • The third part of the moon was darkened.             | Revelation 8:12 |
| • The third part of the stars was darkened.            | Revelation 8:12 |
| • The third part of the day shone not.                 | Revelation 8:12 |
| • The third part of the night did not shine.           | Revelation 8:12 |
| • The third part of men were destroyed.                | Revelation 9:15 |
| • The third part of the stars of heaven cast to earth. | Revelation 12:4 |

**Judgment Against Wicked Individuals**

13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, **Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!**

8:13. an angel. The Greek word here should be translated, "one eagle". John stretches the fact that he saw one eagle. The Greek term can also mean a vulture. John sees a vulture flying through the midst of heaven speaking with a loud voice.

8:12-13. Woe, woe, woe. Understanding the violent, political upheaval that took place between AD 66 and AD 70 makes it easier to find a literal fulfillment of John's vision in many ways. For example, the land of Palestine during this period was devastated so that wood became scarce. One reason why wood could not be found was that up to 500 people a day was being crucified during one phase of the struggle (Revelation 8:7).

Volcanoes did erupt (Revelation 8: 8) which killed off fish, polluted streams, made the water bitter (Revelation 8:9,10,11) and turned the sky blood red in color. The stars fell from the heavens in unusual numbers. While the Christian community was vindicated the inhabitants of the earth knew misery upon misery.

***Special Note.***

The image of speaking animals in heaven is not unusual. On earth the Bible speaks of two talking animals, a serpent and a donkey.

- The talking serpent. *Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*
- The talking donkey. *Numbers 22:28 And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?*

***Special Note.***

The story is told of two scientists discussing the impossibility of a donkey being able to talk because the larynx is not suited for human speech. A godly pastor who overheard this conversation politely interrupted to say, "Men, you make a donkey from nothing on your own, and I will make him talk!" The point is taken. The Creator can control His creation. Therefore the Bible, and the stories of talking animals, can be believed. A person who has never heard a parrot pronounce words would still be foolish to insist in their ignorance that no animal can talk.

## REVELATION 9

### Revelation Chapter 9 Summary

In this chapter an account is given of the sounding of the fifth and sixth trumpets and the events that were to follow the fifth trumpet (Revelation 9:1-12) and the sixth (Revelation 9:13-21).

#### The Sounding of the Fifth Trumpet

1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

9:1. And the fifth angel sounded.

9:1. I saw a star fall from heaven. I saw an angel fall from heaven. This is a personal star for John says, “and to him was given the key.”

9:1. the bottomless pit. the abyss.

#### *Special Note.*

To understand this passage, it must be remembered that in the historical setting Israel was under the dominion of Rome and desperately wanted to be free. It was not going to happen for the wrath of God was being poured out upon the land. These were “days of vengeance” (Luke 21:22).

Israel had rejected the Messiah. Israel had dared to crucify the Son of God. Israel had cried and pleaded that the blood of Christ be upon their head (Matthew 27:25). The foolish prayer was heard. Jesus had stated plainly that great tribulation would be poured out upon the nation before the generation He spoke to vanished (Matthew 24:34).

Beginning in AD 66 the full fury of the wrath of God began to be unleashed. What Jesus said would happen, the apostle John saw would happen. In his vision of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, John saw the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse ride. He witnessed the scenes of Divine wrath in the Seal Judgments and then in the Trumpet Judgments.

9:1. and I saw a star fall from heaven. In the Trumpet Judgments, John saw nature itself being used by God to administer discipline upon those who were the enemies of the saints (Revelation 8:1-13). John now beholds the picture of terror once more as it mounts in its awful intensity. The terrors coming upon the people of the earth are beyond nature; they are demonic. John watches in fascinated horror as a fallen star opens the abyss.

**Special Note.**

In biblical imagery and in Jewish thought a star was a living thing representing some great personage. Revelation 1 states, "*the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches*" (Revelation 1:20). But sometimes a star can be great in evil. Such is the case here for John sees a fallen star, a fallen angel taking a key that was given to him and deliberately opening the abyss to unleash the horrors it contains. No holy angel would want to do that, but a fallen angel would.

9:1. to him was given the key. A key represents power or authority. Who is this fallen angel? The most famous of all the fallen angels is Lucifer. Authority or power was given to Lucifer. Lucifer has no independent authority. As a creature he too is subject to the Sovereign. Lucifer received his evil authority and he uses it. To Lucifer it is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven. Lucifer has always wanted to be like the Most High God. Lucifer, being given permission, opened the door to the black abyss and when he did, "*there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit*" (Revelation 9:2).

**Special Note.**

Commenting on this scene Matthew Henry wrote, "The devil carries on his designs by blinding the eyes of men, by extinguishing light and knowledge and promoting ignorance and error. He first deceives men, and then destroys them; wretched souls follow him in the dark, or they durst not follow him."

2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

9:2. And he opened. And the angel opened.

9:2. The bottomless pit. the abyss. In Scripture, the bottomless pit was an intermediate place and not the final place of the unbelieving which is why we read in Revelation 20:14 that "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." Demonic beings and others may be found in the abyss while they wait for final judgment.

- *Luke 16:22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*
- *1 Peter 3:19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;*
- *Jude 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.*

3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

9:2-3.

#### **Out of the Abyss**

- Black smoke arose from the abyss
- Locusts swarmed out from the abyss
- The atmosphere was darkened because of the smoke from the abyss

4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.

9:4. And it was commanded them. Even that which is from the abyss is under authority and has limitations. Normally, locust will destroy green things.

#### **What was not to be Hurt**

- The grass of the earth was not to be hurt
- No green thing was to be hurt
- No tree was to be hurt
- Anyone who had the seal of God in their foreheads was not to be hurt

#### ***Special Note.***

The command to the locust came from God for only He can restrain evil and direct it to His appointed end. In context God determined to all evil creatures to punish evil individuals who were not protected by “the seal of God in their foreheads.” It is the nature of evil that it is indiscriminate. It does not care whom it hurts and devours as long as its ravenous appetite is allowed to be satiated.

5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

9:5. they should be tormented five months. Five months would be 150 days.

#### ***Special Note.***

While the locust in John’s vision are malicious, malignant, and destructive they have about the same span of life or activity as normal desert locust, five months.

6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7 And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces *were* as the faces of men.

9:7. the locusts were. the locusts appeared.

8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as *the teeth* of lions.

9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power *was* to hurt men five months.

9:3-10. five months. 150 days.

#### **The Appearance of the Hideous Creatures from the Abyss**

- The creatures from the abyss had the appearance of locust
- The creatures from the abyss had the shape of a horse dressed for battle
- The creatures from the abyss had on their heads crowns of gold
- The creatures from the abyss wore the face of a man
- The creatures from the abyss wore hair like the hair of women
- The creatures from the abyss bore teeth that were as the teeth of lions
- The creatures from the abyss wore a breastplate of armour that was like iron
- The creatures from the abyss had wings which sounded like many horses rushing into battle
- The creatures from the abyss had tails that imitated the tail of a scorpion with stinging power

#### ***Special Note.***

From the symbolism of the locust a number of observations can be made about demons and demonic activity.

First, demons are under the immediate leadership of Satan himself who is called in the Hebrew tongue Abaddon (destruction), and in the Greek tongue Apollyon, which means, "Destroyer" (Revelation 9:11).

Second, demons are limited by the sovereign will of God. The locusts were commanded not to hurt the vegetation that would have been their normal diet (Revelation 9:4). They were commanded not to hurt the elect of God that had been sealed in their foreheads (Revelation 9:4b). They were commanded to only torment the non-Christian community (Revelation 9:5).

Third, demons are powerful creatures of darkness, which is why so many people became enslaved to sin in the form of pornography, drugs, alcohol, anger, money, power, and all the other works of the flesh (Galatian 5:19-21).

Fourth, the power of demons is manifested by the symbol of authority in the crowns of gold (Revelation 9:7); the show of wisdom in the faces of men (Revelation 9:7); the allurements of beauty reflected in the ornamental hair some have (Revelation 9:8); their strength as the teeth of lions, and by their armor of iron defense (Revelation 9:9) (Dr. William Barclay).

11 And they had a king over them, *which is* the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath *his* name Apollyon.

9:11. And they had a king over them. This is contrary to nature.

***Special Note.***

- *Proverbs 30:27 The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands.*

**The Names of Satan in Scripture**

• Satan	(opponent, adversary)	1 Chronicles 21:1
• Lucifer	(morning star)	Isaiah 14:12
• Devil	(diabolos, Accuser)	Matthew 4:1
• Enemy		Matthew 13:38-39
• Beelzebub	(dung god; ruler of demons)	Luke 11:15
• Murderer		John 8:44
• Liar		John 8:44
• Thief		John 10:9,10
• Prince of this world		John 12:31
• God of this world		2 Corinthians 4:3-4
• Prince of the power of the air		Ephesians 2:1-2
• Adversary		1 Peter 5:8
• Abaddon	(a destroying angel)	Revelation 9:11
• Apollyon	(a destroyer)	Revelation 9:11
• Accuser of our brethren		Revelation 12:10
• Old Serpent		Revelation 19:9
• Dragon		Revelation 20:2

**Fifth Trumpet: Killing of Men**  
**First Woe is Past: Plague of Locusts**  
**Revelation 9:12**

12 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

9:12. One woe is past. One trouble is past. The fifth angel has sounded his trumpet.

**Sixth Trumpet: A Great Slaughter**  
**Second Woe: An Army of Horsemen**  
**Revelation 9:13-21**

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

9:12. from the four horns of the golden altar. The articles of the Temple which John was familiar with are the same as the Temple articles that are seen in heaven.

***Special Note.***

The Tabernacle which Moses had constructed during the wilderness journey was based on a heavenly pattern which had been given to him in the holy mount.

- *Hebrews 8:5 Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.*

***Special Note.***

9:13. the golden altar. The cry for judgment came from the golden altar which is before God in heaven. That is significant, for the four horns of the golden altar represent the saving work of Jesus Christ and the salvation He accomplished on Calvary's cross. The cry from the altar was the cry for judgment upon those who have rejected Christ.

14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, **Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.**

9:14. Loose the four angels which are bound. Four angels are referenced elsewhere in Revelation.

- Four angels stand on the four corners of the earth. Revelation 7:1,2
- Four angels are said to be bound in the Euphrates. Revelation 7:14,15

9:13-14. the great river Euphrates. The Euphrates River was the boundary for the nation of Israel. God promised Abraham, “*To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates*” (Genesis 15: 18). The angels are sent to judge the whole land of Israel. As a people of the covenant they had rejected the Messiah. Now they would be judged fully.

15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

9:15. an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year. This totals a time period of 391 days plus 1 hour.

***Special Note.***

1 year = 360 days, 1 month = 30 days, plus 1 day, plus 1 hour = 391 days plus 1 hour.

The affairs of humanity are under the sovereign control of God who operates according to a definite plan indicated by the specific time given to each event.

16 And the number of the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

9:15-16. the army of the horsemen. By using the imagery of a cavalry, John may have been instilling a sense of dread of foreign invaders for the Parthians, who dwelt beyond the Euphrates and were the most dreaded cavalry in the world. It had attacked Rome in 53 BC and again in AD 62. John saw a vast host of 200 million, which means they were beyond numbering, like the chariots of God.

- *Psalms 68:17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.*

***Special Note.***

There are other supernatural horses mentioned in Scripture.

- Supernatural horses are associated with Elijah. *2 Kings 2:11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.*
- Supernatural horses are associated with Elisha. *2 Kings 6:17 And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.*

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

9:17. jacinth. A precious blue stone.

9:17. brimstone. sulphur.

**A Hideous Horse Creature and Rider**

**The Breastplates  
of the Riders**

- Fire
- Jacinth
- Brimstone

**The Heads of the Horses**

Shaped like a lion  
Able to breath forth fire,  
smoke, and brimstone

**The Tails of the Horses**

Shaped like a serpent

***Special Note.***

“The horses, the riders, and the locusts which preceded them are John’s symbols, given to him to express certain specific things. They are symbolic. John has told us in the beginning of the book that he is writing a book that is filled with symbols. So we are not to look at these as the kinds of locust which we have, like those grasshoppers, and locusts, and scorpions, that you know about. But they are symbols of the very things that are very terrifying in the eternal plan of God” (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

This quotation by Dr. Johnson, a devout, articulate, and leading Premillennial Dispensational teacher, now with the Lord, illustrates the challenge of consistently taking Revelation “literally” by way of interpretation. John wrote in an apocalyptic style full of symbolism.

18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

9:18. By these three.

- |                  |    |                  |
|------------------|----|------------------|
| • By the locusts | or | By the fire      |
| • By the horses  |    | By the smoke     |
| • By the riders  |    | By the brimstone |

19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

### **The Spiritual Climate of Society and the Need for Judgment**

20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

9:20. that they should not worship devils. that they should not worship demons.

***Special Note.***

How foolish are individuals to create an image of gold and silver, of brass, of stone, of wood, with their own hands, and then worship what they have made. Such activity is the epitome of human stupidity.

**Three Things an Idol Cannot Do**

- An idol cannot see
- An idol cannot hear
- An idol cannot walk

**Three Things God Can Do**

- |              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| God can see  | Deuteronomy 32:20 |
| God can hear | 1 Kings 8:45      |
| God can walk | Genesis 3:8       |

No matter how severe the judgment of God is, the heart is so stubborn it will not repent. God must change the heart and if He does not, the heart will only grow harder still.

21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

9:17-21. Neither repented they. Since men do not repent, God will not cease to express the righteous judgments of His wrath. It is all very sad. After seven seal judgments, after six trumpet judgments, the earth still remains steadfast in sin. Men are judged because they have sinned against God and hurt His servants. But the voice from the altar (Revelation 9:13) reminds all of the power of prayer and the justice of the resurrected Savior.

***Special Note.***

It is important to see in these verses, not an apocalyptic timetable but a message for God's people. John was writing to his seven churches a great letter of hope and encouragement in the midst of tribulation. Over and over he emphasized that Jesus Christ would triumph over the rulers of this world and that the prayers of the saints would be heard. May that message be heard afresh in every generation.

**What the Ungodly will not Repent Of**

- Idolatry (worship of demons)
- Murder
- Sorcery (magic, witchcraft, drugs)
- Fornication
- Theft

## REVELATION 10

### A Brief Summary Outline Revelation 1:1-10:11

I. The Opening Vision of the Resurrected Christ	Revelation 1
II. The Seven Letters to Seven Churches of Asia Minor	Revelation 2-3
III. The Vision of the Throne in Heaven and the Little Book	Revelation 4-5
IV. The Six Seals of the Seven Sealed Book are Opened	Revelation 6
V. An Interlude and a Vision of the 144,000	Revelation 7
VI. The Opening of the Seventh Seal and Seven Trumpet Judgments	Revelation 8
VII. The Continuation of the Fifth and Sixth Trumpet Judgments	Revelation 9
VIII. An Interlude before the Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet	Revelation 10

### Revelation Chapter 10 Summary

This chapter is an introduction to the latter part of the prophecies of the Revelation. In this chapter there is a remarkable description of a very glorious angel with an open book in his hand (Revelation 10:1-3) followed by an account of seven thunders which the apostle heard. However, what was communicated to John was not allowed to be recorded for the moment (Revelation 10:4). As the unfolding scene continued, John saw a solemn oath taken by Him who had the book in His hand (Revelation 10:5-7). Instructions were then given to the apostle and observed by him (Revelation 10: 8-11).

### Second Interlude

**During this Second Interlude,  
John Bears Witness to a Little Scroll  
Revelation 10:1-11  
and saw Two Witnesses  
Revelation 11:1-14**

#### *Special Note.*

The verses in chapters 10:1-11:14 form an interlude between the sounding of the sixth and the seventh trumpets. The sixth trumpet blast has been sounded but the seventh is silent until Revelation 11:15. In between the sixth and the seventh trumpets are terrible sights to see.

1 And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

10:1. another mighty angel. The arresting description of this Angel is such that suggests it might be the Lord Jesus Christ. But John says he saw “another of the same kind” of angel, which rules out this being a theophany. Jesus is the unique Son of God and there is no other like him.

10:1. a rainbow was upon his head. The rainbow was the sign of the covenant God made with Noah that He would never again destroy the world by water. The rainbow used here in the Revelation speaks of the fact that there will be peace between God and men.

**The Title Deed  
A Claim**

2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and *his* left *foot* on the earth,

10:2. a little book. This is not the book of chapter 5 for there is no article spoken of here. This is a little book, a title deed, reflecting the claims of God upon the earth. The content of the book of Revelation 5 contains the whole of the rest of the Revelation. This book confines itself to what will happen when the Seventh Trumpet is sounded. “We really do not know what the seven thunders are” (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

***Special Note.***

“Stars and Stripes nailed to the North Pole.—Peary.” On September 6, 1909, this dramatic message from U.S. Arctic explorer Robert Edwin Peary was flashed around the world by cable and telegraph. It was his way of claiming the territory for the United States of America. The long quest to reach the North Pole had apparently finally succeeded, and Peary had planted the U.S. flag (nicknamed the Stars and Stripes) there (*Encyclopedia Britannica*).

10:2. His right foot upon the sea and *his* left *foot* on the earth. The angel is seen as taking possession for God of His creation.

3 And cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

10:3. And cried with a loud voice. And swore with a loud voice.

**The Description of a Mighty Angel  
Revelation 10:1-3**

- He wore a cloud for clothing
- He had a rainbow upon his head
- His face shined like the sun
- His feet were as pillars of fire
- His hand held a Little Book which was opened
- His right foot was upon the sea
- His left foot was upon the earth
- His voice was like that of a roaring lion

10:3. seven thunders uttered their voices. This is an unusual expression. Matthew Henry observes that the voice of the Mighty Angel “was echoed by *seven thunders*, seven solemn and terrible ways of discovering the mind of God” (Matthew Henry Commentary).

***Special Note.***

Attention is drawn to the seven voices of God in Psalm 29.

**Psalm 29A Psalm of David**

*Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. 2 Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.*

- *3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.*
- *4 The voice of the Lord is powerful;*
- *the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.*
- *5 The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.*
- *7 The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire.*
- *8 The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness; the Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.*
- *9 The voice of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests: and in his temple doth every one speak of his glory.*
- *10 The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever. 11 The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.*

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, **Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.**

10:4. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices. What did the seven thunders say? We do not know. They are sealed. It is folly for individuals to proceed to interpret the seven thunders as Ellen G. White and others have tried to do. Ellen White wrote seven convoluted and incoherent paragraphs about the seven thunders which have been preserved in her works, *Jots and Tittles II* (MS 59, August 16, 1900, pages 8-9).

10:4. I was about to write. John was prohibited from publishing what he had learned from the seven thunders. Sometimes God reveals and sometimes He conceals. For this reason Jesus spoke to the people of His day in parables. His teaching was revealed to His disciples but was concealed from others.

- *Mark 4:10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. 11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: 12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.*

10:4. I heard a voice.

- Adam and Eve heard the voice of God before The Fall and enjoyed fellowship with the Divine. Then they heard the voice of God after The Fall and fled. *Genesis 3:8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.*
- Abraham heard the voice of God and spared the life of his son Isaac. *Genesis 22:11 And the Angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.*
- Moses heard the voice of God and gave to Israel the Law. *Exodus 19:19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.*
- Samuel heard the voice of God and was able to speak with prophetic authority. *1 Samuel 3:11 And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.*
- Paul heard the voice of God and the world was turned upside down for the cause of Christ. *Acts 9:4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*
- John heard the voice of God and wrote of those things which were yet to come. *Revelation 1:15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.*

10:4. Seal up...write them not. John is told not to write what the seven thunders said. The sealing of the information would be for only a short time in the same manner as Daniel was told to seal up for a time what he wrote.

- *Daniel 12:4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*

### **The Swearing Angel**

5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

6 And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

10:5-6. And the angel...lifted up his hand to heaven. The angel is going to take an oath and sware by "him that liveth for ever and ever."

10:6. that there should be time no longer. that there will be delay no longer. The angel swears that "there will be delay no longer."

***Special Note.***

Perhaps the best way to speak of eternity is to understand that time will be endless.

7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

10:7. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel. We do not normally think of someone blowing a trumpet for days. But John says that the seventh angel sounds his trumpet judgment for days. This means that the seventh judgment will not be immediate. It will take some days to be accomplished.

10:7. should be finished. shall be finished.

10:7. the mystery of God. The mystery of God, the secret of God, is His divine program in history now revealed. The Lord will avenge His own. There will be judgment upon the wicked. The gospel will be preached. The devil, the Dragon, and the False Prophet will be cast into hell. The earth will be renewed. There will be a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The church has a glorious future but the wicked have a terrible fate which awaits them. All this and more is the secret of God which shall come to a conclusion soon. "The secret of God is the whole purpose of God in history whereby man is finally given what God intended for Him to have" (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

***Special Note.***

This phrase, the mystery of God, is used by Paul in Colossians 2:2.

- *Colossians 2:2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;*

The mystery of God is that Jews and Gentiles would be united into one body and blessed with spiritual riches.

- *Ephesians 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;*

***Special Note.***

Biblically, a mystery refers to something that is known to those within a fraternity, but not to those outside the fraternity. To them, certain things remain a “mystery”, they remain a “secret.”

**The Mysteries of the Bible**

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| • Matthew 5:11                    | The mystery of the kingdom of God        |
| • Romans 11:25                    | The mystery of the blindness of Israel   |
| • Romans 16:25                    | The mystery of preaching Jesus Christ    |
| • 1 Corinthians 2:7               | The mystery of the wisdom of God         |
| • 1 Corinthians 15:51             | The mystery of the bodily transformation |
| • Ephesians 1:9                   | The mystery of God’s will                |
| • Ephesians 3:3,4; Colossians 4:3 | The mystery of Christ                    |
| • Ephesians 3:9                   | The mystery of the fellowship            |
| • Ephesians 5:32                  | The mystery of Christ and the Church     |
| • Ephesians 6:19                  | The mystery of the gospel                |
| • Colossians 1:26, 27             | The mystery of the riches of God’s glory |
| • Colossians 2:2; Revelation 10:7 | The mystery of God                       |
| • 2 Thessalonians 2:7             | The mystery of iniquity                  |
| • 1 Timothy 3:9                   | The mystery of the faith                 |
| • 1 Timothy 3:16                  | The mystery of godliness                 |
| • Revelation 1:20                 | The mystery of the seven stars           |
| • Revelation 17:7                 | The mystery of the woman                 |

10:7. as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. as he hath evangelized to his servants the prophets. The prophets preached the gospel, the good news, the glad tidings, which is why Paul appealed to the Law and to the prophets to establish his theology.

- *Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.*

8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, **Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.**

**John Requests the Little Book**

9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, **Give me the little book.** And he said unto me, **Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.**

10:9. Take *it*, and eat it up. Eating is a symbol of appropriation and assimilation. This is what Ezekiel did.

- *Ezekiel 3:1 Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel. 2 So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll.*

***Special Note.***

There was a Jewish custom that was used to help young children learn. The letters of the alphabet would be made from flour and honey. Then, when the child was able to identify the letters correctly, he was able to eat them much like alphabet cereal today. Words formed from sugared cereal can be very sweet. However, as the Word of God can be sweet, it can also be very bitter as it pronounces judgments upon individuals. At such time it is more of a challenge to be a messenger with a mandate. Still, the servant of the Lord will be careful to communicate what the Lord has given and when the Lord would have His message given (Dr. William Barclay).

10 And I took the little book out of the angels hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

10:10. in my mouth sweet as honey...my belly was bitter.

***Special Note.***

It is possible that the teaching of verse 10 is that the kingdom of God must come through suffering.

- *Luke 24:25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?*
- *Acts 14:22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*

***Special Note.***

During the wilderness journeys of Israel, the people were given manna to eat, reflecting the Word of God. To those who were in fellowship with the Lord, the manna was as sweet as honey. To those who were in rebellion against the Lord, the manna was bitter. In like manner, when a person's heart is towards the Lord then the Word of Truth is sweet and something to be desired. When a person is not in fellowship with the Lord, His word is bitter and is resisted.

11 And he said unto me, **Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.**

10:11. Thou must prophesy again before many people. Thou must prophesy again among many people.

**To Whom John will Preach**

- Among many people
- Among nations
- Among languages
- Among kings

10:11. tongues. languages.

## REVELATION 11

### Revelation Chapter 11 Summary

In Revelation 11 an account is recorded of a measuring-reed given to the apostle to take the dimensions of the temple (Revelation 11:1-2). John also recorded the appearance of the two witnesses of God (Revelation 10:3-13), the sounding of the seventh trumpet and what followed (Revelation 10:14-19).

#### Attention was paid to these witnesses: their association with the temple Revelation 11:1-2

1 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, **Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.**

11:1. The measuring of the Temple, like the sealing of the saints (Revelation 7:2,3), was for the purpose of protecting the faithful one's from the demonic terrors about to descend upon the Earth. God will always protect His saints, not in the sense of excluding them from suffering but in the sense that after the danger passes the Church lives on.

2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months [3 ½ years].

11:2. The presence of impending danger just outside the inner Temple area of security has a historical basis. In AD 70 when the Roman army was attacking the city of Jerusalem the Jews began to retreat. Fighting was taking place in the Court of the Gentiles, the Court of the Women, the Court of the Israelites, and the Court of the Priests which contained the altar of burnt offering made of brass, the altar of incense made of gold, and the Holy Place. In this court only the priests could come. As the fighting grew fierce, the Zealots urged their fellow citizens to fall back to the priestly court where God would stop the Gentiles (Romans) advance. For John, there was a spiritual reality for the true Temple of God, the Church (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:20, 21; 1 Corinthians 3:16 cf. 2 Corinthians 6:16) would be protected. No harm would come to it. The terror was to last for only a limited time reflected in the 42-month period.

#### The Duration of their Ministry Revelation 11:3

3 And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

11:3. a thousand two hundred and threescore days. 1,260 days.

It is not difficult to trace the origin of the phrase 42 months. It goes back to the reign of terror under Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, who dared to force Greek language and Greek culture and worship on the Jews. When the Jews resisted, a blood bath followed. There was a great slaughter of Israelites that was finally stopped by the efforts of Judas Maccabees and his followers. Waging guerrilla warfare, the Maccabees won some stunning victories. Finally, Antiochus and his soldiers were driven out of the land and the Temple was restored. The whole terrible time had lasted 42 months, from June 168 BC to December 165 BC. Today, the Jews still celebrate Hanukah to commemorate this period of restoration and cleansing. The phrase 42 months was stamped upon the ancient Jewish mind as a time of terror, suffering, and martyrdom. In the midst of the physical suffering there was to be spiritual suffering as well for God would send His two prophets. Clothed in sackcloth, commissioned to preach for 3 1/2 years the prophets did not offer hope but condemnation.

### **Their Personal Protection and Power** **Revelation 11:4-6**

4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks [lamp stands] standing before the God of the earth.

11:4. There are several possibilities in identifying the two witnesses. If the passage is viewed as an allegory the two witnesses might be the Law and the Prophets or the Law and the Gospels, or the *Old Testament* and the *New Testament*. Another possibility is that the two witnesses are Elijah and Enoch for these two men never died (Genesis 5:24; 2 Kings 2:11). A third understanding is that witnesses are Moses and Elijah who appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mark 9:4).

5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

11:6. These have power to shut heaven.

#### ***Special Note.***

Moses and Elijah exercised the power attributed to the two witnesses. The two witnesses had power to devour their enemies (2 Kings 1:10, 12; Hosea 6:5). They could stop the rain from falling (Revelation 11:6 cf. 1 Kings 17:1). The two witnesses could turn water into blood (Exodus 7:14-18) and then smite the earth with plagues.

**The Termination of Their Ministry**  
**Revelation 11:7-10**

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8 And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongue and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

11:9. tongue. languages.

11:9. shall not suffer. shall not allow.

10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

**Their Ultimate Translation**  
**Revelation 11:11-14**

11 And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

11:11. And after three days and an half. A reference to a short period of time in comparison to the number of days they had prophesied.

***Special Note.***

“Here may be a reference to the resurrection of Christ, who is the resurrection and the life. The dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Or there may be a reference to the resurrection of Lazarus on the fourth day, when they thought it impossible. God's witnesses may be slain, but they shall rise again: not in their persons, till the general resurrection, but in their successors. God will revive his work, when it seems to be dead in the world” (Matthew Henry).

11:11. the Spirit of life from God entered into them.

***Special Note.***

God put not only life, but courage into them. God can make the dry bones to live; it is the Spirit of life from God that quickens dead souls, and shall quicken the dead bodies of his people, and his dying interest in the world” (Matthew Henry).

11:11. great fear fell upon them which saw them. The effect upon the people who witnessed the resurrection of the two witnesses was fear.

***Special Note.***

“The reviving of God's work and witnesses will strike terror into the souls of his enemies. Where there is guilt, there is fear; and a persecuting spirit, though cruel, is not a courageous, but a cowardly spirit. Herod feared John the Baptist” (Matthew Henry).

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, **Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.**

11:12. Come up hither. This phrase was used in Revelation 4:1 when John was commanded to “come up hither” in order to be shown spiritual realities.

13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second woe is past; *and*, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

11:14. The second woe....the third woe. The second trouble... the third trouble.

11:14. The Seventh Trumpet sounded to announce the sovereign reign of the Lord over the nations of the earth (Revelation 11:15-19). The nations resisted the reign of the Sovereign with violence.

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, **THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD ARE BECOME THE KINGDOMS OF OUR LORD, AND OF HIS CHRIST; AND HE SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER** [Exodus 15:18; Daniel 2:44; 7:14].

16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

17 Saying, **We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.**

18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

## REVELATION 12

### Revelation Chapter 12 Summary

It is likely that Revelation 12-14, from the sounding of the seventh trumpet to the opening of the seven vials, is not a prediction of things to come, but rather a recapitulation and representation of things past. As God would have the apostle to foresee future events so He would have him review what these events were in the past so that he might have a more perfect idea of them in his mind. The Lord would have John to observe an essential unity between prophecy and the Providence that is always fulfilling the Scriptures. In Revelation 12 there is an account of the contest between the church and antichrist, the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. The angelic conflict which began in heaven (Revelation 12:1-11) is carried on in the earth (Revelation 12:12-17).

### Seven Personages: Revelation 12:1-14:20

#### First Person: the woman clothed with the sun Revelation 12:1-2

#### The First Wonder (Sign)

1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

12:1. a great wonder. a great sign. In context a sign refers to a miracle that has spiritual significance. John uses the term for sign this way in his gospel (John 2:18; 6:30). John says it was a "great sign" to stress the importance of this sign.

12:1. a woman. John sees a woman, and the question arises, "Who is the woman?" Some have suggested the woman is the Virgin Mary for Jesus was born of a virgin. Others have suggested that the reference is to a system of teaching. Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy said that the woman was – Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy, the "man-child" was her teaching, and the Dragon was "moral mind"! Still others have suggested the woman is the church.

Concerning the woman the best understanding is that the woman is Israel, which means that she represents all those who have the faith of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Collectively, in the Old Testament, spiritually, Israel was considered to be the Bride of God. In Isaiah 54:5 we read, "*For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of Host is His name.*" As the wife of Jehovah, Israel was spiritually the mother of His son, the Messiah. *Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

***Special Note.***

The image of the sun, moon, and stars being Israel would be familiar to the Jewish reader who knew the story of Joseph.

- *Genesis 37:9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. 10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?*

2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

12: travailing in birth. The coming of the Messiah was something the Jews travailed over. Some believed the Messiah would be a conquering hero. Others thought He would be “*a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.*”

**Second Person: A Great Red Dragon  
Revelation 12:3-4**

**The Second Wonder (Sign)**

3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

12:3. a great red dragon. The concept of a Red Dragon was well known to the ancient world. In Babylon, where the Jews were once exiled for 70 years, in the temple of Marduk, the creating god, there was a great image of a red-gleaming serpent that represented the defeated dragon of chaos. The Old Testament has reference to a dragon. The dragon appears as Rahab, a poetical name for Egypt, in Isaiah 51:9. The dragon is associated with Leviathan, which may refer to the crocodile, a symbol for the ruling powers of Egypt (Psalm 74:12-14). The dragon is associated with behemoth, a terrible creature of uncertain identity in Job 40:15. The fact that the Dragon is “red” speaks of his murderous nature.

12:3. ten horns, and seven crowns. Horns and crowns speak of strength and power.

***Special Note.***

To talk about the great red dragon is to speak of a real spiritual person. The devil is not an idea or a power, but a person. God has a specific purpose for the devil, which is why he is not destroyed immediately.

4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

12:4. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven. Based on a “star” being a symbol for an angel, it has been surmised that Satan has gathered around him a third of all the angels that were created. These non-elect angels are the devil’s demons who go forth to serve him (Ezekiel 28; Isaiah 14).

12:4. and the dragon stood before the woman. and the dragon waited, and kept on waiting, before the woman. The picture is that of the devil standing before the woman, waiting for the child to be born in order that he might destroy the infant as soon as it was born.

When Satan tried to destroy the promise of the Messiah through Pharaoh, the sovereign of Egypt was defeated in his nefarious design by a baby’s tear (Exodus 2:5-10). The story of Esther records how the devil’s design to destroy the Jews was frustrated. When we come to the New Testament, the gospel of Matthew records that in the person of Herod the Great, the infant that was born to Mary was in great danger for Herod sought to take his life (Matthew 2:20). But the plans of Herod were frustrated and the child Jesus was spared.

### **Third Person: A Man Child Revelation 12:5-6**

5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and *to* his throne.

12:5. And she brought forth a man child. And she brought forth a son, a male.

12:5. who was to rule all nations. Jesus does rule all nations as King of kings and Lord of lords.

- *Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

12:5. a rod of iron. This is a reference to the Messiah as King.

- *Psalms 2:8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. 9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

12:5. And her child was caught up unto God, and *to* his throne. This a reference to the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. John omits the life of Christ on earth to speak of His triumphant victory over the great dragon leading Him to His throne in heaven.

- *Acts 1:10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*
- *Acts 2:32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days.

12:6. a thousand two hundred and threescore days. 1,260 is 3 ½ years.

12:6. where she hath a place prepared of God. God has always protected His people. Certainly national Israel has been protected historically despite many attempts to exterminate the Jews. The promise of Genesis 12:3 has been honored. *“And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”*

In like manner the church has always been protected, and shall continue to be protected, for Christ loves the church and for her He died.

“The Church’s one foundation  
Is Jesus Christ her Lord,  
She is His new creation  
By water and the Word.

From heaven He came and sought her  
To be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her  
And for her life He died.

She is from every nation,  
Yet one o’er all the earth;  
Her charter of salvation,  
One Lord, one faith, one birth;

One holy Name she blesses,  
Partakes one holy food,  
And to one hope she presses,  
With every grace endued.

The Church shall never perish!  
 Her dear Lord to defend,  
 To guide, sustain, and cherish,  
 Is with her to the end:

Though there be those who hate her,  
 And false sons in her pale,  
 Against both foe or traitor  
 She ever shall prevail.

Though with a scornful wonder  
 Men see her sore oppressed,  
 By schisms rent asunder,  
 By heresies distressed:

Yet saints their watch are keeping,  
 Their cry goes up, "How long?"  
 And soon the night of weeping  
 Shall be the morn of song!

'Mid toil and tribulation,  
 And tumult of her war,  
 She waits the consummation  
 Of peace forevermore;

Till, with the vision glorious,  
 Her longing eyes are blest,  
 And the great Church victorious  
 Shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union  
 With God the Three in One,  
 And mystic sweet communion  
 With those whose rest is won,  
 With all her sons and daughters  
 Who, by the Master's hand  
 Led through the deathly waters,  
 Repose in Eden land.

O happy ones and holy!  
 Lord, give us grace that we  
 Like them, the meek and lowly,  
 On high may dwell with Thee:

There, past the border mountains,  
Where in sweet vales the Bride  
With Thee by living fountains  
Forever shall abide!"

Samuel J. Stone, 1866

***Special Note.***

In AD 66, the Palestinian church fled the persecution that came upon the Jews for revolting against Rome. The Lord provided Christians a safe haven in the Decapolis city of Pella (Petra). This is a historical fact attested to by early Christian historians Eusebius and Epiphanius (Mark 13:14; Matt 24:15; Lu 21:20-22; cf. 19:43-44). From the outbreak of the Jewish revolt in AD 66 to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 was about 42 months or 3 ½ years.

**Fourth person: The Archangel  
Revelation 12:7-12**

**War in Heaven**

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

***Special Note.***

In Jewish thought Michael was the great champion of the people of God (cf. Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1). Being an elect angel confirmed in holiness, Michael and his angels fought against Lucifer and his angels and prevailed. Here is a marvelous passage of Scripture for in it we have a glimpse of a civil war in heaven.

12:7. And there was war in heaven. Just when the great angelic conflict first began is not certain. It may have taken place prior to creation or more likely after the creation of the world. Only one thing is certain about the timing. The angelic warfare did occur prior to the fall of man for it is Lucifer who tempted Adam and Eve to join him in his revolt against God. From this passage several conclusions can be noted about Satan.

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| ❖ He lost the war in heaven                          | Revelation 12:8a                |
| ❖ He lost his position in heaven                     | Revelation 12:8b                |
| ❖ He was cast out into the earth                     | Revelation 12:9                 |
| ❖ He retained the ability to deceive the whole world | Revelation 12:9                 |
| ❖ His angels (demons) were cast out with Him         | Revelation 12:9                 |
| ❖ His exile was witnessed by Christ                  | Luke 10:18                      |
| ❖ His power on earth was broken by Christ            | Revelation 12:10 cf. Luke 10:17 |
| ❖ He still stands to accuse the saints before God    | Revelation 12:10                |

❖ He knows that his time is short	Revelation 12:12
❖ He has a tremendous amount of anger	Revelation 12:12
❖ As he once declared war on Israel so he has turned to making war with the Church	Revelation 12:13, 17

8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

12:9. which deceiveth the whole earth. Satan is the Great Deceiver because he blinds the minds of men through religion, through thoughts of relative righteousness, and through unbelief.

- *1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*
- *2 Corinthians 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*
- *2 Corinthians 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, **Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.**

12:9-10. Now is come salvation. At this moment is come salvation. The church shall emerge triumphant over the devil who is called the great dragon.

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

12:1. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. The reference is to the violent, sacrificial death of Christ at Calvary and is inclusive of His spiritual death for it is the blood of the Lamb.

“Did we in our own strength confide,  
Our striving would be losing;  
Were not the right man on our side,  
The man of God’s own choosing:

Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus it is He,  
 Lord Sabaoth, His name, From age to age the same,  
 And He must win the battle.”  
 “A Mighty Fortress is Our God”  
 Martin Luther

12:11. and they loved not their lives unto the death.

This was the attitude of Jesus.

- *John 10:11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.*

The love of Christ was manifested in His propitiation which was His work of satisfying the righteousness of God.

- *1 John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

This was Paul's attitude.

- *Acts 21:13 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.*

12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

12:12. he knoweth that he hath but a short time. Satan is a defeated enemy.

- *1 John 3:8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

“Low in the grave he lay, Jesus my Savior,  
 waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord!

Up from the grave he arose;  
 with a mighty triumph o'er his foes;  
 He arose a victor from the dark domain,  
 And he lives forever, with his saints to reign.

He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

Robert Lowry (1826-1899)

**Fifth person: the woman with child**  
**Revelation 12:13-17**

**War on Earth**

13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man *child*.

12:13. he persecuted the woman. he, the dragon, a reference to Satan, persecuted the woman. Verses 13-17 expand verse 6. The woman speaks of Israel, or better, the true believing ones which would include all those who name the name of Christ in every generation.

***Special Note.***

The woman was persecuted because of her identity with Christ. The Christian is persecuted because of Christ.

- *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. 20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.*

**Supernatural Protection God Gives to the Woman**  
**Revelation 12:14-16**

14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

12:14. two wings of a great eagle. When the Lord delivered Israel from the Land of Bondage He spoke of it in pictorial language.

- *Exodus 19:4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.*

12:14. a time, and times, and half a time. Meaning, three and one half years.

**Special Note.****Forty Two Months  
(3 ½ Years)**

John uses different ways of describing a recurring time span: 42 months, 1260 days; time, times, and half a time.

- Jerusalem trampled on. *Revelation 11:2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty two (42) months.*
- Mourning of two witnesses. *Revelation 11:3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore (1260) days, clothed in sackcloth.*
- Preservation of the elect. *Revelation 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore (1260) days.*
- Preservation of the elect. *Revelation 12:14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*
- Abuse from the Beast. *Revelation 13:5 And there was given unto him [the Beast] a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty two (42) months.*

**A Composite Picture**

- The Beast makes war against the saints
- Two witnesses testify and proclaim the gospel
- The woman (church) is fed in the wilderness
- The Gentiles tread Jerusalem

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

***Special Note.***

Scholars differ as to whether verses 15 and 16 should be interpreted symbolically or literally. If symbolic, the teaching reflects the struggles that take place between Christians and the enemies of the faith and the help they receive from the Lord.

If literal, and futuristic, there is no end to what can happen with a literary imagination. For example, it has been said that the two wings of an eagle refer to the airplanes of the United States of America, and Phantom jets! (Quoted by Dr. S. Lewis Johnson, Lectures on Revelation).

There is a third option and that is the referencing of a literal historical event crouched in symbolic terms. It is possible that John had in mind the historical events of the Exodus which are spoken of by Moses in figurative language. When Pharaoh sought to drown the children of Israel in the Red Sea, God parted the sea and gave Israel deliverance.

- *Exodus 15:1 Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. 2 The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.*
- *Exodus 15:11 Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? 12 Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.*

12:15-16. and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood.

The general idea of the ground opening up to swallow the flood waters issued forth by the dragon to drown the woman, finds support from the Old Testament. One story is told in Numbers 16.

When Korah, Dathan, and Abiram came “like a flood”, suddenly and unexpectedly, to rebel against Moses, the Lord moved to swallow them up – literally.

- *Number 16:31 And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: 32 And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. 33 They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.*

What is certain is that the gates of hell shall never prevail against the church. Here is the comfort of the saints. Come to Christ. Live for Him. Love Him, and be saved.

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.

12:17. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed. The Christian is part of a great cosmic conflict that shall end in victory in Jesus.

- *Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

“O victory in Jesus,  
My Savior, forever.  
He sought me and bought me  
With His redeeming blood;  
He loved me ere I knew Him  
And all my love is due Him,  
He plunged me to victory,  
Beneath the cleansing flood.”

12:17. the testimony of Jesus Christ. This is a reference to the testimony that Christ bore rather than a testimony to Christ.

## REVELATION 13

### Revelation Chapter 13 Summary

Revelation 13 reveals the discovery and description of the enemies of the church. These enemies are not really new though they are represented as two beasts. The record of the first beast is found in Revelation 10:1-10 while Revelation 10:11-18 describes the second beast. The first beast may represent Roman pagan authority while the second beast represents Roman ecclesiastical authority, all of which was abused.

#### Sixth person: the Beast out of the Sea Revelation 13:1-10

1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

13:1. And I stood upon the sand of the sea. And he stood (the dragon stood) upon the sand of the sea. The Dragon is the Devil (Revelation 20:2). The sea is a reference to the Mediterranean Sea. The sea is often a figure of the nations of the earth.

- *Isaiah 57:20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*
- *Revelation 17:15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*

13:1. and saw a beast rise up. The Dragon stood to bring forth allies from the sea and from the land. The first ally is the Beast from the Sea.

13:1. and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. On the heads of the Beast were blasphemous names.

#### ***Special Note.***

John wrote in a day in which there was a lot of blasphemy. The emperors of Rome often took titles of deity unto themselves. With reference to himself, Nero had inscribed on coins, "The Savior of the World." Domitian (24 October 51 – 18 September 96) referred to himself as "Lord and God". In order to enforce worship of themselves, the emperors of Rome created an elaborate organization of magistrates and priesthood. The Jews considered every form of emperor worship to be blasphemous.

It is possible that the Beast from the Sea refers to the Roman Empire in general, or to a terrible Roman emperor in particular, such as Nero.

### Five Characteristics of the Beast from the Sea

- The Beast from the Sea had power. Seven heads, ten horns, and ten crowns speak of power. But notice, the power of the Beast from the Sea is a derived power from another source which is satanic.

13:4 *the dragon, which gave power unto the beast.*

13:5. *“and there was given to him authority.”*

***Special Note.***

Satan wants to be like God, which means he wants to be worshipped as God. One way Satan is able to get people to worship him is by empowering others. *2 Corinthians 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*

- The Beast from the Sea was hideous in nature. He was a Beast among Beasts (13:2). The Beast from the Sea looked like a leopard, with feet of a bear, and with the mouth of a lion.

***Special Note.***

No doubt this imagery comes from Daniel 13. In the book of Daniel, chapter 13, the prophet saw four beasts. Daniel saw a lion, representing Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian Empire. He saw a bear, representing Cyrus the Great and the Medo-Persian Empire. Daniel saw a leopard, representing Alexander the Great and the Grecian Empire. In John's image of the Beast from the Sea there is a composite image of the previous apocalyptic images.

- The Beast from the Sea promoted worship of himself. This is possible because the Beast from the Sea has a charismatic personality. Moreover, he is a powerful person who is willing to exercise brute strength. *Revelation 13:4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?*

***Special Note.***

It is instructive to observe that the praise and honor given to the Beast from the Sea is language that was traditionally reserved for God. *Exodus 15:11 Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?*

It is not unusual for the world to give honor and glory to an impressive personality, for the natural man is not guided by the Spirit of God, but by sight. Because man looks on the outward appearances we read of Esau being preferred over Jacob. Esau was simply more appealing than Jacob, for Esau was a rugged man's man while Jacob was soft and more of a momma's boy. *Genesis 25:27 And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.*

In the initial presentation of Saul and David we find wonderful statements being made about Saul. He is referred to as a *"choice young man, and a goodly; and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people (1 Samuel 9:2).* In contrast, David, the shepherd boy was hardly thought about when Samuel came to the home of Jesse to anoint the next king of Israel. *1 Samuel 16:11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.*

Among the apostles, Judas was preferred by the others for he was the one who *"carried the bag"* (John 12:6). People looked upon Judas with favor and trust.

- The Beast from the Sea has a limited tenure. He was given permission to act for 42 months (13:5). *"and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months."*
- The Beast from the Sea will manifest great arrogance and will boast (13:5). *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.*

#### **Summary of the Five Characteristics of the Beast from the Sea**

- The Beast from the Sea had power.
- The Beast from the Sea was hideous to look upon.
- The Beast from the Sea received worship.
- The Beast from the Sea had a limited time to operate.
- The Beast from the Sea will manifest great arrogance and will boast.

2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

13:1-2. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard. For John, the Beast which he saw rise out of the sea embodied all the base characteristics of previous empires (Daniel 7:3-7). John's Beast was like a leopard with bear's feet and a lion's mouth which is to say that for the apostle the Roman Empire included all the terrors and fears associated with all the evil empires which had gone before. The Beast, which John saw, had seven heads and ten horns. These heads and horns could easily stand for the various rulers and emperors of Rome. The emperors were as follows.

- Julius Caesar      49-44 BC
- Augustus            31 BC - AD 14
- Tiberius             AD 14-37
- Caligula             AD 37-41
- Claudius            AD 41-54
- Nero                  AD 55-68

**Between AD 68-69 there was a period of 18 months  
in which three men tried to rule Rome:  
Galba, Otho, and Vitellius**

- Vespasian            AD 69-79
- Titus                 AD 79-81
- Domitian            AD 81-96

*Special Note.*

**A Composite of Beastly Natures**

Because John saw elements of the symbolic world empires which Daniel saw, it is not unreasonable to believe that certain characteristics of the historic empires would continue to exist in John's day and beyond. Until there is a new heaven and a new earth the beastly nature of animals, and men, will continue.

Leopard	Alexander the Great	Grecian Empire	Agility
Bear	Cyrus the Great	Medo-Persian Empire	Strength
Lion	Nebuchadnezzar	Babylonian Empire	Power

John saw in the Beast from the Sea the Agility of Alexander (Leopard), the strength of Cyrus the Great (Medo-Persian Empire), and the raw power of a Nebuchadnezzar (Babylonian Empire).

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

13:3. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death.

*Special Note.*

The first seven major emperors of Rome, together with three other rulers, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, would have made up the ten horns. However, as John saw one of the seven heads, perhaps representing Nero, wounded unto death. But then, the wounded head was restored. Something like this was believed to have happened in history. When Nero committed suicide on 9 June 68, the news was too good to be true. Rumors spread leading to the legend of *Nero redivivus* or Nero resurrected. It was whispered that whatever deadly wound Nero inflicted upon himself was healed.

***Special Note.***

When the authentic resurrection of Jesus Christ was preached to Festus by Paul, the idea was rejected and the apostle was ridiculed. *Acts 26:24 And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.*

Here is an individual that has a rapport with the world to the point that even the rumor of a resurrection finds credibility and follows after the Beast from the Sea.

13:3. and all the world wondered after the beast. and all the world followed after the beast.

***Special Note.***

“There is a fountain fill'd with blood  
Drawn from EMMANUEL's veins;  
And sinners, plung'd beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.

William Coper  
Olney Hymns (1779)--'Praise for the Fountain Opened'

“Oh! For a closer walk with GOD,  
A calm and heav'nly frame;  
A light to shine upon the road  
That leads me to the Lamb!

William Cowper  
Olney Hymns (1779)--'Walking with God'

4 And they worshipped the dragon, which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, **Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?**

5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months.

13:5. and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. and power was given unto him to continue for three and one half years.

***Special Note.***

Five times we read that power was given to the Beast from the Sea.

13:2. *the dragon gave him his power.*

13:4. [the dragon] *gave power unto the beast.*

13:5. *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.*

13:5. *and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.*

13:7. *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints.*

While Satan was able to empower the Beast from the Sea in some areas, the ability to persecute the saints for forty two months was given to him by God and God alone. Satan does not decide how long he will torment individuals for time is under the sovereign control of God. The reign of the Beast from the Sea is determined by God. If the Dragon had his way the Beast from the Sea would never stop tormenting the saints.

***Special Note.***

It is a great source of comfort and encouragement to the saints that evil shall not be allowed to dominate forever. God has designed a moral universe. Evil will find its boundaries. “When Satan does his worse, he is still God’s devil” (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson). Satan is subject to the Sovereign.

6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

13:6. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy.

**Three Targets of Blasphemy**

- God
- The Temple
- Those who dwell in heaven

***Special Note.***

The Christian’s defense of God against permitting evil is known, theologically, as the Doctrine of Theodicy. A basic question arises as to why a good God permits the manifestation of evil. It is not an easy question to answer in light of pain and suffering. Another question is whether or not God is personally responsible for evil.

These are not easy questions to answer. Christian dogma has maintained that God cannot sin and cannot tempt anyone else to sin so that He is not the source of evil.

Evil has entered into the universe through the free exercise of the will of angels and man. The angel Lucifer took an inward look leading to a downward fall as he decided he could, and would be like the most high. He rebelled against God and that is the origin of evil in the universe.

When Adam and Eve disobeyed the Lord by eating of the forbidden fruit they too rebelled against God leading to spiritual and physical death. God did not tell Lucifer to become prideful nor did He tell, or compel, Adam and Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. In all of this God remains holy, just, good, and separate from sinners.

That God allows sin to exist, evil men to live, and the Devil to tempt means that God has a purpose for evil. It is possible that only against the black backdrop of sin God is able to manifest all of His divine attributes which include justice, grace, goodness, and mercy. What is certain is that evil did not arise out of His being. God is the “Holy One”.

“GOD moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.”

William Cowper  
Olney Hymns (1779)—  
'Light Shining out of Darkness'

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongue, and nations.

13:7. tongue. language.

8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

13:7-8. written in the book of life. John says that all whose names are not written in the Book of Life shall worship the Beast from the Sea.

***Special Note.***

The election to salvation was not a general, racial, or indiscriminate selection. Rather, God chose particular individuals to be the heirs of salvation and wrote their names in the Book of Life in Christ who was slain, in the eternal plan of God, before the foundation of the world.

***Special Note.***

Either the names recorded in the Book of Life were written “*from the foundation of the world*”, or, the Lamb was “*slain from the foundation of the world.*” Whichever interpretation is chosen, both are true for God is eternal and His decrees are eternal as well. In light of Revelation 17:8, many interpreters assume the reference here in chapter 13 is a reference to the Book of Life, the most natural and grammatical reading of the verse makes it refer to the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

- *Revelation 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

***Special Note.***

In Daniel 3 we have a prelude of this event. Nebuchadnezzar created a majestic image and commanded everyone in his kingdom to bow down and worship it.

*Daniel 3:4 Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, 5 That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: 6 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.*

However, there were three men from Babylon who did not bend and they did not bow to the image. There was Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

The refusal of these godly men to worship an idol infuriated Nebuchadnezzar to the point he had the Hebrew slaves bound and thrown into a fiery furnace.

*Daniel 3:19 Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. 20 And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.*

In matchless grace, God came to deliver Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, not by removing them from the hour of tribulation but by joining them in their sufferings.

- *Daniel 3:24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. 25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. 26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth of the midst of the fire.*

9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

13:10. Here is the patience. Here is the perseverance.

**Seventh Person: the Beast out of the Earth  
Revelation 13:11-18**

**The Rise of the Beast  
Revelation 13:11**

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

**Ten Characteristics of the Beast from the Earth  
Revelation 13:11-18**

- He looked normal (13:11).  
*“He had two horns like a lamb”*
- He spoke with the eloquence of the devil (13:11).  
*“He spake as a dragon”*
- He exercised great power (13:12).  
*“And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him”*
- He insisted that people worship the Beast from the Sea (13:12).  
*“and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast”*
- He was able to perform spectacular miracles (13:13).  
*“he maketh fire come down from heaven”*
- He was able to deceive and lead people into idolatry. This was done in the sight of the Beast from the Sea to please him (13:13).  
*“saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast”*
- He was able to give life to the image of the Beast from the Sea (13:15).  
*“And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast”*

***Special Note.***

The “life” that was given by the Beast from the Land to the idol causing it to speak was an artificial life for only God can give true life.

- He was able to kill by the power of suggestion (13:15).  
*“as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed”*

**Special Note.**

There is a biblically historical example of a “Beast”, in the person of Nebuchadnezzar, promoting the death of those who did not worship his established idol. *Daniel 3:9 They spake and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. 10 Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, shall fall down and worship the golden image: 11 And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.*

- He had power to control the commerce of individuals (13:16-17).  
*“no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name”*
- He was known to the people of his day (13:18).  
*“count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six”*

**Special Note.**

From the ten characteristics ascribed to the Beast from the Earth, it becomes obvious that his primary function is to bring honor and glory to the Beast from the Sea as he too is emerged by the Dragon. It may be that John was speaking about Nero as the Beast from the sea, that is, from the nation of Rome. The Beast from the Land might refer to the cult of Emperor Worship of worship of Caesar for the purpose of this second beast was to get people to honor the first beast.

13:11. out of the earth. out of the land. The reference may be to the Land of Palestine. There were many false messiahs during the first century.

13:11. another beast. The word “another” means another of the same kind, as opposed to another of a different kind. The second beast, the Beast from the Land is like the first beast, the Beast from the Sea.

13:11. like a lamb. Though this beast looked like a lamb, he had two horns, he spoke “*as the dragon*”, which means he spake like the Devil because it was the Devil who energized him.

**Special Note.**

In context, Jesus has been pictured as a Lamb slain.

- *Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

Now, another lamb appears for the “dragon”, the Devil, is always counterfeiting God.

**Special Note.**

Elsewhere in Scripture there is the image of a horned ram, but it represented the Grecian Empire of Alexander the Great.

- *Daniel 8:3 Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last.*

**A Comparison of two Lambs**

**The Lord as a Lamb**

- The Lord speaks the Word
- The Lord speaks the truth
- The Lord was gentle

**The Beast as a Lamb**

- This lamb speaks as a dragon
- This lamb speaks deceptive words
- This lamb is willing to kill

**The Career of the Beast of the Earth**

**He is the Minister of Religious Propaganda**

**Revelation 13:12-17**

Since John was writing of things that were to “*shortly come to pass*” in his day, as per Revelation 1:1 (with Revelation 22:7, 12, 20), since the church was being ruled by Nero, a man with a beastly character, since the church was being forced to engage in emperor worship or suffer economic sanctions, since John said the number of the Beast from the Sea was the number of a man which could be known, it is not unreasonable to identify the two beasts of Revelation 13 as Nero, the Beast from the Sea, and emperor worship, the Beast from the Land.

12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13:12. and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship. and makes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship.

**Special Note.**

In Revelation 13:1-10, the characterizing word is “given” which underlined the fact that it was the dragon which gave power to the Beast from the Sea (antichrist).

In Revelation 13:11-18 the characterizing word is the word “to cause” or “to make” individuals to worship.

The Beast from the Land turns the hearts of individuals from God to worship the Beast from the Sea, a political personage, and thus hearts are turned from heaven to humanism.

**Human Manifest I  
1933**

FIRST: Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.

SECOND: Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process.

THIRD: Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.

FOURTH: Humanism recognizes that man's religious culture and civilization, as clearly depicted by anthropology and history, are the product of a gradual development due to his interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage. The individual born into a particular culture is largely molded by that culture.

FIFTH: Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. Obviously humanism does not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered, but it does insist that the way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relations to human needs. Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.

SIXTH: We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism, modernism, and the several varieties of "new thought".

SEVENTH: Religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation—all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.

EIGHTH: Religious Humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion.

NINTH: In the place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well-being.

TENTH: It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural.

ELEVENTH: Man will learn to face the crises of life in terms of his knowledge of their naturalness and probability. Reasonable and manly attitudes will be fostered by education and supported by custom. We assume that humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking.

TWELFTH: Believing that religion must work increasingly for joy in living, religious humanists aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life.

THIRTEENTH: Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world.

FOURTEENTH: The humanists are firmly convinced that existing acquisitive and profit-motivated society has shown itself to be inadequate and that a radical change in methods, controls, and motives must be instituted. A socialized and cooperative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world.

FIFTEENTH AND LAST: We assert that humanism will: (a) affirm life rather than deny it; (b) seek to elicit the possibilities of life, not flee from them; and (c) endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for the few. By this positive morale and intention humanism will be guided, and from this perspective and alignment the techniques and efforts of humanism will flow.

*Special Note.*

By way of application, as worship of a “beast” was practiced in John’s day in the form of emperor worship, the worship of Caesar, “beast worship” is practiced today. The modern term is “Personality Cult” and refers to those nations which demand citizens to honor a leader in an inordinate way. The Islamic community worships Mohammad. The North Koreans worship Kim Jong and call him “Dear Leader.” Many Communist worshiped Joseph Stalin when he was alive. Adolf Hitler enthralled the masses with his rhetoric and created a personality cult around himself as “The Fuhrer”. In a political-religious world of Personality Cult worship, there is an ecumenical spirit. Many Catholics exalt the Virgin Mary, or the pope, to the point of worship, and that too is wrong.

**The False Elijah Prepares the Way for a False Messiah**

13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

13:13. And he doeth great wonders. The Beast from the Land continues to imitate Christ in that Christ performed miracles to testify to being the authentic Son of God, the Messiah, and the Savior of the World. In like manner the Beast from the Land “*doeth great wonders.*” They are “*lying wonders*” (2 Thessalonians 2:9), but impressive nevertheless. He even called fire down from heaven as Elijah.

- *2 Kings 1:10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.*

***Spiritual Note.***

It is not enough to have truth. One must have a love for the truth or the heart will surely be deceived. Therefore, “*love the truth and peace*” (Zechariah 8:19).

***Special Note.***

During His ministry, Christ performed many miracles because the Old Testament said that when the Messiah came, He would perform miracles. Jesus performed miracles that men might see in Him the marks of the Messiah.

- *John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

***Special Note.***

The role of the second beast, the Beast from the Land, is to promote the worship of the first beast, the Beast from the Sea. By doing this the Beast from the Land assumes the counterfeit role of the Holy Spirit whose job it is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. So the unholy trinity is complete.

**An Unholy Trinity**

The Unholy Father	The Red Dragon who is the Devil
The Unholy Son	The Beast from the Sea who is empowered by the dragon
The Unholy Spirit	The Beast from the Land who promotes worship of the first beast

***Special Note.***

The Beast from the Land, which is the Unholy Spirit of the Unholy Trinity, performs the role of a False Prophet. As a False Prophet who is energized by the Dragon, the Devil, he is able to perform miracles. He leads in the universal worship of the people and he performs great wonders.

14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

13:16. to receive a mark...in their forehead. Satan is a counterfeiter. His main objective is to be "like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:14). It is not surprising that the Beast should mark people in their foreheads in imitation of the Lord placing His mark in the same place.

***Special Note.***

Satan has a counterfeit sealing in imitation of the sealing of the saints.

- The Counterfeit Sealing. *Revelation 13:16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:*

*Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

- The Authentic Sealing. Revelation 7:3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

*Revelation 9:4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.*

*Revelation 14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*

17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

***Special Note.***

The complete picture presented in Revelation 13 teaches that evil can totally dominate the soul of a person. A person can so abandon themselves to the works of the flesh that they actually become the property of Satan, devoted to him and remain forever under satanic authority, without genuine faith but happy in the evil that is committed. Jesus told certain religious people they were of the devil. *John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.* Those who do not follow Christ do not consider themselves slaves of the devil nor working out his lusts, but such individuals are enslaved to the Evil One, and they obey his will.

13:11-17. Concerning the number of the Beast, the suggestions as to the meaning of 666 are endless. It is possible that the number has something to do with Nero.

Many ancient manuscripts give the number as 616. If we take Nero in Latin and give its numerical equivalent, we do get the sum of 666. N = 50 E = 6 R = 500 O = 60 N = 50. The name can equally well be spelled without the final N, which would give the number 616. In Hebrew the letters of Nero Caesar also add up to 666.

It may well be that the number of the Beast from the Land is for Nero but again, it is speculation at best and it is best not to speculate. What is not idle speculation is that the composite picture speaks of two beasts.

There is the Beast from the Sea reflecting the abuse of political power. There is the Beast from the Land reflecting the abuse of religious power. Opposing the Beast from the Sea and opposing the Beast from the Land was the Church which was exhorted to be faithful unto death to Christ while pledging ultimate allegiance only to Him and His kingdom.

**The Divine Counsel**  
**Revelation 13:18**

18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore *and* six.

13:18. for it is the number of a man.

***Special Note.***

It is possible to render these words, “for is the number of man”, in the sense of mankind which includes men and women. The number represents man in his weakness and sinfulness (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson, Lectures on Revelation).

13:18. six hundred threescore and six. This number six hundred threescore and six (666) is used three times in the Old Testament.

- Six hundred and sixty six was the number of people of Adonikam who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon. *Ezra 2:13 The children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty and six.*

***Special Note.***

Adonikam (my lord has risen), Adonijah (Jehovah is my Lord), was an Israelite whose descendants returned to Palestine from Babylon after the Captivity. As a chieftain, along with Nehemiah, he sealed a covenant to keep the Law of God (Nehemiah 9:32-38; 10:14-16).

- Six hundred and sixty six was the income from gold which Solomon received in one year. *1 Kings 10:14 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold. 2 Chronicles 9:13 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and threescore and six talents of gold.*

This fixed income of gold may have come from “rental income” as per Song of Solomon 8:11-12. *Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces of silver. 12 My vineyard, which is mine, is before me: thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.*

1,000 pieces of silver times 1,000 vineyards times 200 people would equal 200 million pieces of silver equivalent to 1 million silver mina which equals 666 gold talents.

Solomon was able to collect so much money during his reign because there was an excess supply of silver and it was undervalued. *1 Kings 10:27 And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance.*

Because he was able to collect so much money, Solomon was able to control the economy. In like manner the Beast of Revelation 13, (Nero?), had power to control the economy and hurt the Christian community.

13:18. it is the number of a man. It is possible that John did not have an individual in mind when he wrote this verse but was referring to men or mankind. Seven is the perfect number in Scripture. Man falls short of perfection in every digit, 6-6-6. Man was created on the sixth day. He was given six work days. When John uses the number “six hundred threescore and six”, “is a symbolic way of describing man’s total inadequacy” (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

***Special Note.***

It is possible that the person John was referring to, if he had a person in mind, was Nero.

**Doctrine of the Beast of Revelation 13**  
**Dr. William Barclay**

1. Though the term antichrist is not used by John in the Revelation to describe a person who did not believe that Jesus was God incarnate, then who, or what is the Beast of Revelation 13?
2. It can be said immediately that whoever or whatever the Beast of Revelation 13 references, it is a historical reference, because of the time element of the book. *Revelation 1:1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:*
3. The first readers of Revelation 13:18 were told to “*count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*”
4. There is a historical personage of this period whose name in both Hebrew and Greek, adds up to six hundred and sixty six in the ancient alphanumeric method used in that day. His name in the English is Nero, but he was known as *Neron Kesar* or simply n-r-w [o sound]- n q [k sound] s-r, in the Hebrew since Hebrew has no letters to represent vowels.

N = 50  
R = 200  
W = 6

N = 50  
Q = 100  
S = 60  
R = 200  
666

5. The character of Nero was beastly in nature.
  - He had his mother beaten to death, and slashed open by soldiers, after three attempts to poison and drown her failed.

- A few years later he had his wife Octavia killed, so he could marry his mistress Poppaea.
  - Then he kicked her to death when she complained he came home too late.
  - Suetonius reported he castrated the boy Sporus and then lived with him as a wife.
  - But it was his persecution of the Christians that gave him the title of “the Beast.” When fire broke out in Rome, Nero blamed the Christians of whom many were arrested and burned alive, used as human torches to light up his garden party.
6. John said of the Beast, it was given to him “*to make war with the saints, and to overcome them*” (Revelation 13:7). And so he did. Tertullian (ca. 155-220) wrote, “At Rome, Nero was the first who stained with blood the rising faith.”
  7. Many of the earliest Christian writers on the Apocalypse, from Irenaeus to Victorinus, of Pettau, to Commodian in the fourth, Andreas in the fifth and St. Beatus in the eighth century connect Nero, or some Roman Emperor, with the Beast of the Apocalypse.

### A Comparison The Beast from the Sea and the Beast from the Earth

#### **Beast from the Sea**

Looked like a leopard with feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion.

#### **Beast from the Earth**

Looked like a lamb with two horns.

#### **Beast from the Sea**

Received a mortal head wound which healed.

#### **Beast from the Earth**

Never wounded.

#### **Beast from the Sea**

Able to communicate effectively while speaking blasphemies.

#### **Beast from the Earth**

Able to communicate effectively while speaking like the dragon.

#### **Beast from the Sea**

Not able to perform miracles.

#### **Beast from the earth**

Able to perform miracles such as making fire come down from heaven.

**Beast from the Sea**

Empowered for 42 months.

**Beast from the Earth**

No time limit is given.

**Beast from the Sea**

Made war with the saints even unto death.

**Beast from the Earth**

Hurt the saints economically if they refused the act of honor by the placing a mark, name or number (666) of the first beast, the Beast from the Sea, on their right hand or in their forehead.

**Beast from the Sea**

Received personal worship.

**Beast from the Earth**

Caused people to worship the first beast, the Beast from the Sea, by deception in making a dumb idol speak.

### Spiritual Lessons from Revelation 13

1. Satan as “the Dragon” will empower certain world leaders and governments illustrated by the power which was given to the Beast from the Sea. *Revelation 13:2 “and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.”* Satan can empower individuals who open themselves up directly, or indirectly, to his influence and guidance.
2. Because the devil, and man, want to be like God, and be the object of worship, the heart must guard against such idolatry. *Revelation 13:4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?* The cult of emperor worship, and by way of application, the making of a “Movie Idol” or a “Teen Idol”, or an “American Idol,” is a direct violation of the principle of the commandment of God forbidding such activity.
3. Evil can persuasively present its ideologies while being bold to defy the righteousness of God. *Revelation 13:5 And there was given unto him [the Beast from the Sea] a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.*
4. Whatever power evil may exercise it is under the sovereign control of God. *Revelation 13:5 and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.* Why God gives power to men to do that which is evil is a great mystery.
5. As Christians are part of the angelic conflict they will come under demonic persecution in the normal affairs of life. *Revelation 13:6 And he [the Beast from the Land] opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.]*

6. The elect shall be faithful and shall never worship man or the devil. In contrast, those whose names are not written in the book of life shall worship man or the devil. *Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*
7. Christ has a chosen remnant, redeemed by his blood, recorded in his book, sealed by his Spirit; and though the devil and his antichrist might overcome their bodily strength, and take away their natural life, they can never conquer their souls, nor prevail with them to forsake their Savior and revolt to his enemies (Matthew Henry).
8. The assurance is given in Revelation 13:10 that when God has accomplished His work on mount Zion, His refining work, then He will turn His hand against the enemies of His people. Those who have killed with the sword shall themselves fall by the sword. Those who led the people of God into captivity shall themselves be made captives. Until the Lord comes to deliver His people they are to exercise patience and faith in times of persecution. There is to be patience under the prospect of great sufferings; there is to be faith in the prospect of a grand and glorious deliverance.
9. It is a mystery as to why God has allowed sin and the manifestation of sin in the Beasts of Revelation. There is the mystery of iniquity.
  - *2 Thessalonians 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.*
10. Whatever the divine purpose might be for evil in the universe, the heart confesses that the Lord God is holy, just, and good.

## REVELATION 14

### A Glimpse of Gory Revelation 14

After an account of the great trials and sufferings that the servants of God had endured, a more pleasant scene is presented. The day begins to dawn with the Lord Jesus at the head of His faithful followers (Romans 14:1-5). Three angels are sent successively to proclaim the fall of Babylon and the events associated with so great an event (Revelation 14:6-13). The vision of the harvest is given in Revelation 14:14-20.

### A Contrast of Chapter 13 and 14

- In Revelation 13 there is a storm.  
In Revelation 14 there is a refreshing sunset.
- In Revelation 13 there are two terrible beasts.  
In Revelation 14 there is the precious Lamb and 144,000 thousand on Mt. Zion.
- In Revelation 13 there are marked followers of the Beasts with the number 666.  
In Revelation 14 there are the marked followers of the Lamb.
- In Revelation 13 there is the spiritual and moral harlotry of the Beasts.  
In Revelation 14 those who follow the Lamb are undefiled, pure, and truthful.
- In Revelation 13 there is the morally enslaving system of the Beasts.  
In Revelation 14 there is the morally redeeming system of the Lamb who ransoms men.
- In Revelation 13 the political and religious order of humanism is promoted by the Beasts.  
In Revelation 14 the ancient laws of God are united with the new song of Redemption.
- In Revelation 13 the Beasts overcome the saints.  
In Revelation 14 the Lamb is ultimately victorious.
- In Revelation 13 the Beasts deceive multitudes and are marked for destruction.  
In Revelation 14 the elect are in heaven before the throne of God.

**Third Interlude**  
**Revelation 14:1-20**

After the description of the seven personages,  
John heard various announcements proclaimed concerning

**The Vision of the Lamb on Mount Zion**  
**and the 144,000**

**The First Vision**  
**Revelation 14:1-5**

*Special Note.*

There are three visions in Revelation 14 presented in six scenes.

**The Three Visions**

- *Revelation 14: 1 And I looked.*
- *Revelation 14:6 And I saw.*
- *Revelation 14:14 And I looked.*

1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Fathers name written in their foreheads.

14:1. a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion. The poetical background for the Revelation is Psalm 2, which speaks of the nations raging against the Lord. It does not matter for the final victory belongs to the Lamb.

- *Psalms 2:1 Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, 3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. 4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. 5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. 6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*

14:1. an hundred forty *and* four thousand. These witnesses are introduced in Revelation 7:1-4 as the servants of God. They have been sealed by God with a mark on their foreheads for divine protection.

*Special Note.*

The number “*an hundred forty and four thousand*” may be taken as a descriptive number of completions. In Revelation 21:17 we read about the wall of a city measuring “*an hundred and forty and four cubits*” (1 cubit = 18 inches  $144 \times 18 = 2592 \div 12 = 216$  feet).

14:1. having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

***Special Note.***

In the ancient world a mark could stand for five things: ownership, as in the case of a slave who was branded in the name of his owner; loyalty, as when a soldier branded his hand with the name of his beloved general; security, as when a camel was branded in the name of their owner. They were also branded in the name of safety. Devotees of a particular god would stamp the shape, or sign, of that god upon themselves in order to ward off evil.

By way of application, those who belong to the Lord are marked by God.

- The believer's brand shows ownership. The Holy Spirit has been given to every believer as a brand or mark, "*Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory*" (Ephesians 1:14).
- The believer's brand indicates personal loyalty. The Christian is to be loyal to the Lord and "*endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*" (2 Timothy 2:3).
- The believer's brand speaks of his security. *John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*
- The believer's brand speaks of his safety. *Isaiah 54:17 No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.*
- The believer's brand wards off evil. The Christians can always say, "*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*" (Psalm 23:4).

**Characteristics of the 144,000 Saints**

- Sealed. *Revelation 7:3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.* The people of God were marked.
- Chosen by God and called. *Revelation 7:4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*
- Not alone. *Revelation 7:9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

- United to Christ. They Stand with the Lamb. *Revelation 7:9. And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion and with him an hundred forty and four thousand.*
- The 144,000 were Singers. *Revelation 14:3 ...and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand.* What the 144,000 sang about is just as important as the fact that they sang. The redeemed of the Lord were confessional. They had a specific doctrine they sang about. They sang about the doctrine of redemption.
- Virgins. *Revelation 14:4 ...they are virgins.* The principle of purity guided the people of God.
- Loyal. *Revelation 14:4 ... they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.*
- Without deceit. *Revelation 14:5 And in their mouth was found no guile.* They were guided by the principle of truthfulness.
- Worshipful. *Revelation 14:5 ... for they are without fault before the throne of God.*
- Firstfruits. *Revelation 14:5 ...being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.*

### A Song of Praise

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

14:2. the voice of many waters. the sound of many waters. The words speak of the might and power of our Great God. John will repeat these descriptive words about the voice of God in Revelation 19:6.

#### ***Special Note.***

At least twice in the Old Testament the voice of God is described as the voice of many waters.

- *Psalms 29:3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters.*
- *Ezekiel 43:2 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.*

3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

14:3. And they sung as it were a new song. Gipsy Smith once prayed that he would never lose the wonder of being a Christian.

“There's the wonder of sunset at evening,  
The wonder as sunrise I see;  
But the wonder of wonders that thrills my soul  
Is the wonder that God loves me.

O, the wonder of it all! The wonder of it all!  
Just to think that God loves me.  
O, the wonder of it all! The wonder of it all!  
Just to think that God loves me.  
There's the wonder of springtime and harvest,  
The sky, the stars, the sun;  
But the wonder of wonders that thrills my soul  
Is a wonder that's only begun.”

Sung by George Beverly Shea

14:3. redeemed (agorazo, ag-or-ad'-zo), properly, to go to market, (by implication) to purchase. Those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb have been effectively purchased, not provisionally purchased.

### Undefiled Virgins

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.

14:4. for they are virgins. The picture of the church as a pure virgin being presented to the Lord is used by John as it was used by the apostle Paul.

- *2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

***Special Note.***

It must not be thought that John was advocating an elite cadre of celibate Christians. The apostle Paul equals a prohibition against marriage to be a doctrine of demons. *1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.* Origen, the first Christian theologian, had himself castrated. How foolish.

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson contends that John is using the word “virgin” in a figurative sense and in contrast to those who commit spiritual “adultery” by going after false gods. The saints should keep themselves from spiritual adultery, spiritual fornication, and physical impurity.

By way of application, there are many ministries today which compromise the Word of God through ecumenical activities and by appealing to seeker sensitive souls to worship. There is spiritual adultery, and there is spiritual fornication taking place, and that is wrong.

14:4. being the first fruits. The first fruits indicate that there will be a glorious harvest to follow. The sealing of the 144,000 anticipates the vast host that will be saved from all nations which no man can number.

5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

14:5. And in their mouth was found no guile. And in their mouth was found no lie.

14:5. they are without fault. they are blameless.

***Special Note.***

When he was under the Law, Paul said he was “*blameless*”, which means he kept the provisions of the Law. *Philippians 3:6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*

The believer in Christ is also to be blameless by observing the law of the life of the Spirit in Christ Jesus. *Galatians 5:16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

***Special Note.***

Always a concern for God’s people is the possibility of committing spiritual adultery. Many times in the Old Testament it is lamented that the people of Israel went “*a whoring*” after strange gods (Exodus 34:15; Deuteronomy 31:16; Judges 2:17; 8:27, 33; Hosea 9:1). Unfortunately, the passage in Revelation 14:4 does not read as if it is to be understood in a metaphorical manner.

While honesty compels an understanding that exalts celibacy and virginity, care must be taken not to go too far. History records that the idea soon appeared in the early Church that the highest Christian life was possible only if marriage was renounced. One of the leading Church fathers, Origen, had himself castrated to ensure virginity.

History records a Roman trial at which the Christians are charged with being “the people who impose upon silly women and tell them that they must not marry and persuade them to adopt a fanciful chastity” (Ruinart: *Acts of the Martyrs*, 27 April, AD 304).

While the Church must hold an exalted view of celibacy, it is not the only view of the Church on sexuality. In Matthew 19:4-6 Jesus glorifies marriage and warns that what God has joined together, no man should put aside. The apostle Paul idealized marriage and compared it to the relation between Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:22-23). The gospel warning foretold that in the latter times the doctrine would be taught not to marry (1 Timothy 4:3).

***Special Note.***

Heresy may be defined as doctrinal error carried to extreme. The Christian must be very careful to stay close to the text. To speak when the Scriptures speak and to be silent when the Scriptures are silent is a great antidote to spiritual pride, which is tempted to teach what is not warranted.

**The Second Vision  
Revelation 14:6-13**

**The First Proclamation of an Everlasting Gospel  
Revelation 14:6-8**

**The First Angel**

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

14:6. the everlasting gospel. an eternal gospel. This gospel is the proclamation of both grace and judgment.

14:6. in the midst of heaven. The gospel is to be heard by all.

***Special Note.***

Notice that despite the hostility of the two Beasts, the gospel is still preached. The world, the flesh, and the devil cannot restrain or suppress the gospel. Light will always prevail over darkness. During His last entry into the city of Jerusalem, when the Pharisees and scribes protested the honor that was given to Him, Jesus said, *“I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out”* (Luke 19:40). Even if everyone could be silenced, the stones would cry out the message of an everlasting gospel. His claims must be spoken to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people.

**The Second Angel  
The Second Proclamation to Worship God**

7 Saying with a loud voice, **Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.**

14:7. the fountains of waters. the springs of waters.

8 And there followed another angel, saying, **Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.**

14:6-8. Babylon is fallen. Because God presides over a moral universe, He does not wait until eternity to deal with the nations of the earth. In order for the gospel to be heard, Babylon must fall.

***Special Note.***

14:8. Babylon is fallen.

It is possible that John was referring to the city of Rome as “Babylon.” Dr. William Barclay noted that, for John, “Rome was his contemporary Babylon ripe for divine judgment. As Babylon was a golden cup in the hand of the Lord (Jeremiah 51:7) making all the earth drunken, so Rome was also a corrupting force luring the people of the world into immorality.” Rome was led by the madman Nero who was notoriously wicked. During the Reformation Period, the Reformers thought the reference was to papal Rome which they believed had become a pagan city filled with pagan principles and immoral practices.

It is possible that John was referring to the city of Jerusalem which had become corrupt, like the historical Babylon, and so was going to fall. Indeed, the city of Jerusalem did fall to the Roman army in AD 70. *Luke 21:22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.*

It is possible that John was referring to the historical city of “Babylon”, but in a symbolic manner since the city was the center of an apostate organized religion against God, characterized by hatred and hostility. Spiritual Babylon was hostile to spiritual Jerusalem and to the church, and so John was referring to a spiritual battle between two cities with the victory going to Jerusalem. There is ultimate victory for the Lamb and for the saints. This is a message that would be comforting to people in a period of great tribulation.

Finally, for our brethren who believe in a Revived Roman Empire in the last days, it is possible John was talking about a revived Babylonian Empire. In a series of sermons on Revelation in the 1980’s, Dr. S. Lewis Johnson made this suggestion, and then pointed out the growing power of Iraq. That, of course was before the events of 2003 and the fall of Sadaam Hussein. In 2014 it does not look like a revived Babylon Empire has a future after all.

***Special Note.***

Historically, the original Babylon fell to Cyrus the Persian (d. 529 BC). It was one of the most shattering events of ancient history though the prophets of Israel foretold it. Isaiah cried, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground" (Isaiah 21:9). Jeremiah said, "Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed" (Jeremiah 51:8).

14:8. the wrath of her fornication. the passion of her immorality.

**The worship of the beast  
Revelation 14:9-13**

**The Third Angel  
The Third Proclamation**

9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, **If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive *his* mark in his forehead, or in his hand,**

10 **The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:**

14:10. poured out without mixture. which is mixed in full strength.

14:10. into the cup of his indignation. in the cup of his anger.

***Special Note.***

Physical death was threatened by the Beast from the Land against those who did not worship the Beast from the Sea (Revelation 13:15). But here, eternal death is threatened for those who do worship the Beast from the Sea. The wrath of God is unmixed and so is more severe. God's wine is strong. It is fatal. Eternally fatal.

- *Matthew 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

14:10. in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. Those who did not worship the Beast from the Sea were killed publically. They were executed in the presence of others to instill fear and terror. When God renders a just judgment on those who did worship the Beast from the Sea, they will be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lord. It is better to lose one's physical life in the presence of a hostile world than to lose one's eternal soul in the presence of angels and the Lamb.

11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

14:9-11. And the smoke of their torment. Hell is the ultimate expression of the wrath of God (Revelation 14:10). It is a just expression of Divine anger. Hell is the place of no mixture of mercy with judgment; it is the place of total fury. Hell is a place of endless torment. The agony of hell is known to the holy angels and to the Lamb. Once the Christians were thrown to the lions while the world sat in the bleachers and watched. In eternity, it is the ungodly that shall suffer while the holy angels and the Savior who suffered look on.

Hell is a place where the smoke of the torture ascends up forever and ever. The Jewish mind would recall the *Old Testament* account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Genesis 19:28 says that, "*the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.*" Unlike Sodom and Gomorrah the eternal death, the second death, offers no relief by day or night. Time ceases in eternity.

The concept about an eternal unceasing place of torment for the wicked has troubled many people, including evangelicals. The biblical Doctrine of Hell has led to a counter teaching known as the Doctrine of Conditional Immortality.

Conditional Immortality teaches that the soul is not inherently immortal. Only God possesses immortality. *1 Timothy 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Man only becomes immortal through faith in Christ. Unbelievers will bear a just punishment after death, but then will come their extermination, and in that sense their judgment is eternal. The eternality of "eternal punishment" is not a reference to its duration, but to its finality.

Those who believe in Conditional Immortality are not Annihilationist. They do not believe that a person is annihilated at death. They believe that the body and soul either sleeps in the grave until the general resurrection of the just and the unjust, or suffer a limited time of punishment. Ultimately, the wicked are judged, punished, and suffer total destruction.

In contrast to the Doctrine of Conditional Immortality, the Christian church has consistently taught, with some rare exceptions noted, that the punishment of the wicked is "*for ever and ever.*" It is a difficult teaching, which is why it is opposed by non-Christians, conservative Christians, and pseudo-Christians reflected in the cults, such as the Jehovah Witnesses.

### **Three Arguments Against Eternal Punishment And Three Responses**

Argument. The punishment does not fit the crime. Eternal torment for sin is said to be too harsh a penalty to have to pay.

Response. Individuals do not consider sin as horrible as God does.

Argument. The concept of eternal punishment goes against the ethical teachings of Jesus.

Response. Hell is ethical for it declares that there is justice in the world. For God not to punish sin would be unethical. It would make God unjust and even unmerciful towards those who have suffered. To turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to acts of brutality and cries of pain is wrong.

Argument. God will one day redeem all of mankind. *2 Corinthians 5:19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

Response. It can be said that neither the plain language of Scripture, nor the vision of John, offers any hope for such a possibility as nice as that concept appears to be. Of the fifteen times the word hell is used in the Authorized Bible, it is used by Christ. Therefore, hear the words of Jesus, and tremble.

*Matthew 5:29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. 30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.*

***Special Note.***

The lessons of this passage become compelling and terrifying: Turn or burn. Those who will not worship the Lamb shall suffer the fate of the damned and the doom of the Beast.

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

**A Heavenly Command**

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, **Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.**

14:13. Write. Sixteen times in the Revelation, John is instructed to write.

14:13. from henceforth. from now on. The reference may refer to those who died during the Great Tribulation of AD 66 to AD 70. It was great comfort for those who survived the madness of Nero and the destruction of the Holy City by Jewish zealots and the Romans to be told that others who died in the Lord are blessed.

***Special Note.***

Some Bible scholars believe the reference is to those who die in a seven year time period prior to the Lord's Second Advent.

**The Third Vision**  
**Revelation 14:14-20**

**The Blessed Dead and a Great Harvest**  
**Revelation 14:14-20**

**The One Sitting on the Throne**

14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

14:15. for the time. for the hour. A reference to v. 7. *Revelation 14:7 "...for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."*

16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

14:16. thrust in his sickle. swung his sickle.

**The Angel with a Sharp Sickle**  
**Judgment, an Inconvenient and Unwelcomed Truth**

17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.

14:17. having a sharp sickle. The sickle is associated with the harvest season. In Scripture there is the harvest of the righteous, who are gathered in, and there is the harvest of the wicked who are also gathered together for judgment.

***Special Note.***

The judgment of God upon individuals is based on books being opened. This means that the judgment of God is deliberate. It is severe. It is just. It is true. *Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works....15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.* In the end, a person will either be judged on their own works of righteousness, or the works of Another, even Jesus Christ the Righteous One who stood as a Substitute for sinner.

“In evil long I took delight,  
Unawed by shame or fear,  
Till a new object struck my sight,  
And stopped my wild career.

I saw One hanging on a tree,  
In agony and blood,  
Who fixed His languid eyes on me,  
As near His cross I stood.

Sure, never to my latest breath,  
Can I forget that look;  
It seemed to charge me with His death,  
Though not a word He spoke.

My conscience felt and owned the guilt,  
And plunged me in despair,  
I saw my sins His blood had spilt,  
And helped to nail Him there.

A second look He gave, which said,  
“I freely all forgive;  
This blood is for thy ransom paid;  
I die that thou mayst live.”

Thus, while His death my sin displays  
In all its blackest hue,  
Such is the mystery of grace,  
It seals my pardon too.”

***Special Note.***

One reason individuals fear judgment is because we will be found out. Nothing will be hidden. 2 *Corinthians 5:10* *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

Another reason for concern about the coming Day of Judgment is that the individual has nothing to gain. The soul is at the mercy of the Court. Nothing can be done to bribe or change or assuage the ruling of the Court. With this thought in mind, the heart tends to minimize the issue. *Que sera, sera.* Whatever will be, will be.

The Christian can stand before God in the shadow of the Cross. At Calvary, God judged the sins of the elect in Christ. *Romans 8:1* *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

### The Angel from the Altar

#### One Angel Talking to Another Angel The Harvesting of the Vintage

18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, **Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.**

19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs.

14:20. by the space. during the space.

14:20. And the winepress was trodden without the city. Between AD 66 and AD 70 the city of Jerusalem was trodden down by the Romans, and the blood flowed as freely as grapes being crushed in a winepress.

14:20. a thousand and six hundred furlongs. Greek, *stadios* (stad'-ee-os). One furlong is 220 yards, or 660 feet, and there are 8 furlongs in a mile. 1,600 furlongs equals 200 miles.

***Special Note.***

The amount of "*blood*" that resulted from the winepress speaks of the severity of the judgment which John saw filling a stretch of earth more than the full length of Palestine. The height of a horse's bridle is about four feet. The length of Palestine, at the moment, is about 184 miles long.

***Special Note.***

There are about 6 quarts of blood in the human body. 6 x 7 billion people in the world today = 42 billion quarts of blood. If it were possible to pour every drop of blood into an area 200 miles in length, and 4 feet high, there would still be land left over. In other words, there is not enough blood in the world for this passage to be taken literally.

## REVELATION 15

### Revelation Chapter 15

#### Summary

So far in the divine narrative, God has set forth the state of the Church under pagan political powers in the form of the six seals opened. John has presented the state of the church under false ecclesiastical powers in the vision of the six trumpets that began to sound after the opening of the seventh seal. Attention is now redirected to a general and brief account of the past, present, and future state of the church in the form of a little book.

The Lord proceeds to show John in the vision of the seven vials how the great enemies of the church shall be destroyed and by what steps the destruction is to be accomplished. Chapter 15 contains a frightening preparation for the pouring out of the vials. John sees the angels in heaven that are responsible for the execution of this great work. The administration of justice and divine wrath is applauded by a heavenly host (Revelation 15:1-4). There is the sight of holy angels coming out of heaven to receive the vials which are to be poured out, and the great upheaval this judgment will cause in the world (Revelation 15:5-8).

The prelude to the seven bowl judgments began as John saw a sea of glass (Revelation 15:2-4). Angels came down out of the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven (Revelation 15:5-8).

John will see three visions in this chapter.

- First Vision:       A Sign in Heaven               Revelation 15:1
- Second Vision:     A Sea of Glass                 Revelation 15:2
- Third Vision:       The Tabernacle                 Revelation 15:5

### Seven Angels with the Seven Last Plagues

#### First Vision: A Sign in Heaven

1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

15:1. the wrath of God. The wrath of God in its physical manifestation will be satisfied, but the spiritual manifestation of God's judgment continues.

#### Doctrine of the Wrath of God

- The wrath of God fell upon the Exodus Generation. *Psalms 78:31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel.*

- The wrath of God abides upon every unbeliever. *John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*
- The wrath of God is revealed from heaven. *Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;*
- The wrath of God should not be denied. *Ephesians 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.*
- The wrath of God is because of moral failure. *Colossians 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:*
- The wrath of God is poured out upon idolaters. *Revelation 14:9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:*
- The wrath of God is deliberate. *Revelation 14:19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.*
- The wrath of God is just and complete. It is for an appointed time. *Revelation 15:1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.*
- The wrath of God is administered, in part, by the Four Living Creatures in heaven and by holy angels. *Revelation 15:7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.*
- The wrath of God is irreversible according to divine decree. *Revelation 16:1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.*

**Second Vision: A Sea of Glass  
The Overcomers**

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, *and* over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

15:2. And I saw as it were a sea of glass. The reference to a sea of glass mingled with fire may be an allusion to the brazen (laver) seen in the Tabernacle and then the Temple, in which the priests were to wash. Another thought is that the image of a sea of glass mingled with fire refers to the Red Sea that stood solidified while the Israelites went through and the pillar of fire reflected light upon the waters.

15:2. the victory. The victory for some of the saints came through natural death having been faithful to the end by fleeing the cities. The victory for others came in the form of martyrdom whereby even torture did not cause a denial of Christ. John sees the victorious saints in their heavenly bodies standing on the sea of glass holding the harps of God.

#### **Four Victories**

- Victory over the Beast.
- Victory over the Image of the Beast.
- Victory over the Mark of the Beast.
- Victory over the Number of the Name of the Beast.

#### **Two Songs to Sing The Songs of Moses and the Lamb**

3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, **Great and marvellous *are* thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true *are* thy ways, thou King of saints.**

15:3.

#### ***Special Note.***

The words of verse 3 reflect the words in the song the Lord gave to Moses prior to his death. Moses was to teach the song to the Israelites who were to sing it throughout all their generations.

- *Deuteronomy 32:4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.*

4 **Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.**

15:3. the song of Moses...the song of the Lamb. It is possible to understand that two songs were sung. There was the Song of Moses, and there was the Song of the Lamb. It is called the song of the Lamb because undergirding the great work of redemption, expressed in the Song of Moses, is the Lamb.

***Special Note.***

Because they are victorious, the saints sang the song of Moses the servant of God (Revelation 15:3). Here is a wonderful passage that stresses the unity between the *Old Testament* saints and the *New Testament* saints. In heaven the truth is known. There is but one people of God, and they all say the same thing.

**Sing to the Tune of  
*A Mighty Fortress is our God***

“Great and marvellous are thy works,  
Lord God Almighty;  
just and true are thy ways,  
thou King of saints.

Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?  
For thou only art holy:  
For all nations shall come, and worship before thee;  
For thy judgments are made manifest.

**Traditional Verse 3  
*A Mighty Fortress is our God***

“And though this world, with devils filled,  
Should threaten to undo us;  
We will not fear, for God hath willed  
His truth to triumph through us.  
The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,  
One little word shall fell him.”

Martin Luther, 1529

15:3. Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Here are two great titles for the Lord. He is the “Lord God Almighty”, emphasizing His sovereignty, and He is the “King of saints.” Indeed, He is the King of nations. How wonderful it is for every Christian to be part of the kingdom of God, a theocratic kingdom, and ruled over by a just and righteous King.

***Special Note.***

This is not the first song of Moses for we read of that song in Exodus 15:1-19. There is another song attributed to Moses in Deuteronomy 32:1-43. In addition, Moses wrote Psalm 90 and Psalm 91.

### **Third Vision: The Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony in Heaven**

5 And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.

15:6. And the seven angels.

#### **The Appearance of the Seven Angels**

- Clothed in pure and white linen.
- Clothed about their breasts with golden girdles, suggesting royalty.
- Carrying seven golden bowls.

7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

15:7. four beasts. four living creatures.

15:7. seven golden vials. seven golden bowls. The bowls will be poured out in chapter 16 in a worldwide judgment.

#### **Barred from the Temple**

8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

15:8. And the temple was filled with smoke. There was no smoke when the Tabernacle was opened. There was no smoke when the Temple was opened. But there is smoke here. Its source is the glory of God and His power. God is of purer eyes and cannot behold evil.

- *Habakkuk 1:13 Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?*

#### ***Special Note.***

The presence of God acts in wrath and sends forth holy angels as royal priests of judgment. The sanctuary is closed until the judgments are over.

15:8. no man was able to enter into the temple. no man was able to enter into the sanctuary. There are times when God is so disturbed with the activities of people that He will not listen to their prayers or receive their worship. The God of love is the God of wrath.

- *Lamentations 3:44 Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through.*

***Special Note.***

Though God will manifest, when needed, great wrath, He is the God of great grace and faithfulness. Multitudes have found Him to be the Rock of Ages for their souls.

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee;  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy wounded side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Save from wrath and make me pure.

Not the labor of my hands  
Can fulfill Thy law’s demands;  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears forever flow,  
All for sin could not atone;  
Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling;  
Naked, come to Thee for dress;  
Helpless, look to Thee for grace;  
Foul, I to the fountain fly;  
Wash me, Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When my eyes shall close in death,  
When I rise to worlds unknown,  
And behold Thee on Thy throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.”

Augustus Montague Toplady  
Written in 1763



The Rock of Ages, Burrington Combe, England  
where the Augustus Toplady is reputed to have sheltered from a storm  
which inspired his song.



Augustus Montague Toplady  
November 4, 1740 - August 11, 1778

“Clouds gathered in dull, gray heaps around Burrington Combe and broke their silence. Rain slicked down the crevices of the gorge and pooled along the steep path. The man quickened his pace, slogging through water and mud, hoping to escape the ferocity of the storm. He slid his hand along the rough edge of the limestone slope and suddenly found it—a deep crevice. Here he turned and squeezed himself between the narrow walls away from the raging wind and rain. He would wait out the storm, sheltered by the rock. As the elements lashed around the man, he called to mind the greatness of the God he served, how like a Rock He protected His people throughout their sojourn in a barren and hostile wilderness. Thought followed thought, and words heaped up like the clouds until the young man could no longer contain himself. Finding the only thing he could to write on—an old playing card—Augustus Toplady scribbled "Rock of Ages" and one of the Church's most beloved hymns was born. Or so the legend goes” (Kate Uttinger).

## REVELATION 16

### Revelation Chapter 16 Summary

Chapter 16 gives an account of the pouring forth of the vials that were filled with the wrath of God. Historically, these vials were poured out upon the whole Anti-Christian Empire of Rome including Judaism. John sees judgment upon the earth (Revelation 16:2), upon the sea (Revelation 16:3), and upon the rivers and fountains of the waters (Revelation 16:4). John listens as the heavenly hosts proclaim and applaud the righteousness of the judgments of God. The fourth vial was poured out on the sun (Revelation 16:8), the fifth on the seat of the beast (Revelation 16:10, 11), the sixth on the river Euphrates (Revelation 16:12-16) and the seventh into the air and upon the cities so that the nations of the earth fell and the great city of spiritual Babylon (Rome) became nothing more than a memory to God (Revelation 16:13-21).

### First Bowl: Boils Revelation 16:1-2

1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, **Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.**

16:1. a great voice. a loud voice. A loud voice calls special attention to what is being said. John uses this expression several times in the revelation: 1:10; 11:12; 16:1, 17; 19:1; 21:3.

16:1. vials. bowls.

#### Ten Plagues of Egypt

- Water to blood Exodus 7:14-25
- Frog Exodus 8:1-15
- Lice (Gnat) Exodus 8:16-19
- Flies Exodus 8:20-32
- Murrain Exodus 9:1-7
- Boils Exodus 9:8-12
- Hail Exodus 9:13-35
- Locust Exodus 10:1-20
- Darkness Exodus 10:21-29
- Death firstborn Exodus 11:1-12:36

#### Seven Bowls of Judgment in Revelation

- Sea turned to blood Revelation 16:3
- Streams turned to blood Revelation 16:4
- Scorching heat Revelation 16:8
- Euphrates dried up Revelation 16:12
- Boils Revelation 16:2
- Thunder, earthquake Revelation 16:17
- Darkness Revelation 16:10

2 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.

16:2. and poured out his vial. and poured out his bowl.

#### Where Each Bowl was Poured

First Bowl	On earth	Grievous sores	Revelation 16:2
Second Bowl	On the sea	Turned to blood	Revelation 16:3
Third Bowl	On the rivers and streams	Turned to blood	Revelation 16:4-7
Fourth Bowl	On the sun	Scorching heat	Revelation 16:8-9
Fifth Bowl	On the seat of the beast	Darkness ensued	Revelation 16:10-11
Sixth Bowl	On the river Euphrates	Water dried up	Revelation 16:12-16
Seventh Bowl	Into the air	Thunder, lightning	Revelation 16:17-21

#### Second Bowl: Blood in the Seas Revelation 16:3

3 And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.

#### Third Bowl: Blood in the Water Revelation 16:4-7

4 And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.

5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, **Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.**

16:5. Thou art righteous. Even those who receive the severe judgment of God understand that God is justified. Though the unbeliever will curse God, blaspheme God, and hate Him, the ungodly still know God does exist and He is righteous.

- *Romans 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*
- *Romans 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*

6 **For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.**

16:6. For they have shed the blood. The word “for” introduces a purpose clause. The reason for the severe bowls of judgment is because God has promised to avenge His own.

- *Romans 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

16:4-6. John can sympathize with the suffering saints caught up in the turmoil of divine judgment (Revelation 16:6) as a spiritual truth is learned. The saints may, and do suffer for righteousness sake, while the ungodly shall suffer the punishments of an outraged Father who will avenge His Son and those who follow Him (Luke 21:22; Romans 12:19).

7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

#### **Fourth Bowl: Scorching Men Revelation 16:8-9**

8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

16:9. and they repented not. The same sun which softens the butter will harden the clay. The same gospel that will soften the heart of one sinner will harden the heart of another. Repentance is a gift of God which must be granted or no one would ever believe and be saved.

- *Acts 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*

#### **Fifth Bowl: Darkness Revelation 16:10-11**

10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain,

16:10. and they gnawed their tongues for pain. The affliction of time is the affliction of eternity.

11 And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

**Sixth Bowl: Euphrates River Dries Up**  
**Revelation 16:12-16**

12 And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

16:12. the water was dried up.

***Special Note.***

John may have as the background for this part of the vision a historical event. Herodotus (1:91) writes that when the Persian king named Cyrus captured Babylon, he did so by drying up the Euphrates. The Euphrates flowed right through the center of Babylon. Going up the river Cyrus had his army deflect the course of the river into a lake. The level of the water dropped and in the end the channel of the river stretching through Babylon became a dry road. The Persians used the road to enter Babylon and the city was conquered.

16:12. the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

***Special Note.***

John was reminding his audience that the Lord has a way to make even the mightiest of empires fall. To the East of Rome, beyond the Euphrates River lived the Parthians, the great cavalry force Rome feared. The rumor spread that Nero had not died but gone to Parthia and it was from Parthia that Nero *redivivus* (resurrected) was to return. In John's vision it was from across the Euphrates River that death and destruction and judgment was to come.

**Fourth Interlude: Prelude to Armageddon**  
**Three Unclean Spirits Like Frogs**

13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

14 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.

16:14. devils. demons.

**An Unholy Trinity**

- |                           |               |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| • The Dragon              | Unholy Father | John 8:44           |
| • The Beast from the Sea  | Unholy Son    | Revelation 13:1-10  |
| • The Beast from the Land | Unholy Spirit | Revelation 13:11-18 |

15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

16:15. Behold, I come as a thief. The imagery of Jesus coming in judgment upon the wicked, and His coming the Second Time, as a thief, means He will come with suddenness and overwhelming force.

- *1 Thessalonians 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.*
- *1 Thessalonians 5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.*
- *2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

16:15. and they see his shame.

***Special Note.***

According to Alfred Edersheim, it was the custom for Temple guards to stay awake at night to protect the Temple. The officer of the guard would check on the guards to make sure they were doing their duty. If a soldier was found to be derelict, his clothing was burned and he had to make his way back to the barracks the best he could exposing himself to humiliation and shame (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*).

16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

16:16. tongue. language.

16:16. Armageddon (Hebrew, *har-magiddo*, hill or city of Megiddo). "It was famous for two great victories: of Barak over the Canaanites (Judges 4:15) and of Gideon over the Midianites (chap. 7); and for two great disasters: the deaths of Saul (1 Samuel 31:8) and Josiah (2 Kings 23:29-30; 2 Chronicles 35:22). Armageddon became a poetical expression for terrible and final conflict" (The New Unger's Bible Dictionary).

16:13-16. There is in both Jewish and Christian theology a concept of a final conflict between God and the forces of evil. There is also in Jewish and Christian theology the concept of an ongoing struggle between God and the forces of evil. Psalms 2:2 says that, "*The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and His anointed.*"

The symbolic place where good and evil fight in the Jewish mind is a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

**Special Note.**

Because the Christian is engaged in spiritual warfare it is necessary that the whole armor of God be used. *Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.*

**Seventh Bowl: Great Hail  
Revelation 16:17-21**

17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, **It is done.**

16:17. vial. bowl.

16:17. It is done.

**Three Divine Completions**

- |                     |                  |             |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------|
| • “It is finished.” | John 19:30       | Redemption  |
| • “It is done.”     | Revelation 16:17 | Retribution |
| • “It is done.”     | Revelation 21:6  | Restoration |

18 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great.

19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

16:20. And the great city was divided...and every island fled away.

***Special Note.***

It has been argued that the past is a prelude to the future. If the plagues upon Egypt were real, then the Seven Last Plagues of the Revelation are to be taken literally. However, in response, it should be noted that things which are similar are not the same. In the book of Exodus, Moses writes history. In the Revelation, John writes in an apocalyptic style using symbols. The purpose of this style of writing was to conceal information from those not initiated into the mysteries of the gospel, and to convey truth to those who were. The overarching truth is that any political entity, such as the Beast from the Sea, and any religious entity, such as the idolatry promoted by the Beast from the Land, shall be destroyed.

A literal reading of verses 19-20 indicates that Jerusalem will be divided into three parts, every island will vanish from the earth, and every mountain will disappear.

21 And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

16:21. a talent. 100 pounds.

16:21. and men blasphemed God. Despite divine retributive justice, men still blaspheme God.

***Special Note.***

There is a way to avoid being judged by God, and that is to stand in the place where judgment has already taken place. That place is Calvary.

“One of the first gospel illustrations that ever made a real impression upon my young heart was a simple story which I heard a preacher tell when I was less than nine years old.

It was of pioneers who were making their way across one of the central states to a distant place that had been opened up for homesteading. They traveled in covered wagons drawn by oxen, and progress was necessarily slow. One day they were horrified to note a long line of smoke in the west, stretching for miles across the prairie, and soon it was evident that the dried grass was burning fiercely and coming toward them rapidly. They had crossed a river the day before but it would be impossible to go back to that before the flames would be upon them. One man only seemed to have understanding as to what could be done. He gave the command to set fire to the grass behind them. Then when a space was burned over, the whole company moved back upon it.

As the flames roared on toward them from the west, a little girl cried out in terror, "Are you sure we shall not all be burned up?" The leader replied, "My child, the flames cannot reach us here, for we are standing where the fire has been!"

What a picture of the believer who is safe in Christ!

"On Him Almighty vengeance fell,  
Which would have sunk a world to hell.  
He bore it for a chosen race,  
And thus becomes our Hiding Place."

The fires of God's judgment burned themselves out on Him, and all who are in Christ are safe forever, for they are now standing where the fire has been" (H.A. Ironside, *Illustrations of Bible Truth*, Moody Press, 1945).

## REVELATION 17

### Revelation Chapter 17 Summary

Chapter 17 contains another representation of those things that had been revealed before concerning the wickedness and ruin of anti-Christ. This anti-Christ had been before represented as a beast and is now described as a great whore.

In this vision scene the apostle is invited to see this vile woman (Revelation 17:1-2). John tells what a majestic appearance she made (Revelation 17:3-6). The mystery of the scarlet whore is explained to John (Revelation 17:7-12). Her ruin is certain and is foretold (Revelation 17:13-18).

The vision of John enters into a final phase as he witnesses the seven final judgments (Revelation 17:1), which is called Armageddon.

#### *Special Note.*

The “Woman”, the “Great Whore”, of this Revelation 17:1 is identified in verse 18.

### A Historical Background

- *Revelation 17:18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*
- *Genesis 10:8 And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.*

#### *Special Note.*

The land of Shinar is an early reference to the land of Babylon, modern Iraq.

- *Genesis 11:1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. 3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. 4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. 5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 6 And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. 7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.*

8 So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left to build the city. 9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

### A Simple Outline of Revelation 17

- The Vision of the Harlot and the Beast Revelation 17:1-6
- The Interpretation of the Vision Revelation 17:7-18

### First Judgment: Religious Babylon Revelation 17:1-18

1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, **Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:**

17:1. Come hither.

#### Twelve Commanding Voices of Heaven

##### The Command

##### The Voice

- |                   |                                   |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| • Come up hither  | A great unidentified voice        | Revelation 4:1   |
| • Come and see    | First Living Creature             | Revelation 6:1   |
| • Come and see    | Second Living Creature            | Revelation 6:3   |
| • Come and see    | Third Living Creature             | Revelation 6:5   |
| • Come and see    | Fourth Living Creature            | Revelation 6:7   |
| • Come up hither  | A great unidentified voice        | Revelation 11:12 |
| • Come hither     | One of the Seven Bowl Angels      | Revelation 17:1  |
| • Come out of her | An unidentified voice from heaven | Revelation 18:4  |
| • Come and gather | An angel standing in the sun      | Revelation 19:17 |
| • Come hither     | One of the Seven Bowl Angels      | Revelation 21:9  |
| • Come            | The Spirit and the Bride          | Revelation 22:17 |
| • Come            | The one who hears                 | Revelation 22:17 |

##### Special Note.

- The spirit of John was transported to heaven. *Revelation 4:1 Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.*

- The resurrected bodies of the two witnesses of chapter 11 were transported to heaven. *Revelation 11:12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. John was shown the Bride, the Lamb's wife. Revelation 21:9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.*

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.

17:1. vials. bowls. John sees judgment upon The Great Harlot that Sits on Many Waters (Nations).

***Special Note.***

The time of this bowl judgment was future when given to John, but it may be historical to us today according to the words of Revelation 1:1.

17:1-2. For John, the Great Whore of this vision was majestic imperial Rome. *“And the Woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the Earth.”*

Obviously, Rome reigned over the kings of the earth, and for John, Rome was nothing less than a great whore. Such language sounds harsh to our sensitive ears, but in the Bible, harsh language is often used, not only to shock but also to communicate. Calling upon *Old Testament* images of ancient Babylon, John wants his readers to realize how evil Imperial Rome had become in the sight of God.

**An Ancient and Contemporary Comparison**

- *Revelation 17:1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:*
- *Jeremiah 51:13 O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness.*

John presents Rome as a wealthy courtesan, dressed in all her glory to seduce men. Just as the prostitutes in the public brothels wore upon their foreheads a frontlet giving their names, so the Woman wore her name (Revelation 17:5).

For John, not only had Rome encouraged sexual immorality, she had also become drunk with the slaughter of the saints having drunk their blood (Revelation 17:6). Something must be done to challenge this majestic woman, and something will be done.

John sees that the Great Whore is to be destroyed by the invasion of a confederation of ten kings. To remain faithful to the image, it is as if the Great Whore is to be destroyed by her lovers turning against her (Revelation 17:16). It is interesting that John makes a connection between immorality and the persecution of the saints.

***Special Note.***

In 1917, C. I. Scofield commented on Revelation 17 and referred to “MYSTERY BABYLON” as “apostate Christianity headed up by the papacy.” In the New Scofield Bible there has been a slight change of opinion. There is still a reference to “apostate Christianity” but it includes the papacy as well as the Protestant church, both of which are “destroyed by the nations headed up under the Beast and false prophet”.

The fundamental contempt some religious teachers have for the church is alarming, and appalling, in light of Ephesians 5:25 where we read that “*Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.*” Jesus did not die in vain. The Christian church of Jesus Christ will not apostatize, but will be sanctified and cleansed. *Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.* The church is the most glorious institution on earth and is worthy of honor and respect.

3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

17:3. in the spirit. This expression is used four times in Revelation.

- Revelation 1:10 In the Spirit, John saw the Lord in the midst of seven candlesticks.
- Revelation 4:2 In the Spirit, John saw a throne in heaven, and the One who sat on it.
- Revelation 17:3 In the Spirit, John saw a scarlet coloured beast.
- Revelation 21:10 In the Spirit, John saw the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven.

17:3. into the wilderness. Rome was a moral wilderness. Caesar worship was a moral and spiritual wilderness.

4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:

17:4. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet. Purple and scarlet were symbols of wealth and luxury.

***Special Note.***

The use of a woman to tempt others would be drawn from the temptation of Adam by Eve. This woman, with a golden cup in her hand, tempted others to commit acts which heaven would call an abomination and filthy.

***Special Note.***

The essence of harlotry is that it is special attention paid to an illicit lover. Spiritually, God was jealous that Israel committed acts of harlotry with the gods of surrounding nations to the point their hearts were drawn away from Him. When Israel went to Egypt for help they were engaging in spiritual harlotry. When they went to Assyria for help, they engaged in spiritual harlotry.

God wants His people to rely upon Him and Him alone. When Israel went to Babylon for help, they engaged in spiritual harlotry. When Judah Maccabee appealed to Rome for help against the Seleucid overlords, Israel engaged in spiritual harlotry.

In modern times, when Jews wanted to establish a nation, the Zionist turned for help to the Sultan of Turkey, then to the Kaiser of Germany, then to England, and finally to the United Nations. So the ancient practices of failing to depend wholly upon the Lord continues, and their judicial blindness remains (Romans 11:25).

In addition to turning to other nations and gods, the ancient Jews also turned to the immoral practices of the false gods. Rome was inviting illicit love, and persecuting those who would not give it honor and affection.

5 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

17:5. And upon her forehead. A name was written that was a mystery. The name was "BABYLON THE GREAT: THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH".

**Marks on the Forehead**

• Revelation 7:3	The mark of God	the seal of God
• Revelation 9:4	The mark of God	the seal of God
• Revelation 13:16	The mark of the Beast	the <i>charagma</i> , the imperial stamp
• Revelation 14:1	The mark of God	the Father's name
• Revelation 14:9	The mark of the Beast	the <i>charagma</i> , the imperial stamp
• Revelation 17:5	The mark of the Harlot	Mystery, Babylon the Great
• Revelation 20:4	The mark of the Beast	the <i>charagma</i> , the imperial stamp
• Revelation 22:4	The mark of God	the Lamb's name



17:6. with great admiration. with great wonderment (astonishment).

***Special Note.***

By way of application, the church must realize the absolute prohibition of embracing “Babylonianism” over God. The world, the flesh, and the devil unite to draw the heart from the Lord, and redirect it to worship a false god, be that god a political Beastly entity, such as Nero, or a spirit of the ages, reflected in nationalistic worship of the emperor. Christians must flee temptation and find refuge in the Lord.

- *Proverbs 18:10 The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.*

**The Divine Interpretation**

7 And the angel said unto me, **Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.**

17:7. And the angel said unto me. This is repeated in verse 15. “And he saith unto me.”

17:7. Wherefore didst thou marvel? John was gently rebuked for being astonished. He was rebuked for not knowing the symbolism, and a principle is established. God wants His people to be informed and to be faithful. God wants His people to “*earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3).

***Special Note.***

There are other angelic rebukes in the Bible to be remembered.

- Gideon was rebuked with sanctified humor by the Angel of the Lord. *Judges 6:12 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.*
- The ladies at the tomb were rebuked on resurrection Sunday. *Matthew 28:6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.*
- The disciples were rebuked on the day of the Lord’s ascension. *Acts 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*

17:7. I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast. The best interpretation of the Word of God is the Word of God.

***Special Note.***

John is plainly told that the “woman”, the “Great Whore” is a city which reigned over the kings of the earth. *Revelation 17:18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.* Taking into consideration the issue of audience relevance, John’s audience would have immediately identified the city as Rome and the Beast as Nero. The Beast was energized by the Dragon, the Devil, and honored by the promotion of another “Beast”, false religion in the form of Emperor Worship whereby people were forced to say, “Caesar is Lord.” When the saints refused, they were persecuted unto death.

**8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.**

17:8. The beast...out of the bottomless pit. This is first mentioned in Revelation 11:7.

**Seven References to the Bottomless Pit**

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| • Revelation 9:1  | The key of the bottomless pit             |
| • Revelation 9:2  | The smoke of the bottomless pit           |
| • Revelation 9:11 | The angelic king of the bottomless pit    |
| • Revelation 11:7 | The beast out of the bottomless pit       |
| • Revelation 17:8 | The beast out of the bottomless pit       |
| • Revelation 20:1 | The key of the bottomless pit             |
| • Revelation 20:3 | The devil is cast into the bottomless pit |

***Special Note.***

A young Charles Spurgeon once asked his grandfather why hell is described as being “bottomless”. The wise grandfather told Charles that the reason why hell is described as bottomless is because it reflects the fact that there is no sin which is not deeper still.

17:8. perdition (Greek, *apoleia*, a “perishing, destruction”). Jesus called Judas Iscariot the “*son of perdition*” and speaks of the end of Judas as the fulfillment of Scripture.

- *John 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*
- *Zechariah 13:6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*

### Four Descriptions of the Beast

- The Beast was.
- The Beast is not...and yet is.
- The Beast shall ascend out of the bottomless pit.
- The Beast shall go into perdition.

17:3-8. the book of life. The choice of God as to whom He will save and whose names are in the Book of Life was not based upon foreseen intrinsic merit or upon any works of human righteousness. The true gospel is that of free mercy according to the Sovereign's grace.

***Special Note.***

Grace is something more than "unmerited favor." To feed a tramp who calls on me is "unmerited favor," but it is scarcely grace. But suppose that after robbing me I should feed this starving tramp—that would be "grace." Grace, then, is favor shown where there is positive de-merit in the one receiving it (A. W. Pink).

**9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.**

17:9. The seven heads are seven mountains. Rome was built upon seven hills.

#### The Seven Hills of Rome

English	Latin	Italian
• Aventine Hill	Aventinus	Aventino
• Caelian Hill	Caelius	Celio
• Capitoline Hill	Capitolium	Campidoglio
• Esquiline Hill	Esquilinus	Esquilino
• Palatine Hill	Palatinus	Palatino
• Quirinal Hill	Quirinalis	Quirinale
• Viminal Hill	Viminalis	Viminale

**10 And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.**

17:10. If the Line of Roman Emperors begins with Julius Caesar then the seven kings would be as follows.

- Julius Caesar                      49-44 BC
- Augustus                              31 BC.- A.D.14
- Tiberius                                AD 14-37
- Galius [Caligula]                    AD 37-41
- Claudius                                AD 41-54
- Nero                                      AD 54-68
- Galbo                                    AD 68-69; he reigned from AD 68 June—January 69

With this understanding, the five fallen kings are Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Galius, and Claudius. The one king who is, would be Nero, the sixth ruler, and Galba, the seventh ruler would be he that “must continue a short space”.

***Special Note.***

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson believes the seven kings refer to seven great kingdoms which have embraced “Babylonianism” which is the spirit of rebellion against God. These “beastly” kingdoms have persecuted the saints.

- Egyptian Empire
- Assyrian Empire
- Babylonian Empire
- Medo-Persian Empire
- Greek Empire
- Roman Empire
- Revived Roman Empire with Babylon as the capital

**11 And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.**

17:11. perdition. destruction.

***Special Note.***

If the Roman Empire of John’s day is in view here and Nero is the beast, then his suicide, which anticipated the death of the Roman Empire, did not die when wounded but continued stronger than ever.

If a future, Revived Roman Empire is in view, then the eighth beast is simply the seventh wounded beast brought back to life.

**12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.**

17:12. the ten horns....are ten kings.

***Special Note.***

In contrast with John's vision, Daniel tells us that the rise of the ten kings preceding over the face of the earth precede the coming of the beast because the beast arises as a little horn among the ten horns, and overcomes three of them.

***Special Note.***

17:9-12. No matter how many times evil reappears it can effectively be destroyed. The conclusion of this part of the vision is that John sees judgment upon the Great Whore and judgment upon the Beast.

Though both personages have great evil power and authority, it is limited, and directed, and finally destroyed. For a people persecuted this will be of great comfort. When people are hurting they cannot be comforted enough even if they know everything is going to be all right. God is the God of comfort. There may come a day when the Church will read Revelation with renewed understanding. The *Book of Revelation* will be read, not out of sensationalist speculations in mind, but for the constant comfort it offers those suffering for their faith.

**13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.**

**14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.**

17:13-14. The Application of the Sovereign's grace is applied singularly on the basis of the omnipotent power of God. What a great comfort is the doctrine of election. Those who have been called will be sanctified and seated in the royal reign of Christ forever and ever. Believers recognize the origin of their salvation and rejoice in the goodness of God.

**15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.**

**16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.**

**The Fate of the Whore**

- The Whore shall be hated.
- The Whore shall be made desolate.
- The Whore shall be made naked.
- The Whore shall be the object of cannibalism.

- The Whore shall be burned with fire.

**17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.**

17:17. For God hath put in their heart to fulfill his will. Behind the evil that nations and individuals do is God. God is the one who puts into the hearts of people that which will “fulfill his will.”

- *Daniel 4:34 And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: 35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?*

**18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.**

17:14-18. When all of this is put together, a number of spiritual lessons are learned. First, the saints and the martyrs share in the final triumph of God (Revelation 17:14). This has been the hope of the prophets of old and the expressed belief of the apostles of Christ (Matthew 20:21; Mark 10:37). Here is a noble thought. The saints and martyrs shall assist Christ to win His victory over evil and to share in the glory of His eternal reign of righteousness.

Second, evil is intrinsically self-destructive. In Revelation 17:16 there is the picture of the Ten Horns rising violently against The Harlot. Even though The Harlot had been their mistress the Confederation devoured her flesh. History is filled with similar examples. Prior to the outbreak of WW II Hitler signed a secret treaty with Stalin of Russia. Then, in the winter of 1940-41 he invaded Russia.

Hitler had signed a treaty with Italy. Then he invaded Italy. Japan talked peace while sailing to bomb Pearl Harbor. And so it goes. Nations eat the flesh of other nations as political and military cannibals (Micah 3:3).

Third, evil shall be burned. In the Old Testament terrible vengeance was manifested in burning. The most heinous sins were dealt with in this way (Lev. 20:14). The daughter of a priest who had been guilty of sexual immorality was burned (Lev. 21:9). Rome was a harlot and was worthy of destruction.

Fourth, evil has a divisive power. It is the nature of goodness to promote harmony and symmetry. It is the nature of evil to be disruptive and divisive.

Fifth, evil powers, though working out their own purpose are in fact working out the purposes of God (17:17). Here is a great mystery and yet as R.H. Charles notes, "*Even the wrath of man is made to praise God.*" For those to whom John wrote it was a source of great comfort to realize that Rome would someday fall. Rome would someday be destroyed and devoured. Rome would not be allowed to hurt the people of God and go unpunished.

***Special Note.***

The spiritual lessons of Revelation 17 may be easier to discern than its interpretation.

- Revelation 17:1. God is a God of holiness and righteousness and so will judge evil doers
- Revelation 17:2. The doctrines of false religious systems may, and have, found their way into the church.
  - ❖ Baptismal regeneration
  - ❖ Celibacy
  - ❖ Worship of the Madonna and child
  - ❖ The tonsure (shaving of the head)
- Revelation 17:3-5. The Doctrine of Mystery Babylonianism is to be studied and remembered.
- Revelation 17:6. The religions of this world are hostile to the truth and will try to destroy the saints.
- Revelation 17:7-15. In matchless grace, truth can be known but only by divine revelation.
- Revelation 17:16. Those who promote false religion will be severely judged.
- Revelation 17:17. God sovereignly controls evil.
- Revelation 17:18. God keeps His word. Rome was destroyed by the victory of the church according to promise and prophecy. The prophesy of Rome's destruction is found in Daniel 2:35. The promise of Rome's destruction is found in this portion of Scripture, Revelation 17:16.

## REVELATION 18



The Tower of Babel

### Revelation Chapter 18 Summary

Chapter 18 records an angel proclaiming the fall of Babylon [Rome] (Revelation 18:1-2) and the reasons for her destruction (Revelation 18:3). Before judgment, a gospel call is issued to all who belong to God to come out of her (Revelation 18:4-5) and assist in her destruction (Revelation 18:6-8). John listens to a lamentation made for fallen Babylon by those who had been large sharers in her sinful pleasures and profits (Revelation 18:9-19). While some lament the fall of an evil entity, others rejoice greatly at the sight of her irrecoverable ruin (Revelation 18:20-24).

### Second Judgment: Commercial Babylon Revelation 18:1-24

1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

18:1. great power. great authority.

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, **Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.**

18:2. Babylon the great is fallen. Isaiah 14 along with Jeremiah 50 and 51 offers background material for this portion of John's vision.

18:2. devils. demons.

18:2. Babylon... a cage of every unclean and hateful bird

***Special Note.***

A strong case can be made that John uses the term "Babylon" to speak of the atrocities of Rome. However, if the ancient city of Babylon is viewed as the source of false religion, then the practices of "Babylonianism", to coin a term, may be acknowledge to be found in Rome, and then in the church. The following practices, incorporated into the Christian church, can be traced to "Babylonianism" (*Babylon Mystery Religion: Ancient and Modern* - Ralph E. Woodrow).

- Baptismal regeneration
- Purgatory
- Signing with the form of a cross
- Turning to the east in prayer
- Incense
- Celibacy
- Title of *Pontifex Maximus* (greatest pontiff; pontiff, "to make a bride")
- Tonsure (Latin, to clip; to cut)
- Use of holy water
- Worship of the Madonna (Literally, "my lady") and child

**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.**

18:3. For. This word introduces a purpose cause and the reason why Babylon is judged.

**Three Reasons for the Judgment of Babylon**

- The societies of the world have drunk of the wine of her passionate adulteries.
- The rulers and leaders of the world have united with her in committing fornication which is spiritual idolatry.
- The businessmen of the earth have become rich with the wealth of her excessive luxury and wantonness.

18:3. drunk of the wine.

- *Jeremiah 51:7 Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.*

**An appeal is made to the People  
Be Separate from the Corrupt System**

**Revelation 18:4-8**

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.**

18:4. Come out. Time and again God calls His people to come out from among the wicked and be separate from the world and its influence.

- *Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*
- *2 Corinthians 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,*

**Two Reasons to Separate  
From those Who are Sinning**

- In order not to partake of the sins of others.
- In order not to be judged.

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.

6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, **I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.**

18:7. How much. To the same degree.

18:7. and lived deliciously. and lived luxuriously and sensually.

### Three Expressions of Self Deception

- I sit a queen.
- I am no widow.
- I shall see no mourning.

8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

18:8. in one day. suddenly.

### An Appeal is made to the People Suffering will be certain Revelation 18:9-19

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,

18:9. who have committed fornication and lived deliciously. who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously.

10 Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, **Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour is thy judgment come.**

18:10. Alas, alas. Woe, woe.

18:10. For in one hour. One hour may be literal, or it may be a symbolic expression indicating a short period of time.

#### **Literal**

Daniel 4:19  
Matthew 20:12  
Matthew 26:40  
Mark 14:37  
Luke 22:59

#### **Symbolically**

Revelation 17:12  
Revelation 18:10  
Revelation 18:17  
Revelation 18:19

11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

18:12. thyine wood. An African coniferous tree which yields gum.

13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

18:12-13. The merchandise.

#### **The Merchandise of Babylon**

- Gold
- Silver
- Precious stones
- Pearls
- Fine linen
- Purple
- Silk
- Scarlet
- Thyine wood (citron wood)
- Ivory
- Precious wood (from very costly wood)
- Brass (bronze)
- Iron
- Marble
- Cinnamon
- Odors (spices)
- Ointments (perfume)
- Frankincense
- Wine
- Oil
- Fine flour
- Wheat
- Beasts (cattle)
- Sheep
- Horses
- Chariots
- Slaves (bodies; a person)
- Souls of men (human lives)

14 And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

18: 11-14.

In Revelation 18:11-24 the Bible tells us that many will weep at the funeral of the Roman Empire. The merchants of the earth would weep because their best market had ceased to exist (18:11). The prostitute and the party lovers would weep for the freedom of their passions could no longer be openly displayed (18:14). At the funeral of the Roman Empire, while many wept from all over the world, others would be dancing at the graveside. The saints in heaven are also commanded to rejoice for God has avenged His own (18:20).

In Rome was the blood of the prophets and the saints. Now that blood has been avenged. While the Roman citizens engaged in open sins against every commandment of God, the Lord sanctified the citizens of heaven. God has called His people to be different. Chapter 18 is really a marvelous chapter as it sets forth the certain destruction of Rome, the sanctification of the Church and the willing seduction of other nations by Rome.

15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

16 And saying, *Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!*

18:16. Alas, alas. Woe, woe.

17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, *What city is like unto this great city!*

19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, *Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! For in one hour is she made desolate.*

18:19. Alas, alas. Woe, woe.

**An appeal is made to the people:  
just judgment caused joy for the elect  
Revelation 18:20-24**

20 Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

18:20. Rejoice...ye holy apostles and prophets. Rejoice...ye saints and apostles and prophets.

***Special Note.***

The word “saints” has been omitted from the Authorized Version and should be included.

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, **Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.**

22 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

18:22-23.

**Eight Things which will Cease**

- The voice of harpers
- Musicians
- Pipers
- Trumpeters
- Craftsman
- The sound of a millstone
- The light of a candle
- The voice of the bridegroom and of the bride

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

## REVELATION 17 AND REVELATION 18

### Similarities

#### Religious Babylon Revelation 17

- Under the rule of the Beast (Ant-Christ)  
Revelation 17:3, 7-14, 17-21
- Rules like a queen  
Revelation 17:3
- Filled with blasphemy  
Revelation 17:3
- Hates the saints  
Revelation 17:6
- Hates the blood of the saints  
Revelation 17:6
- Engaged in spiritual fornication  
Revelation 17:2
- Destroyed by God  
Revelation 17:1, 16, 17

#### Commercial Babylon Revelation 18

- Under the rule of the Beast (Anti-Christ)  
Revelation 18:1
- Rules like a queen  
Revelation 18:7
- Filled with blasphemy  
Revelation 18:7
- Hates the saints  
Revelation 18:24
- Sheds the blood of the saints  
Revelation 18:24
- Engaged in spiritual fornication  
Revelation 18:3
- Destroyed by God  
Revelation 18:2, 6-8

## REVELATION 17 AND REVELATION 18

### Differences

#### Religious Babylon Revelation 17

- Called "Mystery Babylon"  
Revelation 17:5; 16:19
- Presented as a harlot  
Revelation 17:3, 4
- Identified with the city on seven hills  
Revelation 17:9, 18
- Guilty of religious abominations  
Revelation 17:4
- Destroyed by a political power  
Revelation 17:16

#### Commercial Babylon Revelation 18

- Called "Great Babylon"  
Revelation 18:2
- Presented as a city  
Revelation 18:1,2
- A port city, visible from the sea  
Revelation 18:17, 21
- Guilty of commercialism  
Revelation 18:3, 11-19
- Destroyed by an act of God  
Revelation 18:8-10; 19, 21

## REVELATION 19

### Revelation Chapter 19 Summary

Chapter 19 sets forth a further account of the triumphant song of angels and saints for the fall of Babylon (Revelation 19:1-4). After the fall of Babylon John sees that the marriage between Christ and the church is proclaimed and perfected (Revelation 19:5-10). The marriage supper is followed by a great crusade by the glorious Head and Husband of the church. He enjoys great success against His enemies (Revelation 19:10-21).

### A Simple Outline

I. The Praises of Heaven Over the Fall of Babylon	Revelation 19:1-4
II. The Praises of the Saints Over the Fall of Babylon	Revelation 19:5-8
III. Epilogue	Revelation 19:9-10

### Fifth Interlude

**During a fifth interlude the apostle anticipates the coming of Christ:  
there is a hallelujah chorus  
Revelation 19:1-7**

### The First Alleluia

1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, **Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:**

19:1. And after these things. After being commanded to “rejoice” that God will avenge the elect, chapter 19 contains the response to the heavenly commandment found in chapter 18 and verse 20. The first use of “Alleluia” in the New Testament is in the context of judgment.

- *Revelation 18:20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.*

19:1. Salvation. The reference is to the divine deliverance of the saints from the evil one. Salvation awakens gratitude, glory awakens reverence, honour awakens great esteem, and power awakens trust.

2 **For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.**

19:2. For. Because. The reason is given for the saints saying, “Alleluia”.

19:2. For he hath judged. One clause explains another as divine revelation unfolds like a flower in bloom. The judgments of God are true and righteous, and that is the basis for shouting, “Alleluia.” But there is more. The true and righteous judgments of God are made manifest in that He judges “the great whore”, who has corrupted the earth, and He avenges the blood of His servants. If God did not avenge the saints then He would cease to be just and righteous and there would be no basis for saying, “Alleluia.”

### The Second Alleluia

3 And again they said, **Alleluia**. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

### The Third Alleluia

4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, **Amen; Alleluia.**

19:4. the four beasts. the four living creatures.

5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, **Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.**

### The Fourth Alleluia

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, **Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.**

19:6. Alleluia. Literally, “praise Yah”, “praise God”. Praise is given in verse 1, 3, 4, and 6.

#### *Special Note.*

The first occurrence of Alleluia is found in Psalm 104:35 in praise of the destruction of evil. The same is true in the New Testament.

- *Psalms 104:35 Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord.*

“There is a heavenly bliss when evil is destroyed on this earth” (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

7 **Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.**

19:7. for the marriage of the Lamb is come. The thought of marriage showing forth the relationship between the Lord and His people is rooted in the Old Testament.

- *Hosea 2:19 And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. 20 I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord.*
- *Isaiah 54:5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.*

The symbolism of marriage permeates the gospels.

- Matthew 22:2 speaks of a marriage feast.
- Matthew 22:10 sets forth the bridegroom and the wedding garment.
- Mark 2:19 teaches about the friend of the bridegroom.
- Mark 2:19 and Matthew 5:1 speaks of the bridegroom.
- John 3:29 comments on the friends of the bridegroom.

In the epistles that he writes, Paul presents the converts of Corinth as a pure virgin to Christ.

- *2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

The relationship of husband and wife reflects the relationship between Christ and the Church.

- *Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of the body.*

**The hallelujah chorus is followed by a  
Marriage Supper of the Lamb  
Revelation 19:8-10**

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

19:8. the fine linen is. Often in Scripture the text will interpret the symbolism. Here the fine linen is said to be “the righteousness of saints.”

9 And he saith unto me, **Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.** And he saith unto me, **These are the true sayings of God.**

19:9. are called. The effectual grace of God calls individuals to salvation.

*Special Note.*

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| • Many are called to salvation, but few are chosen.                  | Matthew 22:14      |
| • Both Jews and Greeks are called by Christ, the power of God.       | 1 Corinthians 1:24 |
| • Not many mighty, not many noble, are called.                       | 1 Corinthians 1:26 |
| • Christians are called to salvation and to sanctification.          | Ephesians 4:1      |
| • Christians are called in one hope.                                 | Ephesians 4:4      |
| • Christians are called to peace in the body of Christ.              | Colossians 3:15    |
| • The called of God receive the promise of eternal inheritance.      | Hebrews 9:15       |
| • The name of Jesus, by which the believer is called, is blasphemed. | James 2:7          |
| • Those who are in Christ are called, they are chosen, and faithful. | Revelation 17:14   |
| • Those who are called by God are called to the marriage supper.     | Revelation 19:9    |

19:9. the marriage supper. Suppertime is an important time. Many good memories are associated with the evening meal.

“Many years ago in days of childhood  
I used to play till evenin' shadows come  
Then windin' down that old familiar pathway  
I'd hear my mother call at set of sun.

Come home, come home it's suppertime  
The shadows lengthen fast  
Come home, come home it's suppertime  
We're going home at last.

Some of the fondest memories of my childhood  
Were woven around suppertime  
When my mother used to call  
From the backsteps of the old homeplace  
Come on home now son it's suppertime.

Ahhhh, but I'd loved to hear that once more  
But you know for me time has woven the realization of  
The truth that's even more thrilling—and that's when  
The call come up from the portals of glory  
To come home for its suppertime.  
When all God's children shall gather around the table  
of the Lord, Himself and the greatest suppertime of them all.

Come home, come home it's suppertime  
The shadows lengthen fast  
Come home, come home it's suppertime  
We're going home at last...”

Ira F. Stanphill



- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| • The name of the Great Personage was, “The Word of God”   | Revelation 19:13 |
| • The armies of heaven followed the Great Personage        | Revelation 19:14 |
| • From the mouth of the Great Personage went a sharp sword | Revelation 19:15 |
| • On the garment of the Great Personage was a name         | Revelation 19:16 |

19:11. and he that sat upon him. A rider on a white horse is first mentioned in Revelation 6:2.

- *Revelation 6:2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

### Seven Last Things

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson mentions seven last events described by John in Revelation 19-21.

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| • First, the return of Jesus Christ                               | Revelation 19:11-16 |
| • Second, the final conflict with the Beast and the False Prophet | Revelation 19:17-21 |
| • Third, the Binding of Satan                                     | Revelation 20:1-3   |
| • Fourth, the establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah         | Revelation 20:4-6   |
| • Fifth, the final conflict                                       | Revelation 20:7-10  |
| • Sixth, the Great White Throne Judgment                          | Revelation 20:11-15 |
| • Seventh, the creation of the New Heavens and New Earth          | Revelation 21       |

12 His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

19:12. His eyes were as a flame of fire. The eyes of Christ as “a flame of fire” is a picture of penetrating judgment. There are perhaps two occasions in the ministry of Christ when He manifested eyes “as a flame of fire.” The first instance might have been when He cleansed the Temple of mercantilism (Matthew 21:12-13). A second event might have occurred when the Lord turned His penetrating gaze upon the soldiers in the Garden that had come to arrest Him (John 18:4-6).

- *Matthew 21:12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, 13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.*
- *John 18:4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? 5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. 6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*

***Special Note.***

Jesus actually said in John 18:6, "I AM", an expression of the essential nature of God as per Exodus 3:14.

19:12. and on his head were many crowns. Having rejected the kingdom crowns when offered by Satan during the days of His humiliation, Jesus has received all those crowns and more.

- *Philippians 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:*

Perhaps there is a principle to note at this point which is this: God will give the very best to those who leave the choice to Him. To Christ was given many diadems to wear upon His head.

"Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon His throne.  
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own.  
Awake, my soul, and sing of Him who died for thee,  
And hail Him as thy matchless King through all eternity."

Matthew Bridges, 1874

19:12. and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. This is John's way of reminding men that Jesus has a name known only to His divine person. We shall never know this name which is only proper, for who can truly know the depths of God's nature?

13 And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

19:13. a vesture dipped in blood. A robe dipped in blood. This blood is not the Lord's own, but the blood of the kings of the earth.

***Special Note.***

Blood is spoken of in a variety of ways in Revelation.

**The Blood of Revelation**

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| • The blood of Christ cleanses from sin                   | Revelation 1:5        |
| • The blood of Christ redeems                             | Revelation 5:9        |
| • The blood of martyred saints cries out to be avenged    | Revelation 6:10; 19:2 |
| • In the hour of divine judgment the moon turns to blood  | Revelation 6:12       |
| • The robes of saints are washed in the blood of the Lamb | Revelation 7:14       |

"Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing pow'r?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?  
Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?"

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Are you washed in the blood,  
In the soul-cleansing blood of the Lamb?  
Are your garments spotless? Are they white as snow?  
Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?"

Elisha A. Hoffman, 1878

- Blood is associated with judgment in Revelation Revelation 8:7,8;11:6;  
14:20; 16:3,4,6
- There is power in the blood of the Lamb. Revelation 12:11

“Would you be free from the burden of sin?  
There’s pow’r in the blood, pow’r in the blood;  
Would you o’er evil a victory win?  
There’s wonderful pow’r in the blood.

There is pow’r, pow’r, wonder-working pow’r  
In the blood of the Lamb;  
There is pow’r, pow’r, wonder-working pow’r  
In the precious blood of the Lamb.”

Lewis E. Jones 1899

- The blood of the saints becomes the seed of the church Revelation 17:6
- The world is thirsty for the blood of the saints Revelation 18:24
- Jesus Christ will dip His robe in the blood of revenge Revelation 19:13

19:14. and his name is called The Word of God. There are many names given to the Lord Jesus Christ. Here, His name is called “The Word of God.”

- *Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

We know Jesus as the Word.

- *John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

14 And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

19:14. And the armies.

### The Army of Christ

- The armies of Christ have their origin in heaven.
- The warriors of Christ are clothed in white linen.
- The white linen worn by the heavenly warriors is clean.
- The warriors of Christ follow Him on white horses.

### The Contrast

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The army of Christ</li> <li>• Holy angels</li> <li>• The glorified saints who follow Christ</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The army of the Devil</li> <li>• Evil angels</li> <li>• The mortal sinners on earth who oppose the Lord</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

19:15. and he shall rule. and he himself shall rule.

19:15. and he treadeth the winepress. and he himself treadeth the winepress. The reflexive pronoun emphasizes that Christ is the actor.

#### ***Special Note.***

The words of Revelation 19:15 are taken from four Old Testament messianic passages that are woven together.

- *Isaiah 49:2 And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;*
- *Isaiah 11:4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.*
- *Isaiah 63:3 I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.*
- *Psalms 2:9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*

16 And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

19:16. a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

- *Daniel 2:47 The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.*

“Jesus shall reign where’er the sun  
Does his successive journeys run;  
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.”

Isaac Watts, 1719

### **The Great Supper of God A Supper of Judgment**

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, **Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;**

19:17. And I saw an angel standing in the sun.

#### *Special Note.*

Question, “Why was the angel standing in the sun”? Perhaps the answer is that the angel is simply reflecting the dazzling splendors and glory of heaven. “It is difficult to conceive of an image more sublime than this. Why he has his place in the sun is not stated, for there does not appear to be anything more intended by this than to give grandeur and impressiveness to the scene” (Barnes' Notes).

19:17. saying to all the fowls that fly. The words of the Lord Jesus may have been remembered by the apostle John.

- *Matthew 24:28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.*

19:17. the supper. Greek, deipnon (dipe'-non), meaning, “the chief meal” (usually in the evening).

#### **Doctrine of Supper**

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| • On the night of his birthday, Herod made a supper for his guests. | Mark 6:21      |
| • On the night of his conversion, Matthew made a supper for Christ. | Matthew 9:9-10 |
| • Suppertime is to be used for evangelistic purposes.               | Luke 14:12     |
| • Some who are bidden to the gospel supper will not taste of it.    | Luke 14:16-24  |
| • The New Covenant was established at suppertime.                   | Luke 22:20     |
| • Mary and Martha made a supper for Jesus.                          | John 12:2      |
| • It was after supper that Judas moved to betray Christ.            | John 13:2      |
| • After the supper meal Jesus modeled humility.                     | John 13:4      |

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| • During the supper meal important questions can be asked.         | John 21:20          |
| • A distinctive associated with Jesus is called the Lord's Supper. | 1 Corinthians 11:20 |
| • The suppertime meal can be abused when used in a selfish manner. | 1 Corinthians 11:22 |
| • There are two great suppers associated with the Trinity.         |                     |
| ❖ There is the marriage supper of the Lamb.                        | Revelation 19:9     |
| ❖ There is the judgment supper of the Great God.                   | Revelation 19:17    |

***Special Note.***

Psalm 2 pictures God as laughing at the wicked, while passing judgment upon the nations of the earth.

**18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men, both free and bond, both small and great.***

19:18. That ye may eat. In this verse the divine purpose for coming to the supper of the great God is given. The wicked are to be devoured by the fowls of heaven.

**A Universal Supper of Judgment**

- The flesh of kings shall be eaten.
- The flesh of captains shall be eaten.
- The flesh of mighty men shall be eaten.
- The flesh of horses shall be eaten.
- The flesh of the riders on the horses shall be eaten.
- The flesh of all men shall be eaten, both free and bond, both small and great.

***Special Note.***

“An invitation is given to the fowls of heaven, that they should come and see the battle, and share in the spoil and pillage of the field (v. 17, 18), intimating that this great decisive engagement should leave the enemies of the church a feast for the birds of prey, and that all the world should have cause to rejoice in the issue of it” (Matthew Henry).

19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

19:19.

**A Great Cosmic Conflict**

The Beast and the Kings of the Earth      vs.      Him that sat on the horse, and his army.

**Third Judgment: False Prophet and Beast**

### Revelation 19:20

20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

19:20. a lake of fire. The lake of fire is mentioned in the Revelation in 19:20; 20:10, and 20:14.

#### Three Occupants in the Lake of Fire

- The Beast
- The False Prophet
- All that worshipped the image of the Beast.

#### *Special Note.*

#### Additional Occupants in the Lake of Fire

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| • The Dragon, which is the Devil, shall be cast into the Lake of Fire.  | Revelation 22: |
| • All who reject Christ as Saviour shall be cast into the Lake of Fire. | Luke 16:14-31  |
| • The fallen angels, the demons, shall be cast into the Lake of Fire.   | Matthew 25:41  |

### Fourth Judgment: the nations Revelation 19:21

21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

19:21. And the remnant were slain. The wicked are avenged.

“Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,—  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.”

James Russell Lowell  
The Present Crisis, 1844

## REVELATION 20

### Revelation Chapter 20 Summary

Chapter 20 contains an account of the binding of Satan for a thousand years for the expressed purpose that he should deceive the nations no more thereby prohibiting the universal spread of the gospel (Revelation 20:1-3). The binding of Satan allows the glorious reign of the saints with Christ for the same period (Revelation 20:4-6). The time will come when Satan shall be loosed for a little season and then will come the conflict of the church with Gog and Magog (Revelation 20:7-10). Human history will end with a day of divine judgment (Revelation 20:11-15).

### Recapitulation

**Dr. Fernando D. Saraví,**

“Fundamental to a belief on a wholly future earthly millennial kingdom is the assumption of a chronological continuity between the visions of Chapter 19 and those of Chapter 20; that is, the defeat of the beast, the kings of the earth and their armies is temporally followed by Satan’s binding and the coming to life and reign of beheaded saints. However, that this is the case is by no means obvious. Most students of Revelation have long ago noticed that while in each vision there is some kind of orderly intensification (the seals, the trumpets, the vials), there are also discontinuities among them, as if each series of visions showed at least partially overlapped events.

From written records, we learn that the first to point out this characteristic feature of Revelation was the millenarian Church Father, Victorinus bishop of Pettau (who died ca. 304). At the end of his remarks on Ch. 7 he wrote, concerning the similarities between the seals, the trumpets and the bowls:

"We must not regard the order of what is said, because frequently the Holy Spirit, when He has traversed even to the end of the last times, returns again to the same times, and fills up what He had [before] failed to see. Nor must we look for order in the Apocalypse; but we must follow the meaning of those things which are prophesied" (Commentary on the Apocalypse; in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson, Ed., *The Ante Nicene Fathers*; Repr. 1989, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 7:352).

In other words, the Seer from Patmos leads us time and again from the beginning to the end of salvation history, in several partially parallel sections that follow a pattern of repetition with elaboration. This approach, later called recapitulation, is one of the keys for understanding Revelation.

Most interpreters from different schools agree that there is an evident discontinuity between Chapters 11 and 12: From the apparent end ushered by the seventh trumpet we are unexpectedly carried back to the time before Jesus Christ’s birth. Now, we can find clues that allows us to delineate seven sections in the book:

### **Section One**

The glorious Savior ruling His churches: Ch. 1-3 (Introduction, messages to the Churches; turning point: John is called up to heaven).

### **Section Two**

The Lamb as the revealer and executor of God's plan: Ch. 4-7 (heavenly vision, God & the Lamb, the book, the seals; turning point: "God will wipe away every tear...").

### **Section Three**

The proclaiming of God's rule and warnings of the coming judgments: Ch. 8-11 (The censer, the trumpets, the temple, the two witnesses; turning point: the opening of God's heavenly temple).

### **Section Four**

The Battle of Satan and his followers against Christ and His church: Ch. 12-14 (The Woman, the male Child and the Dragon; the beasts; the Lamb & the 144,000, the great multitude in heaven; turning point: the harvest of the earth).

### **Section Five**

The wrath of God poured on earth: Ch. 15-16 (The plagues, the bowls; turning point: judgment, "the plague was so terrible").

### **Section Six**

The victory of the Lamb over the unrighteous of the earth: Ch. 17-19 (Babylon, her downfall, heavenly celebration, judgment; turning point: "The rest of them were killed...").

### **Section Seven**

The final triumph over Satan and the eternal blessing of the saints: Ch. 20-22 (Satan's binding, the saints raised and reigning, Satan's final attack, general resurrection and judgment, new heavens and earth, heavenly Jerusalem, epilogue).

Colin Brown, Editor of the New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-1978), says that

"there is a very strong case for seeing the whole book as structured in seven series of visions corresponding to the seven days of the creation story in Genesis 1, each of which looks at the Church in the gospel age. The visions are thus seven sets of parallel visions of the church and its tribulations between the two advents of Christ. In this view the period of a thousand years refers to the present era culminating in a final outburst of satanic activity prior to the final destruction of all the evils that afflict man." (Subject, "chilias", 2:702).

I agree, and let me show you why I believe that Chapter 20 does not follow chronologically Chapter 19, but starts another section, the last one, culminating with the eternal state.

At the start of Chapter 20 we learn that Satan has been bound with a goal that's carefully specified by John: "to keep him from deceiving the nations any more..." So we must accept that there are still nations that can be deceived, and 20:7f dramatically confirms this.

However, in 19: 11-21 we have learned that all earthly foes of God have been utterly destroyed, so nobody is left that may be deceived." Therefore, Revelation 20 begins the last and final section of the vision.

**Sixth Interlude**  
**In this interlude John observes: The binding of Satan**  
**Revelation 20:1-3**

1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

**What is NOT Found in Revelation 20**

- National ethnic Israel
- David's throne
- A kingdom on earth
- The land of Palestine

**Symbolism in Revelation 20**

<b>The Symbol</b>	<b>The Meaning</b>	<b>Verse</b>
• Key	Authority	vs. 1
• A great chain	Arrested behavior	vs. 1
• The Dragon	The Devil	vs. 2
• That Old Serpent	Satan	vs. 2
• Bottomless Pit	There are depths of sin which are deeper still	vs. 3
• The first resurrection	Regeneration	vs. 5
• A thousand years	A term of undetermined length; completeness	vs. 6
• The second death	Eternal judgment	vs. 6
• Gog and Magog	The rebellious forces of the earth hostile to God	vs. 8
• The Beloved City	Jerusalem	vs. 9
• The Beast	The Beast from the Sea (Nero)	vs. 10
• The False Prophet	The Beast from the Land (Caesar Worship)	vs. 10
• The flight of heaven and earth	Judgment	vs. 11
• Great White Throne	Place of Divine Judgment	vs. 12
• The dead small and great	People not known and people well known	vs. 12
• The book of life	A record of those who belong to God	vs. 12

- |                             |   |        |
|-----------------------------|---|--------|
| • And the books were opened | The record of human good works                    | vs. 12 |
| • The sea                   | The nations of the earth                          | vs. 13 |
| • Death and hell            | The sphere of the departed spirits                | vs. 14 |
| • Lake of Fire              | The place of judgment of which there is no outlet | vs. 14 |

***Special Note.***

A thousand years (χιλιοι chilioi [khil'-ee-oy]); plural of uncertain affinity; a thousand: (New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary). The French introduced the world to the nomenclature of the metric system and kilo was established as 1000. However to the Greeks the meaning was not as concrete and meant “plural of uncertain affinity.”

Kenneth Fortier compares murias (myriad) and murioi (myriads) with chalias and chilioi, in his article, A Preliminary Study of the Greek Word Thousand and Thousands. Revelation 5:11 contains both words, myriads, and thousands. Fortier offers as a translation: “And I saw, and I heard a sound of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders, and the number of them was myriads (of) myriads and thousands (of) thousands.”

20:1. And I saw an angel. The identity of this angel is not revealed but may be a reference to the fifth angel spoken of in Revelation 9:1.

- *Revelation 9:1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.*

***Special Note.***

It is possible that the identify of this angel should be associated with the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew Henry explains. “It is very probable that this angel is no other than the Lord Jesus Christ; the description of him will hardly agree with any other. He is one who has power to *bind the strong man armed, to cast him out, and to spoil his goods*; and therefore must be stronger than he.”

20:1. having the key of the bottomless pit. A “key” in the Bible speaks of authority.

- *Matthew 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

The key to the bottomless pit is the authority of God.

20:1. a great chain.

**Special Note.**

Is this a literal chain that is used to bind a spiritual creature? Some Bible teachers believe it is. But we read of chains elsewhere in the Bible.

- Chains of darkness. *2 Peter 2:4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.*
- Everlasting chains. *Jude 6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.*

“So, what is the nature of the chain? We don’t really know, but it is sufficient to bind Satan for a thousand years because it has the authority of the eternal God behind it” (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

20:2. and bound him. The binding of a person does not mean the cessation of activity, only the limitation of movement. In context, John is told in what way the Devil is bound.

### **The Binding of Satan**

**Special Note.**

The binding of Satan being bound in some definite way is taught in Scripture. *that he should deceive the nations no more” (Revelation 20:3).*

- *Matthew 12:29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? And then he will spoil his house.* Christ states that He Himself has bound Satan so that He can plunder Satan’s house.
- *Luke 10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.* When His disciples returned with their report about casting out demons Christ exclaimed, *“I know. I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightening.”*
- *John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.* Jesus said that “now” in His day Satan would be cast out. He did not say that Satan would be cast out thousands of years in the future.

- *2 Thessalonians 2:6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.* Led by God the Holy Spirit, Paul declared that the works of Satan were, and are, currently being restrained.
- *Hebrews 2:14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;* The death of deaths in the death of Christ has rendered Satan defeated, “destroyed”, powerless.
- *Revelation 20:3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*

***Special Note.***

Because Christ has bound Satan in order to plunder his house of precious souls held captive, because Christ watched Satan fall from heaven, because Christ in His own day cast out Satan, because the works of the Devil are being restrained, the evil one is not able to deceive the nations any longer. Now the Great Commission can be engaged in with confidence. And the gospel is being preached to all the nations for they are deceived no more.

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

20:3. And cast him into the bottomless pit. And cast him into the abyss; the chaotic deep. The bottomless pit, or the abyss, is the prison of disobedient spirits, or the world of the dead. It is the abode of the wicked.

- *Luke 8:31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.*
- *Romans 10:7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (That is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)*

***Special Note.***

Originally, the term “bottomless pit, or abyss”, “represented a deep mass of waters, and was associated with the water which God created with the earth. Darkness is said to have been on the face of the deep or abyss (Genesis 1:2)” (Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary).

20:3. deceive, “to roam (from safety, truth, or virtue)”.

### **The Purpose for the Binding of Satan**

20:3. that he should deceive the nations no more. Because Satan is bound, the gospel is free to go forth to all the nations of the earth. Because Satan is bound, Peter can preach to people from the nations of the world. Because Satan is bound, Paul can be, and was, commissioned by God to be a minister to the Gentiles.

- *Acts 2:8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?*
- *2 Thessalonians 1:11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:*

#### ***Special Note.***

The purpose given in Revelation 20:3 for the binding of Satan must be reconciled with the reason given in 2 Corinthians 4:3 as to why men do not believe the gospel.

- *2 Corinthians 4:3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

#### ***Special Consideration.***

Question: "In what way is Satan no longer able to deceive the nations?"

*Answer.* The passage in Luke 8:11-12 is helpful in answering this inquiry.

- *Luke 8:11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*

Satan deceives through telling lies. But lies can no longer stop the truth because of the Incarnation. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). Let the nations rejoice.

Question: "How does Satan blind the minds of those who believe not when they are already spiritually blinded by natural birth?"

- *1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

*Answer.* Satan blinds the minds of those who believe not by various methods.

- Some are blinded by the details of this world. There is an inordinate love for the toys of time. *1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

- Some are blinded by loyalty to family members. *Matthew 10:37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*
- Some are blinded by the friendships of this world. *2 Corinthians 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*
- Some are blinded by various lust patterns. *1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

But because Jesus has come, Satan can no longer stop the glorious light of the gospel from shining. When individuals are not blinded they are not deceived and they are not deceived because Satan has been bound in a specific way.

True, Satan is said to be like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour but his ability to devour is subject to the Sovereign. By being sober, by being vigilant, the Adversary of the soul, the devil, will not be able to devour anything.

- *1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

It is also true that Satan has a certain amount of freedom, for binding does not mean cessation of activity. It just means that Satan has boundaries which he cannot cross. Therefore, the heart of the Christian can rejoice at the binding of Satan, so that the nations can be evangelized, at the limitations of Satan, so that he cannot prevail against the sober and the watchful, and the ultimate doom of the Devil who shall one day be placed under the feet, under the authority of every believer.

- *Romans 16:20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*
- *Isaiah 65:25 ...dust shall be the serpent's meat.*

20:3. he must be loosed. The eternal plan of God necessitates that the Devil be loosed a little season. Nevertheless, when Christ returns, the current limitation of Satan's power, accomplished by the Lord's death, will render this Arch Enemy of men's souls complete. Satan will then be cast into the lake of fire where he will remain, forever.

**The Blessed First Resurrection**  
**Revelation 20:4-6**

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

20:4. And I saw. This expression is used by John thirty-seven (37) times in Revelation chapters 1 - 22. The expression is used eleven (11) times in Revelation 19:1-22:8.

#### What John Saw

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| • A Rider on a White Horse called Faithful and True | Revelation 19:11 |
| • An Angel Standing in the Sun                      | Revelation 19:17 |
| • A Warrior Beast                                   | Revelation 19:19 |
| • An Angel with the Key of the Bottomless Pit       | Revelation 20:1  |
| • Thrones and the Souls of the Beheaded Saints      | Revelation 20:4  |
| • A Great White Throne                              | Revelation 20:11 |
| • The Books Opened                                  | Revelation 20:12 |
| • A New Heaven and a New Earth                      | Revelation 21:1  |
| • The Holy City, New Jerusalem                      | Revelation 21:2  |
| • The Absence of a Temple                           | Revelation 21:22 |
| • All Previous Events Mentioned                     | Revelation 22:8  |

20:4. And I saw thrones. A throne speaks of judgment. Christians are to sit in judgment both in time and in eternity for Christ has *“made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen”* (Revelation 1:6).

20:4. and they that sat upon them. The identity of those who sat upon the thrones is undefined. The reference may be to all the saints of God.

20:4. and judgment was given unto them. Christians should, do, and will sit in judgment. Christians should sit in judgment on the world because believers are the salt of the earth. Christians do sit in judgment when they render an ecclesiastical verdict in the church (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 14:29), or a righteous verdict on the morals of society,

- Judging in time. *1 Corinthians 6:4 If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.*
- Judging in eternity. *1 Corinthians 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?*

20:4. and they lived. they came to life.

**Special Note.**

Some Bible teachers believe there is a bodily resurrection of the saints at the “Rapture”, and another resurrection of the body seven years later at the beginning of the Second Advent “Proper” following the tribulation. They also teach, of necessity, a third resurrection of the body for those who have been martyred, or died during the millennial reign for death does reign in the millennial. They based this belief about death in the millennial on Isaiah

- *Isaiah 65:20 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.*

***Special Note.***

Amillennialist believe the kingdom of God is in heaven, but His kingdom is also presently on the earth, and has always been on the earth for we read the words of Jesus when He said, “*the kingdom of God is come unto you.*” The kingdom of God is within the hearts of individuals.

- *Matthew 12:28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.*
- *Luke 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*

20:4. and they lived.

***Special Note.***

It is possible that the reference is not to a physical resurrection of the body, but to the fact that people live after death. The passage speaks of the souls of those who “*were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands*”. John says, “*and they lived.*” In a new resurrected body? No. But the souls of them which had died lived again in heaven with the Lord and they reigned with Him, as do all who know Jesus Christ as personal savior.

5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection.

20:5. This is the first resurrection. The first resurrection refers to salvation. While the natural man is physically alive, he is spiritually dead in trespasses and sin and is in need of regeneration (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13). Salvation brings resurrection life to the soul of the natural man.

- *John 5:25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. 26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;*

***Special Note.***

Some Bible teachers believe this “first resurrection” is a bodily resurrection. But if it is, then it is really a second resurrection for the first resurrection, according to their teaching, takes place at the Rapture seven years earlier. Realizing this is a concern, the argument is set forth that this expression is used in reference to the second resurrection which follows and not to preceding orders in the resurrections as given by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

The term resurrection occurs about 42 times in the New Testament and refers, with perhaps one exception, to a bodily resurrection. That exception is found in the words of Jesus. 20:5. This is the first resurrection.

***Special Note.***

“Here is an account of the reign of the saints, for the same space of time as Satan is bound. Those who suffer with Christ shall reign with him in his spiritual and heavenly kingdom, in conformity to him in his wisdom, righteousness, and holiness: this is called the first resurrection, with which none but those who serve Christ, and suffer for him, shall be favoured. The happiness of these servants of God is declared. None can be blessed but those that are holy; and all that are holy shall be blessed” (Matthew Henry).

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.

20:6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.

### **Three Blessings Associated with the First Resurrection**

- The second death will have no power over such a person.
- The individual shall be a priest of God and of Christ with access to the Father and the Son.
- The individual shall reign with the Lord a thousand years.

### **Summary**

20:1-6.

In Revelation 20 John speaks of the spiritual present reign of Christ in three scenes beginning with the binding of Satan in verses 1-3. God controls Satan through all of his deceptive changes even as he appears “*as an angel of light*” (2 Corinthians 11:14). It is the LORD God who holds the “*key to the bottomless pit*” (Revelation 9:1; 20:1) into which Satan is cast.

The word “*key*” appears six times in the New Testament. Not once does it refer to a literal, physical key. In Matthew 16:19 Jesus told Peter that he would be given the “*keys of the kingdom*”.

Peter never received a literal key to a literal kingdom and yet he was given spiritual authority, which he exercised time and again during the days of his ministry. Jesus rebuked lawyers in Luke 11:52 for taking away spiritual understanding from the people in regard to the Law of God. And in Revelation 1:18 and 3:7 we read that Jesus Christ possesses the keys of Hades and Death and of the house of David.

Again, the reference is not to a physical key but to the power to make available (to open) and to restrict (to shut). So in Revelation 20 we need not entertain questions regarding the shape and size of the *“key to the bottomless pit.”* The key is a symbolic representation of great restrictions placed upon Satan.

The word *“bound”* emphasizes the binding of Satan. *“Binding”* expresses limitations or obligations. *“A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives”*, says 1 Corinthians 7:9. And the meaning is understood. There are limitations imposed by the law of the land. However, a wife being bound in no way implies inactivity or inability to influence others.

The binding of Satan does not mean cessation of his activities. Nevertheless, Satan is bound as the Scriptures teach. Therefore consider Matthew 12:29. Christ states that He Himself has bound Satan so He can plunder Satan’s house.

This binding of Satan probably took place just before the start of His ministry when the Dragon, that Serpent of old, personally confronted Jesus. Two temptations were initiated with the challenge: *“If you are the Son of God, prove it”* (Matthew 4:3, 6). Jesus proved that He was very God of very God and so bound His number one enemy. Turning to Luke 10:18 it is read that Jesus told His disciples, *“I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.”*

When His disciples returned with their report about casting out demons Christ exclaimed, *“I know. I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.”*

Nearly every case of demon possession recorded in the *Bible* took place during the Lord’s ministry. In Christ, Satan knew He faced His greatest foe and so unleashed the demons of darkness upon the land of Palestine. But it was to no avail. Jesus cast out the demons and gave His disciples power to do the same.

The Lord’s power over demons was evidence of the arrival of God’s kingdom. Satan was being bound. But that was not the best news. The disciples were not to rejoice in this. Rather, they were to rejoice because their names were written in the Lamb’s Book of Life (Luke 10:20). John 12:31 *“Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.”*

Jesus said that “now” in His day Satan would be cast out. He did not say that Satan would be cast out thousands of years in the future. Jesus could say this because He knew that soon, oh very soon, He was going to destroy Satan at the Cross. Though each step to the Cross was a step of agony, it was also a step to victory. *“Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.”*

Observe 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7. Led by God the Holy Spirit, Paul declared that the works of Satan were, and are, currently being restrained. In context the apostle taught that as long as law and order are still present, men of lawlessness, energized by Satan, are unable to appear upon the scene of history with a program of unprecedented unrighteousness, blasphemy, and persecution.

If and when God removes the restraints, then the forces of hell will and do break forth afresh until they are arrested. History is filled with examples of this process. The life of Adolph Hitler is a familiar example.

The great truth from this passage is that the works of Satan were and are currently being restrained. The next passage to consider is Hebrews 2:14. The death of death in the death of Christ has rendered Satan defeated, “*destroyed*”, and powerless. Oliver Holden recognized what great work Christ accomplished and invited the Church to sing the praises of the Savior.

“All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name!  
Let angels’ prostrate fall:  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
And crown Him Lord of all.”

Christ has rendered Satan defeated, “*destroyed*”, and powerless. Because Christ has bound Satan in order to plunder his house of precious souls held captive, because Christ watched Satan fall from heaven, because Christ in His own day cast out Satan, because the works of the Devil are being restrained, the Evil One is not able to deceive the nations any longer. Now the Great Commission can be engaged in with confidence. Christians can go into the entire world with the good news of redemption. And the gospel is being preached to all the nations for they are deceived no more.

***Special Note.***

When Satan is released from the bottomless pit, he shall once more deceive the nations.

- *Revelation 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*

**A Final Burst of Rebellion  
Revelation 20:7-9**

7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

20:7. Satan shall be loosed.

***Special Note.***

Commenting on the binding of Satan in Revelation 20, Matthew Henry has some wise comments. “We have here a prophecy of the binding of Satan for a certain term of time, in which

he should have much less power and the church much more peace than before. The power of Satan was broken in part by the setting up of the gospel kingdom in the world; it was further reduced by the empire's becoming Christian; it was yet further broken by the downfall of the mystical Babylon; but still this serpent had many heads, and, when one is wounded, another has life remaining in it.”

**Fifth Judgment: on Gog and Magog  
Revelation 20:8-9**

8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea.

20:8. And shall go out to deceive the nations. When Satan is bound by God he cannot deceive the nations. When Satan is given more freedom by God he is incorrigible and goes forth to deceive the nations.

**How Nations are Deceived by Satan**

**Political Deception**

- Communism
- Socialism
- Capitalism
- Nationalism
- Fascism
- Nazism (Anti-Semitism)
- Liberalism

**Religious, Spiritual, and Mental Deception**

- Universalism
- Mormonism
- Russellism (Jehovah Witness)
- Confucianism
- Buddhism
- Secular Psychology
- Secular Humanism

The common theme in political deception is that the state will meet all the needs of the individual and thus replace God. The common theme in religious spiritual deception is that man can do something to earn or deserve salvation.

20:8. Gog and Magog. When used in Ezekiel 38 and 39, Gog is said to be from the land of Magog. But here in Revelation, John is using the words “Gog” and “Magog” in a different sense.

***Special Note.***

In rabbinic literature the words “Gog” and “Magog” are used to speak of the great mass of the nations who are rebellious toward the Lord God of heaven. So the words are used by the apostle John in a symbolic way (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

20:8. Gog (golden ornament), is the name of two men in the Bible. The first man named Gog was descendant of Joel, of the tribe of Reuben.

- *1 Chronicles 5:4 The sons of Joel; Shemaiah his son, Gog his son, Shimei his son.*

The second man in the Bible named Gog is referred to as the leader of a confederacy of armies that attacked the land of Israel. Gog is described as “the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal” who comes from “the land of Magog”, a place north of Israel.

- *Ezekiel 38:2 Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, 3 And say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal:*

In the prophecy given by Ezekiel, the confederate leader, Gog, and his allies, was to be crushed on the mountains of Israel in a slaughter so terrible it was to take seven months to bury the dead.

- *Ezekiel 39:12 And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land.*

In Jewish history the name Gog became a name associated with ruthless evil, much like the name of modern madmen such as Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Hussein, and Castro.

In the Revelation, John sees another “Gog” united with Satan who, being set free from his prison, tries to deceive the nations “which are in the four quarters of the earth”. Once more “Gog” is seen as a commanding leader of the army under the dragon.

20:8. Magog (land of Gog) was a grandson of Noah as one of the sons of Japheth. He began to populate the country called Syria. His descendants spread into many other parts of the world to form a region known in the ancient world as “the land of Magog.

- *Genesis 10:2 The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.*
- *Ezekiel 38:2 Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him,*

The “land of Magog” refers to a people who lived in northern Asia and Europe. The Jewish historian Josephus identified these people as the Scythians who were known for their cruelty in waging destructive warfare. Because of their location to Israel they were considered to be the “northern barbarians”. They were skilled horsemen and accomplished in the use of the bow and arrow.

- *Ezekiel 38:15 And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army:*

“The Book of Revelation uses Ezekiel's prophetic imagery to portray the final, apocalyptic encounter between good and evil at the end of this age. “Gog and Magog” (Revelation 20:8-9) symbolize the anti-Christian forces of the world” (Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary).

It is not national Israel that Satan wishes to hurt for the unbelieving people of the Jewish faith are not converted and are already in the kingdom of their father the Devil. No, it is Christ and the church, consisting of the saints of God, with whom the Devil makes war on. It is those who have the testimony of Jesus Christ that Satan wishes to destroy, not an unbelieving apostate nation or race.

- War is waged on the witnesses of Christ. *Revelation 11:7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*
- War is waged against those who have the testimony of Jesus. *Revelation 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.*
- War is waged against the Lamb. *Revelation 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

***Special Note.***

Because the Dragon, who is the Devil, the Beast from the Sea, and the Beast from the Land wage war against the saints, the Saviour of the saints shall wage war on them.

- *Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

20:9. And they went up...and compassed the camp of the saints about. History is the prolong conflict between man and God for sovereignty. Encapsulated here is the story of God in the hands of angry sinners through His church consisting of the saints.  
20:9. and fire came down from God. God is determined that man shall not be sovereign. He is the Holy One. He is the jealous One. God will not surrender His sovereignty. God has also promised to avenge His own.

- *Romans 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

The word for vengeance (Greek, *ekdikesis* (ek-dik'-ay-sis) refers to divine retribution or punishment.

### **Sixth Judgment: on Satan Revelation 20:10**

10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

20:10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is mentioned four times in the Revelation: 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15.

#### **The Final Judgment of the Unholy Trinity**

- The Devil
- The Beast from the Sea
- The Beast from the Land which is the False Prophet

20:10. brimstone (Hebrew, *goprit*, properly “resin”; Greek *theion*, “flashing”), sulfur. The cities of the plain were destroyed by fire and brimstone (Genesis 19:24). Brimstone is used in Scripture to speak of punishment (Deuteronomy 29:23; Job 18:15; Psalm 11:6; Isaiah 30:33; Ezekiel 38:22; Luke 17:28; Revelation 9:17; 20:10).

#### ***Special Note.***

One of the most tragic aspects of the teaching of some prophetic teachers is that nothing really changes after Jesus returns to earth the Second Time according to promise. There is no real new heaven and new earth. People still die and, in the end, Satan still works in the nations of the world. Furthermore, the millennial does not last a thousand years but a thousand years PLUS the time allotted to Satan for a little season. It is as history today is doomed to repeat itself even after Jesus comes.

20:10. for ever and ever. In this verse there is no comfort for the annihilationist or for those who believe in soul sleep. Nor is there a second chance after the return of Christ. The purpose of God will not be frustrated. It cannot be altered by Satan or his allies. “Lucifer, Son of the Morning, was it worth it? You said, ‘I will be like the Most High. You were going to be God. But now, your kingdom is lost and your followers are doomed. Satan, was it worth it?’”

### **Seventh Judgment on the Wicked Dead Revelation 20:11-15**

11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

20:11. a great white throne. What John sees is symbolic of the essence of God. The throne is great because the infinite God sits upon it. It is white because God is pure and holy. It is a throne because God is the just Judge of the universe. While human justice is imperfect, God will be just.

20:11. from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. Comparative language is found in Revelation 16:20. "*And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*" They fled in dismay is probably the sense John wishes to convey. Judgment day can be a day of great fear and terror.

20:11. and there was found no place for them. When the Lord Jesus Christ appears in glory, He "puts on such majesty and terror that the earth and the heaven flee from his face, and there is no place found for them; there is a dissolution of the whole frame of nature" (Matthew Henry).

- *2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

20:12. And I saw the dead, small and great.

### **Who Shall Stand to be Judged before God**

#### **2 Corinthians 5:10**

*"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."*

- The dead shall be judged
- Those who are small or unknown shall be judged
- Those who are great or well-known shall be judged

20:12. and the books were opened. The word "books" is in the plural because there is a Book of Life and there is a Book of Works. For those who are in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. For those who reject Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the basis of judgment will be human works which shall condemn every soul for those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- *Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*
- *Romans 8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*
- *Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*
- *Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

***Special Note.***

Those who are not written in the Book of Life shall be judged according to their works, which is the basis on which all religions, apart from Christianity, insists should be the basis for divine evaluation.

20:12. *the book of life.* This book is mentioned eight times in Scripture.

**The Book of Life**

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| • Philippians 4:3  | Contains the names of fellow-laborers in the work of the Lord       |
| • Revelation 3:5   | Those who confess Christ shall not be blotted out                   |
| • Revelation 13:8  | It is a book of the Lamb  |
| • Revelation 17:8  | There are names not written in the book of life                     |
| • Revelation 20:12 | The book of life is different from other books                      |
| • Revelation 20:15 | There are names which will not be found written in the book of life |
| • Revelation 21:27 | Only those written in the Lamb's book of life will be in heaven     |
| • Revelation 22:19 | Care must be taken to preserve one's name written in the book       |

**A New Name in Glory**

“I was once a sinner, but I came  
Pardon to receive from my Lord:  
This was freely given, and I found  
That He always kept His word.

There's a new name written down in glory,  
And it's mine, O yes, it's mine!  
And the white robed angels sing the story,

“A sinner has come home.”

For there's a new name written down in glory,  
And it's mine, O yes, it's mine!  
With my sins forgiven I am bound for Heaven,  
Never more to roam.

I was humbly kneeling at the cross,  
Fearing naught but God's angry frown;  
When the heavens opened and I saw  
That my name was written down.

In the Book 'tis written, “Saved by Grace,”  
O the joy that came to my soul!  
Now I am forgiven, and I know  
By the blood I am made whole.”

C. Austin Miles, 1910

20:12. according to the works. according to their deeds. Since individuals want to be saved according to their works, they shall be judged on that basis. Judgment shall be in degrees.

- *Matthew 10:15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.*

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

20:13. hell (Greek, hades), unseen, or the place (state) of departed souls. The word “hades” is consistently used four times in the Revelation to speak of the place of departed souls.

- Revelation 1:18 Christ holds the keys of hell
- Revelation 6:8 Hell follows death
- Revelation 20:13 Hell shall deliver up its dead for judgment
- Revelation 20:14 Hell shall be cast into the lake of fire

### The Sphere of the Dead in the New Testament

**Greek**

**English**

**Scripture**

- Gehenna                      Hell                      Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6

***Special Note.***

The Greek word “gehenna”, used twelve times in the New Testament, is of Hebrew origin; valley of (the son of) Hinnom; ge-henna (Ge-Hinnom), a valley of Jerusalem, used (figuratively) as a name for the place (or state) of everlasting punishment. In every case but one, the term is used by our Lord Jesus Christ. The singular exception is James 3:6.

- Hades                      Hell                      Matthew 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13, 14

***Special Note.***

The Greek word “hades” (hades); unseen, or the place (state) of departed souls.

- Tartaros                      Hell                      2 Peter 2:4

***Special Note.***

The Greek word “tartaros” (the deepest abyss of Hades); to incarcerate in eternal torment.

**Summary**

- Hell is a place for the departed spirits of the wicked.
- Hell is a place of fire.
- Hell is a place of eternal torment in a deep abyss.

“The damned in hell would give the world to have the number of their sins one less” (Jonathan Edwards).

Even young people need to be taught of hell for they are but, “Young serpents who have not yet learned to bite but were full of poison” (Jonathan Edwards).

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

20:14. This is the second death. Scripture teaches that the second death is when death and hell are cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20; 20:10, 14, 15). The second death is eternal death prolonged in the lake of fire.

### Three Types of Death

Kind of Death	Punishment	Scripture
• There is physical death.	The death of the body.	Genesis 3:1-3
• There is spiritual death.	Separation of fellowship with God.	Matthew 7:23
• There is eternal death.	The destruction of body and soul.	Matthew 10:28

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

20:15. was cast into the lake of fire. Sin involves endless guilt, and time is unrelated to its character (Dr. S. Lewis Johnson).

#### *Special Note.*

A guilty conscience desires to put time and distance between acts of sinning. But it does not go. What must be put between the sin and the sinner is Christ and His redemptive work at Calvary. The guilty heart will only find relief, not in time and distance, but in divine forgiveness. Confess your sin. Call upon the name of the Lord. Believe in His pardoning grace. Receive His mercy through Jesus Christ who is the Saviour of the world.

#### *Special Note.*

William Elbert Munsey wrote of the everlasting punishment of the wicked:

"The eternal punishment of the wicked, the eternal happiness of the righteous, and the eternity of God, as far as Revelation is concerned, form the same building. The Universalist has placed his shoulders against the basement pillars, and if he succeeds the whole structure falls; but he and his co-laborers may toil and sweat, and leave their bones to molder away in the cellars, but God lives on, the righteous shout on, and the damned groan on- throughout all eternity- O Eternity!

The meaning of such a word in its connection with the future punishment of the wicked is dreadful- O Eternity! Its significance is as high and wide and deep and grand as God is. He fills it, and it fills Him, and all the worlds, and all the men, and all the demons, and all the angels, but perform their parts in its awful shadow."

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH: "Corrupters of families will not inherit the kingdom of God. And if they who do these things according to the flesh suffer death, how much more if a man corrupt by evil teaching the faith of God for the sake of which Jesus Christ was crucified? A man become so foul will depart into unquenchable fire: and so will anyone who listens to him" (Letter to the Ephesians 16:1-2 [AD 110]) -

CLEMENT: "If we do the will of Christ, we shall obtain rest; but if not, if we neglect his commandments, nothing will rescue us from eternal punishment" (Second Clement 5:5 [AD 150]).

JUSTIN MARTYR: "[Jesus] shall come from the heavens in glory with his angelic host, when he shall raise the bodies of all the men who ever lived. Then he will clothe the worthy in immortality; but the wicked, clothed in eternal sensibility, he will commit to the eternal fire, along with the evil demons" (First Apology 52 [AD 151]).

POLYCARP: "Fixing their minds on the grace of Christ, [the martyrs] despised worldly tortures and purchased eternal life with but a single hour. To them, the fire of their cruel torturers was cold. They kept before their eyes their escape from the eternal and unquenchable fire" (Martyrdom of Polycarp 2:3 [AD 155]).

IRENAEUS: "The penalty increases for those who do not believe the Word of God and despise his coming. . . . [I]t is not merely temporal, but eternal. To whomsoever the Lord shall say, 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire,' they will be damned forever" (ibid., 4:28:2).

TERTULLIAN: "After the present age is ended he will judge his worshipers for a reward of eternal life and the godless for a fire equally perpetual and unending" (Apology 18:3 [AD 197]).

HIPPOLYTUS: "Standing before [Christ's] judgment, all of them, men, angels, and demons, crying out in one voice, shall say: 'Just is your judgment!' And the righteousness of that cry will be apparent in the recompense made to each. To those who have done well, everlasting enjoyment shall be given; while to the lovers of evil shall be given eternal punishment. The unquenchable and unending fire awaits these latter, and a certain fiery worm which does not die and which does not waste the body but continually bursts forth from the body with unceasing pain. No sleep will give them rest; no night will soothe them; no death will deliver them from punishment; no appeal of interceding friends will profit them" (Against the Greeks 3 [AD 212]).

### **A Sinner's Prayer**

**Suggested by Dr. S. Lewis Johnson**

"Lord, I know I am a sinner. I know, I know there is something wrong with my heart. You have said in Your infallible Word that Christ died for sinners, and that eternal life is offered through faith in Him. I come, acknowledging my sin. I take Christ as my own Saviour."

**Suggested by Dr. Billy Graham**

“O God, I am a sinner. I am sorry for my sin. I am willing to turn from my sin. I receive Jesus as my Saviour. I receive Him as Lord. From this moment on, I want to follow Him in the fellowship of the Church. In Christ’s name. Amen.”

## **REVELATION 21**

### **Summary Revelation Chapter 21**

For the larger part of the prophecy in the book of the Revelation there is a mixture of light and shadow, prosperity and adversity along with mercy and judgment in the conduct of divine Providence toward the church in the world. Now, at the close of the narrative the day breaks and the shadows flee away. There is a New World that appears because the former has passed away. The overarching message of the Revelation comes into focus. Let the faithful saints and servants of God wait just a little while more and they shall not only see but also enjoy the perfect holiness and happiness of a New World. In Revelation 21 there is an introduction to the vision of the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:1-9) and then the glorious vision itself (Revelation 21:10-27).

**Lord of the New Heaven and New Earth**  
**Chapters 21-22**

**Seven wonderful blessings, together with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ,  
form the climax of the Bible as eternity future is unveiled:**

**A New Heaven and a New Earth**  
**Revelation 21:1**

1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

21:1. And I saw a new heaven.

***Special Note.***

We know very little about heaven, but I once heard a theologian describe it as "an unknown region with a well-known inhabitant," and there is not a better way to think of it than that. Richard Baxter expresses the thought in these lines:

“My knowledge of that life is small,  
The eye of faith is dim,  
But it's enough that Christ knows all,  
And I shall be with him.”

To those who have learned to love and trust Jesus, the prospect of meeting him face to face and being with him forever is the hope that keeps us going, no matter what life may throw at us (James Packer, *Your Father Loves You*).

21:1. And I saw a new heaven. And I saw a fresh heaven.

### Four Heavens

- |                 |  |                    |
|-----------------|--|--------------------|
| • New Heaven    | A renewed heaven                                 | 2 Peter 2:13       |
| • Third heaven  | The dwelling place of God                        | 2 Corinthians 12:2 |
| • Second Heaven | The celestial sphere of the sun, moon, and stars | Psalm 136:8-9      |
| • First Heaven  | The atmospheric heaven around the earth          | Matthew 6:26       |

21:1. and there was no more sea.

#### *Special Note.*

For John, it was important that in the new heaven and new earth there would be no more sea. The sea was a terrible place in Jewish thought. The sea spoke of separation. John, on the isle of Patmos was separated from the churches of Asia Minor. In the new earth there would be no more separation. The sea was the place from which the Beast of Revelation 13 came. The sea was the place of the dead (Revelation 20:13). The sea was the place of chaos.

### A Descending City Revelation 21:2-8

2 And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

21:2. And I John saw the holy city. There is one verse given to the new universe, but twenty five verses given to the New City. Notice that nothing is said about the New Jerusalem being on the earth. What is said is that John saw the holy city coming down, and then he stops.

#### *Special Note.*

Some prophetic Bible teachers view the holy city as a real city literally descending from heaven. It is certainly possible for God to build a city in the sky and cause it to descend to earth. But it is more likely that this vision city, which John sees, is a symbolic representation of the church as the bride of Christ, the ravishing beauty of the Lamb's wife, for John unites two images into one.

3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, **Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**

21:3. and God himself shall be with them. This is the language of the Abrahamic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant.

- |                      |                                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Abrahamic Covenant | Genesis 17:1-8                    |
| • Davidic Covenant   | 2 Samuel 7:5-17                   |
| • New Covenant       | Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:9-12 |

21:3. and God himself shall be with them. God with them shall be their God. This the final and ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23.

- *Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*
- *Matthew 1:23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*

***Special Note.***

Nowhere in the New Testament do we find Jesus being called Immanuel. But in the eternal state the prophecy will be fulfilled. This point is significant in another way because it puts to rest the claim that people took the Old Testament prophecies and applied them to Jesus. But that is not the case or surely someone would have found occasion to address Jesus as Immanuel. No one ever did during the days of our Lord's earthly ministry.

***Special Note.***

Heaven is not heaven unless there is close fellowship with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This verse promises there will be fellowship and worship.

“Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;  
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!  
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,  
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;  
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,  
Who was, and is, and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,  
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;  
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,  
Perfect in power, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
All Thy works shall praise Thy Name, in earth, and sky, and sea;  
Holy, holy, holy; merciful and mighty!  
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!”

Reginald Heber, 1826

***Special Note.***

D. L. Moody told the story of a family that lost the mother at a young age. The children were sent away until after the great ordeal and her funeral was over. After returning home the little girl went from room to room asking, "Where is mother." When the situation was explained to her she cried out, "Take me away. I do not want to be here without mother." That is the heartfelt sentiment of the Christian. If there is no fellowship with God, "Take me away, I don't want to be on earth or in heaven without Him."

**4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.**

21:4. And God shall wipe away all tears.

**Five Great Negatives in Glory**

The Tabernacle of God is with men and God shall be God to His people.

- God shall wipe away all tears
- There shall be no death
- There shall be no sorrow
- There shall be no crying
- There shall be no pain

21:3. Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men. Man is the dwelling place of God (A. W. Tozer).

- In the Garden of Eden, God dwelt with men.
- In the Wilderness, God dwelt with men.
- In the time of the Judges, God dwelt with men.
- In the time of the kings, God dwelt with men.
- In the Tabernacles built by Solomon, God dwelt with men.
- In the days of our Lord's humiliation, God dwelt with men.
- In the days following Pentecost, God dwelt with men.

21:1-4. And I John saw the holy city...prepared as a bride. There is an obvious mixture of metaphors here for cities do not appear in wedding garments. What John has done is to take two great symbolic images to try to communicate how majestic, how powerful, how spectacular the Church is. The sight of a heavenly host descending at once towards earth could easily bring to John's mind the image of a city with definite structure much like dances can form physical looking shapes. In John's imagination the descending beautifully arrayed Bride, the very wife of the Lamb takes on a definite shape in the form of a city with a foundation, and gates in a wall.

- The beautiful bride. *Revelation 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*
- The wife of the Lamb. *Revelation 21:10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.*

### The Voice from the Throne

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, **Behold, I make all things new.** And he said unto me, **Write: for these words are true and faithful.**

21:5. Behold, I make all things new. Only God can make all things new.

- *2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

### What God Has Made New

- On every believer is a new name Revelation 2:17; 3:12
- In every believer is a new song Revelation 5:9; 14:3
- Around the believer is a New Jerusalem Revelation 3:12; 21:2
- Under the believer is a new earth Revelation 21:1
- Over the believer is a new heaven Revelation 21:1
- Before the believer are new expressions of the love of God Revelation 2:4; 3:19

21:5. these words are true and faithful. They are faithful and true because the triune God has given them. The words of a person are no greater than the strength of character of the person who speaks. These words are true and faithful because God cannot lie nor be faithless.

### God the Father is True and Faithful

- God the Father is true. *Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;*
- God the Father is faithful. *James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*

### God the Son is True and Faithful

- God the Son is true. *John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*
- God the Son is faithful. *John 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*

### **God the Holy Spirit is True and Faithful**

- God the Holy Spirit is true. *John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*
- God the Holy Spirit is faithful. *John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 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, and shall be in you.*

***Special Note.***

### **Every Believer is to be True and Faithful**

- The believer is to be truthful. *James 5:12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.*
- The believer is to be faithful. *1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

6 And he said unto me, **It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.**

21:5-6. Behold...Write...It is done.

### **Three Wonderful Divine Utterances**

- Behold, I make all things new
- Write: for these words are true and faithful.
- It is done.

***Special Note.***

When God undertakes a divine work of grace, He invites the attention of others. He speaks and the deed is done.

### **It is Done**

- |                                |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| • The salvation of sinners     | John 19:30       |
| • The punishment of the wicked | Revelation 16:17 |
| • The great purposes of God    | Revelation 21:6  |

21:6. I am Alpha and Omega. The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The Lord is the Alpha (Revelation 1:8, 11) and the Omega (Revelation 21:6; 22:13) of time and eternity.

***Special Note.***

As the Alpha, God existed from eternity past. There is none like Him. Therefore, His counsel shall stand.

- *Isaiah 46:9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:*

As the Omega, human history, and universal history, will progress according to His will.

- *Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:*

21:6. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. The object of all that God says and does is the believer. The person who is wretched over sin, the person who thirsts for righteousness will be given the water of life, freely. No one earns or deserves salvation, nor can eternal life be bought or purchased by good deeds. Grace is free for the asking, it is free for the receiving. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31).

**7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.**

21:7. I will be his God, and he shall be my son. These words were spoken to three persons in history. Now these words of covenantal promise are spoken to every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

**To Whom the Promise is Given**

- Abraham            Genesis 17:6-8
- David                2 Samuel 7:14
- The Messiah        Psalm 2:7
- The Christian        Revelation 21:7

**8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.**

21:8. sorcerers (Φαρμακευς pharmakeus (far-mak-yoos'); a drug, i.e. spell-giving potion); a druggist ("pharmacist") or poisoner, i.e. (by extension) a magician.

### Those Who Will Not Go to Heaven

#### **Galatians 5:19-21**

- Adultery
- Fornication
- Uncleaness
- Lasciviousness (lewdness)
- Idolatry
- Witchcraft (sorcery)
- Hatred
- Variance (quarrelling)
- Emulations (jealousy)
- Wrath
- Strife (factionist)
- Seditions (dissension)
- Heresies
- Envyings
- Murders
- Drunkenness
- Revellings

#### **1 Corinthians 6:9-10**

- Fornicators
- Idolaters
- Adulterers
- Effeminate
- Abuses with men
- Thieves
- The covetous
- Drunkards
- Revilers
- Extortioners

#### **Revelation 21:8**

- The fearful
- The unbelieving
- The abominable
- The murderers
- Whoremongers
- Sorcerers
- Idolaters
- Liars

#### **Revelation 22:15**

- Dogs
- Sorcerers
- Whoremongers
- Murderers
- Idolaters
- Liars

#### ***Special Note.***

Lest anyone despair, take hope in two facts. First, the chief of all sinners has already been saved in the person of Saul of Tarsus. Second, salvation makes all things new. Some of the most hopeful, and precious words in all the Bible were written to the church at Corinth.

- *1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*
- *1 Corinthians 6:11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

#### **Souls that Have Found God's Forgiveness and Mercy**

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| • Adam who plunged all of humanity into a state of sin      | Genesis 3:21              |
| • Abraham, a former idol worshipper while in Ur             | Genesis 17:1-8            |
| • Isaac, who lied   | Genesis 26:8-12           |
| • Jacob, who deceived his father and stole from his brother | Genesis 27:1-28:16        |
| • Joseph, who bragged about his blessings                   | Genesis 37:3-11           |
| • Lot, who committed incest with his two daughters          | Genesis 19:36 2 Peter 2:7 |
| • Noah, who got drunk                                       | Hebrews 11:7              |

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| • Moses, who killed a man                                 | Exodus 2:11-15; 3:2-27 |
| • Rahab, the harlot                                       | Hebrews 11:31          |
| • David, who committed murder and adultery                | Psalms 51:1-19         |
| • Matthew, a tax collector who extorted others            | Matthew 9:9-13         |
| • A sick man with palsy                                   | Matthew 9:2            |
| • John, who, with his brother James, had a violent temper | Mark 3:16-17           |
| • The woman taken in adultery                             | John 8:3-11            |
| • The thief on the cross                                  | Luke 23:43             |
| • Peter, who denied the Lord of glory                     | John 21:15-19          |

“Come, ye sinners, poor and needy,  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;  
Jesus ready stands to save you,  
Full of pity, love and pow’r.

I will arise and go to Jesus,  
He will embrace me in His arms;  
In the arms of my dear Savior,  
Oh, there are ten thousand charms.

Come, ye thirsty, come, and welcome,  
God’s free bounty glorify;  
True belief and true repentance,  
Every grace that brings you nigh.

Come, ye weary, heavy-laden,  
Lost and ruined by the fall;  
If you tarry till you’re better,  
You will never come at all.

View Him prostrate in the garden;  
On the ground your Maker lies;  
On the bloody tree behold Him;  
Sinner, will this not suffice?

Lo! th’ incarnate God ascended,  
Pleads the merit of His blood:  
Venture on Him, venture wholly,  
Let no other trust intrude.

Let not conscience make you linger,  
Not of fitness fondly dream;  
All the fitness He requireth  
Is to feel your need of Him.”

Joseph Hart

**A New City**  
**Revelation 21:9-23**

9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, **Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lambs wife.**

21:9. the seven vials. the seven bowls.

21:9. I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. Note that the Lamb's wife is associated with the Holy Jerusalem of verse 10.

10 And he carried me to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

21:10. and shewed me that great city. In a happy blend of two images, John sees the Lamb's Wife in the form of the Holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven.

**Eleven Images of the Church**

- Sheep. *John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*
- Wheat. *Matthew 13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.*
- Vine or Vineyard. *John 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*
- Body. *Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*
- Children of the Household of God. *Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

- **Bride.** *Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*
- **Building stones.** *1 Peter 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*
- **Priests.** *1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*
- **Kings.** *Revelation 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*
- **Kingdom.** *Colossians 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*
- **Saints.** *Romans 1:7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

***Special Note.***

The city of God, the New Jerusalem, stands in contrast to the City of Babylon.

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • Babylon is unholy             | New Jerusalem is holy                    |
| • Babylon is an earthly city    | New Jerusalem is a heavenly city         |
| • Babylon is for sinners        | New Jerusalem is for saints              |
| • Babylon is for Antichrist     | New Jerusalem is for Christ              |
| • Babylon is full of corruption | New Jerusalem is full of glorious things |
| • Babylon is darkness           | New Jerusalem is light                   |
| • Babylon is a great city       | New Jerusalem is a beloved city          |

**The Glory of God  
The Light of Heaven**

11 Having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

21:11. a stone most precious. The stones reflect the perfections of God and so gems are used.

21:11. the glory of God. The glory (Greek, *doxa*) of God refers to His dignity, majesty, honour, praise, and worship. The glory of God is mentioned in Revelation 15:8; 21:11, 23.

“Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

Thomas Ken, 1674

### **The Twelve Gates: The Twelve Tribes of Israel**

12 And had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

21:12. And had a wall great and high. This suggests the security of those who are within.

21:12. and at the gates twelve angels.

#### **The Number Twelve in Revelation**

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| • Twelve thousand from twelve tribes of Israel | Revelation 7:5-8 |
| • Twelve stars in a crown                      | Revelation 12:1  |
| • Twelve gates                                 | Revelation 21:12 |
| • Twelve angels                                | Revelation 21:12 |
| • Twelve tribes of Israel named                | Revelation 21:12 |
| • Twelve foundation stones                     | Revelation 21:14 |
| • Twelve apostles                              | Revelation 21:14 |
| • Twelve thousand furlongs (1,500)             | Revelation 21:16 |
| • Twelve pearly gates                          | Revelation 21:21 |
| • Twelve manner of fruits                      | Revelation 22:2  |

21:12. of the children of Israel. of the sons of Israel.

#### **The Twelve Tribes of the Sons of Israel**

(Web: [Israel-a-history-of.com](http://Israel-a-history-of.com))

- The Tribe of Manasseh. The Tribe of Manasseh was the only one of the 12 Tribes of Israel to inherit land on both sides of the Jordan River. This was a manifestation of the double-portion still being given to Manasseh, the eldest of Joseph.

- The Tribe of Reuben. The tribe of Reuben descended from the firstborn son of Jacob and Leah, Reuben. As the firstborn son, Reuben played a prominent role in the early accounts. However, his role as a tribe would diminish significantly as a consequence of transgressions.
- The Tribe of Simeon. The tribe of Simeon was descended from the second born son of Jacob and Leah, Simeon. This tribe dwelt in relative obscurity, and had very little impact on the history of Israel.
- The Tribe of Levi. The tribe of Levi was descended from Levi, the third son of Jacob and Leah. Through an act of faithfulness in the wilderness, this tribe would become set apart by God.
- The Tribe of Judah. The tribe of Judah became one of the most prominent tribes in all of Israel. The Davidic Dynasty emerged from this tribe, a lineage which culminated in Jesus Christ in the New Testament.
- The Tribe of Dan. The tribe of Dan is perhaps the most enigmatic of the twelve tribes of Israel. The Danites failed to drive out their Philistine and Canaanite neighbors. As a result, they migrated to another land, in the northernmost limits of Canaan.
- The Tribe of Naphtali. Naphtali was the sixth son of Jacob, and the second produced by Bilhah. Naphtali was blessed by Jacob on his deathbed. The tribe of Naphtali was a tribe of great warriors, and took part in some of the Old Testament's most important battles.
- The Tribe of Gad. Gad was the seventh son of Jacob and Zilpah, Leah's maiden. Gad became the Marines of the 12 tribes of Israel. They were fierce, athletic, and skillful on the battle field. They played lead roles in the conquest of Sihon and Og, then led the Israelites across the Jordan to Jericho and beyond.
- The Tribe of Asher. The tribe of Asher proved to be a tribe of contradictions and vagaries. Influenced by the pagan religion of Phoenicia and chastised by Deborah, the tribe also came to the aid of Gideon, and supplied King David with one-third of his army in Hebron.
- The Tribe of Issachar. The tribe of Issachar earned a reputation as a tribe of students of the law. They were wise men, well respected. Scripture calls them princes. However, the infamous King Baasha and son were descended from this tribe.
- The Tribe of Zebulun. The tenth son of Jacob, Zebulun would prove one faithful throughout much of the Old Testament. The tribe fought bravely with Deborah and Barak. They were mentioned in conjunction with Gideon. The tribe took part in a prophecy of Isaiah's which Christ fulfilled.

- The Tribe of Ephraim. Perhaps no tribe symbolizes man's struggle with God more than the tribe of Ephraim. At once rebuked, then praised, Ephraim was always under the watchful eye of God. The name would come to represent the entire northern kingdom of Israel. The Ephraimites participated in many of Israel's engagements throughout the period of the Judges. They played a significant role in both the United and Divided Monarchies.
- The Tribe of Benjamin: Of the 12 tribes of Israel, the tribe of Benjamin is one of only two to appear throughout the entire Bible. They are the only tribe to have belonged to both the north and the south. The tribe of Benjamin played integral roles in a number of events from the Judges through Ezra. Benjamites such as King Saul and the great prophet Samuel significantly shaped the history of Israel.

13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

#### Twelve Gates of the New Jerusalem

- East        Three Gates
- North      Three Gates
- South      Three Gates
- West        Three Gates

#### The Twelve Foundations: The Twelve Apostles of the Lamb

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

21:13-14. the twelve tribes...the twelve apostles. The essential unity of the people of God in the Old Testament era and in the New Testament era is confirmed in the New Jerusalem. God has only one people, one plan, and one program for His elect.

- *Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

#### The Twelve Apostles

##### Matthew 10:2-4

- Simon Peter
- Andrew his brother
- James son of Zebedee
- John his brother
- Philip

##### Mark 3:16-19

- Simon Peter
- James son of Zebedee
- John brother of James
- Andrew
- Philip

##### Luke 6:14-16

- Simon Peter
- Andrew his brother
- James
- John
- Philip

##### Acts 1:13

- Peter
- John
- James
- Andrew
- Philip

• Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
• Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
• Matthew	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
• James son of Alphaeus	James son of Alphaeus	James of Alphaeus	James of Alphaeus
• Thaddeus	Thaddeus	Simon the zealot	Simon the Zealot
• Simon the Cananean	Simon the Cananean	Jude of James	Jude of James
• Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	

\*Matthias was selected by the apostles to replace Judas according to Acts 1:23, 26.

\*Paul claimed apostolic authority in all his epistles (Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 1 Timothy 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; Titus 1:1).

***Special Note.***

Notice that the apostles are the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The Lamb is the central theme in the Revelation being referenced 27 times in 11 of the 22 chapters.

15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

**Three Measurements with the Golden Reed**

- The city            1,500 miles foursquare
- The gates        of which there are 12
- The wall           216 feet long

16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

21:16. twelve thousand furlongs. The city New Jerusalem is cubed. It is twelve thousand furlongs or 1,500 miles foursquare. The city is vast.

- *John 14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

***Special Note.***

The cube was a symbol of perfection in the ancient world.  $1,500 \times 1,500 = 2,250,000$  Square Miles.  $2,250,000 \times 1,500 = 3.375$  billion cubic miles.

17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

21:17. an hundred and forty and four cubits. This measurement of 144 cubits which equals 72 yards or 216 feet.

18 And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

19 And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21:19-20. the wall of the city were garnished. the wall of the city were adorned.

**Twelve Foundational Stones of the New Jerusalem**

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| • First Foundation    | Jasper   |
| • Second Foundation   | Sapphire   |
| • Third Foundation    | Chalcedony (a small stone of various colors)                   |
| • Fourth Foundation   | Emerald  |
| • Fifth Foundation    | Sardonyx   |
| • Sixth Foundation    | Sardius (a quartz from a pale golden yellow to reddish orange) |
| • Seventh Foundation  | Chrysolite (gold stone)  |
| • Eighth Foundation   | Beryl (a pale-green transparent precious stone)                |
| • Ninth Foundation    | Topaz  |
| • Tenth Foundation    | Chrysoprasus   |
| • Eleventh Foundation | Jacinth  |
| • Twelfth Foundation  | Amethyst (the purple or violet variety of quartz)              |

***Special Note.***

The list of twelve foundations with twelve precious stones is full of symbolic meaning. By the imagery, the splendor of the Church [the city of God] is stressed, for the very foundations are made of riches beyond price. The essential unity of the Church is also stressed, for the twelve foundations are the twelve apostles that made up the precious stones many of which can also be found in the breastplate of the High Priest of Israel.

- *Exodus 28:17 And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row. 18 And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. 19 And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. 20 And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their inclosings. 21 And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.*

### Riches Beyond Price

#### Twelve Precious Foundational Stones Twelve Precious Priestly Stones

First Row	Second Row	Third Row	Fourth Row
• Sardius	Emerald	Ligure	Beryl
• Topaz	Sapphire	Agate	Onyx
• Carbuncle	Diamond	Amethyst	Jasper

#### *Special Note.*

Some Bible teachers, including Dr. S. Lewis Johnson, have suggested a parallel between the precious stones listed in Revelation, the precious stones in the breastplate of the High Priest of Israel, and the precious stones associated with the Zodiac. Josephus in his writings, proclaimed a connection between the twelve stones in the High Priest's breastplate, the twelve months of the year and the twelve signs of the zodiac.

#### Stones in the Breastplate and the Zodiac

Breastplate Placement	Zodiac Sign	Stone	Color	Month
Stone # I	Aries	Carnelian	Pink Red	March 21- April 20
Stone # II	Taurus	Peridot	Light Green	April 21 – May 20
Stone # III	Gemini	Emerald	Dark Green	May 21 – June 20
Stone # IV	Cancer	Ruby	Dark Red	June 21 – July 20
Stone # V	Leo	Lapis Lazuli	Dark Blue	July 21 – August 21
Stone # VI	Virgo	Onyx	Yellow	August 20 – September 22
Stone # VII	Libra	Sapphire	Deep Blue	September 23 – October 22
Stone # VIII	Scorpio	Agate	Lined colors	October 23 – November 22
Stone # IX	Sagittarius	Amethyst	Purple	November 23 – December 20
Stone # X	Capricorn	Topaz	Light colors	December 21 – January 19
Stone # XI	Aquarius	Beryl	Tinted	January 20 – February 18
Stone # XII	Pisces	Jasper	Varied Color	February 19 – March 20

If there is any real connection between the Zodiac, the Breastplate, and the gems of the New Jerusalem, the divine message remains the same. Men and women do not need to look to the stars to determine their destiny. They need to look to Jesus Christ who is in heaven. The true jeweled city is the City of God, the New Jerusalem.

21 And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

**The Twelve Gates  
The Streets of the New Jerusalem**

- The twelve gates were made of pearls
- The streets of the city were of pure gold

***Special Note.***

The pearl was associated with redemption. The Lord used it in that sense in one of His parables.

- *Matthew 13:45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: 46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.*

The pearl is the answer to a wounded life from without and in that sense forms an illustration of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquity and by His wounds we are healed. Jesus Christ is the Pearl of great price.

- *Isaiah 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

21:22. And I saw no temple. In the New Jerusalem we are all “Enochs”, we all walk with God.

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

21:22-23. the Lamb.

**The Lamb in the Revelation**

- |                           |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| • The Lamb is slain       | Revelation 5:6         |
| • The Lamb is worshiped   | Revelation 5:8, 12, 13 |
| • The Lamb is instructive | Revelation 6:1         |
| • The Lamb is angry       | Revelation 6:16        |

• The Lamb is the object of adoration	Revelation 7:9
• The Lamb is the foundation of salvation	Revelation 7:10
• The Lamb is bloody	Revelation 7:14
• The Lamb is like a Shepherd	Revelation 7:17
• The Lamb is victorious	Revelation 12:11
• The Lamb is the keeper of the scroll of life	Revelation 13:8
• The Lamb is followed	Revelation 14:4
• The Lamb is a terrible and fearful Judge	Revelation 14:10
• The Lamb is worthy of being sung about	Revelation 15:3
• The Lamb is a mighty warrior	Revelation 17:14
• The Lamb is married to His bride	Revelation 19:7
• The Lamb is in fellowship with many	Revelation 19:9
• The Lamb is the Chief of the Apostles	Revelation 21:14
• The Lamb is the temple in the New Jerusalem	Revelation 21:22
• The Lamb is the light in the New Jerusalem	Revelation 21:23

### A New Order of the Nations

#### Revelation 21:24-27

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

21:25. And the gates of it shall not be shut. The gospel invitation is wide open to all, and all who respond can be assured they are saved and are safe.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lambs book of life.

## REVELATION 22

### Revelation Chapter 22 Summary

Revelation 22 contains a further description of the heavenly state of the church (Revelation 22:1-5) ending with a confirmation of this and all the other visions of the book (Revelation 22:6-19). The vision concludes in verses 20-21.

#### A river of life Revelation 22:1

1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

#### A tree of life Revelation 22:2

2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

22:2. the tree of life. What was once forbidden is now offered for the healing of the nations.

#### The Tree of Life in Scripture

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| • Genesis 2:9      | Was located in the midst of the Garden of Eden                       |
| • Genesis 3:22     | Protected lest man eat of it and live forever in a fallen state      |
| • Genesis 3:24     | Guarded by Cherubims   |
| • Proverbs 3:18    | Wisdom is spoken of as a tree of life                                |
| • Proverbs 11:30   | The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life                         |
| • Proverbs 13:12   | A desire that is satisfied is like a tree of life                    |
| • Proverbs 15:4    | A wholesome tongue is a tree of life                                 |
| • Revelation 22:2  | Those who overcome shall eat of the tree of life                     |
| • Revelation 22:14 | Those who are blessed will have the right to eat of the tree of life |

#### An eternal home Revelation 22:3-5

3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

22:3. the throne of God...his servants shall serve him. In the New Jerusalem there will be the perfection of government and the perfection of divine service. Jesus is presented as Lamb and Lord.

***Special Note.***

Work is one of God's greatest gifts to His creation for work is a reflection of His own divine genius and energy. There will be enough work to keep everyone happy and busy for all eternity.

4 And they shall see his face; and his name *shall* be in their foreheads.

22:4. And they shall see his face. Moses was only allowed to see the back part of the Lord (Exodus 33:17-34:9). But we shall see Him face to face.

“Face to face with Christ, my Savior,  
Face to face—what will it be,  
When with rapture I behold Him,  
Jesus Christ Who died for me?

Face to face I shall behold Him,  
Far beyond the starry sky;  
Face to face in all His glory,  
I shall see Him by and by!

Only faintly now I see Him,  
With the darkened veil between,  
But a blessed day is coming,  
When His glory shall be seen.

What rejoicing in His presence,  
When are banished grief and pain;  
When the crooked ways are straightened,  
And the dark things shall be plain.

Face to face—oh, blissful moment!  
Face to face—to see and know;  
Face to face with my Redeemer,  
Jesus Christ Who loves me so.”

Carrie E. Beck, 1898

22:4. in their foreheads. This is the third time in Revelation that God's name is said to be in the forehead of His own.

- *Revelation 9:4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.*
- *Revelation 14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*
- *Revelation 22:4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.*

5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

#### **Twenty-eight Characteristics of the New City of Jerusalem**

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| • New Jerusalem is a perfect city in a new heaven and earth         | Revelation 21:1      |
| • New Jerusalem is a holy city                                      | Revelation 21:2      |
| • New Jerusalem is a prepared city like a radiant bride             | Revelation 21:2      |
| • New Jerusalem is the dwelling place of God                        | Revelation 21:3      |
| • New Jerusalem is a city without tears, death, sorrow, or pain     | Revelation 21:4      |
| • New Jerusalem is a city called the bride, the Lamb's wife         | Revelation 21:9      |
| • New Jerusalem is a city which descends out of heaven              | Revelation 21:10     |
| • New Jerusalem is a great city to be viewed from a high mountain   | Revelation 21:10     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city with light like unto precious stone       | Revelation 21:11     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city guarded by twelve angels                  | Revelation 21:12     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city with gates dedicated to the twelve tribes | Revelation 21:12     |
| • New Jerusalem is a walled city                                    | Revelation 21:14     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city founded on the twelve apostles            | Revelation 21:14     |
| • New Jerusalem is a measured city                                  | Revelation 21:15     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city four square measuring 1,500 miles         | Revelation 21:16     |
| • New Jerusalem is city where walls are measured 216 feet           | Revelation 21:17     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city of pure gold                              | Revelation 21:18     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city of precious stones                        | Revelation 21:19, 20 |
| • New Jerusalem is a city with pearly gates                         | Revelation 21:21     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city with streets of gold                      | Revelation 21:21     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city without a temple                          | Revelation 21:22     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city without sun or moon                       | Revelation 21:23     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city where the Lamb is the light               | Revelation 21:23     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city where the saved walk in light             | Revelation 21:24     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city with gates always opened                  | Revelation 21:25     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city with the water of life                    | Revelation 22:1, 17  |
| • New Jerusalem is a city with the throne of God                    | Revelation 22:2      |
| • New Jerusalem is a city with the tree of life                     | Revelation 22:14     |
| • New Jerusalem is a city without sinners                           | Revelation 22:15     |

## Conclusion

### The Apostle John closes the Book of the Revelation with

#### Words of comfort Revelation 22:6-17

6 And he said unto me, **These sayings are faithful and true:** and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

22:6. faithful and true.

#### Things Which Are Faithful and True

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| • The Lord is a faithful and true witness           | Revelation 3:14; Jeremiah 42:5 |
| • The Rider on the White horse is Faithful and True | Revelation 19:11               |
| • The words of God are true and faithful            | Revelation 21:5; 22:6          |

#### Three Testimonies

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| • The testimony of the Mediating Angel<br>Regarding the reliability of the Book | Revelation 22:6-15  |
| • The testimony of the Lord Jesus   | Revelation 22:16-19 |
| • The testimony of the apostle John   | Revelation 22:20-21 |

7 **Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.**

22:6-7. blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

#### The Seven Blessings of Revelation

- There is a blessing for those who hear and keep the words of this prophecy. *Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*
- There is a blessing for those who suffer martyrdom. *Revelation 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*

- There is a blessing for those who persevere in the Christian faith. *Revelation 16:15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*
- There is a blessing for those who are occupied with the person of Christ and fellowship with Him. *Revelation 19:9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*
- There is a blessing for those who have been regenerated. *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.*
- There is a blessing for those who persevere in the sphere of saving faith and service. *Revelation 22:7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*
- There is a blessing for those who are obedient. *Revelation 22:14 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.*

#### **The Timing of the Book of Revelation**

##### **AD 70**

- The events will shortly come to pass. *Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:*
- The events will come without delay. *Revelation 10:6 And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: [lit. that there should be delay no longer].*
- The events will shortly be done. *Revelation 22:6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.*
- The events will come quickly. *Revelation 22:7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*
- The events will surely come. *Revelation 22:20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

***Special Note.***

The book of Revelation is a book of opportunity, worship, hope, and judgment. It is a book of opportunity for the seven churches mentioned to repent and be holy (Revelation 1:1-3:22). It is a book of worship, for the Lamb is worthy of honor and praise (Revelation 4:1-5:14). It is a book of hope in that the saints who suffer for the Lord will be avenged (Revelation 6:10).

It is a book of judgment on those who oppose the Lord and who hurt His people. Specifically, the earth will be judged (Revelation 6:1- ; 8:1-21), the Beast from the Sea shall be judged, the Beast from the Land will be judged (Revelation 20:10), and the dead, small and great shall be judged (Revelation 20:12). When would judgment be poured out upon the earth, the righteous avenged, the political and religious beasts destroyed? "Soon, very soon," is the divine answer. For those suffering great persecution, the message of Revelation would be a source of great comfort.

**The Worship of Angels Forbidden**

8 And I John saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

**The Message of the Mediating Angel**

9 Then saith he unto me, **See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.**

22:9. See *thou do it* not. This is the second time John has tried to worship the angel, and the second time John is told not to worship him, but to worship God.

- *Revelation 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

22:9. worship God. Christians may worship God the Father. They may worship God the Son. They may worship God the Holy Spirit. But, the Christian may not worship a man, his image, or an angel.

- The twenty-four elders worshipped God                      Revelation 5:14; 11:16; 19:4
- The angels worshipped God    Revelation 7:11

***Special Note.***

Worship (Greek, proskuneo, pros-koo-neh-o'), meaning to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand); to fawn or crouch to, i.e. (literally or figuratively) prostrate oneself in homage (do reverence to, adore (New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary).

### Worship in Revelation

True Worship	True Object	False Worship	False Object
• Revelation 4:10	The One who lives forever	Revelation 9:20	Devils, gold, silver
• Revelation 11:1	The Lord God	Revelation 13:8,12,15	The First Beast
• Revelation 14:7	The Maker of heaven	Revelation 14:9,11	The False Image
• Revelation 15:4	The Lord	Revelation 19:10	An angel
• Revelation 22:9	God	Revelation 22:8	An angel

***Special Note.***

Once, in the Revelation, the Lord has promised He will make the enemies of the church to come and be prostrate before it in an act of reflective worship to demonstrate His love for His own.

- *Revelation 3:8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.*

10 And he saith unto me, **Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.**

22:10. Seal not. While Daniel was told to seal up his vision for the time of its fulfilment was not immediately at hand (Daniel 9:24; cf. Revelation 10:4), John is told not to seal up this portion of his vision “for the time is at hand”.

***Special Note.***

Seal (sphragizo, sfrag-id'zo), to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation (literally or figuratively); by implication, to keep secret, to attest (New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary).

#### The Sacred Seals of Scripture

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| • There is the seal that God is true                               | John 3:33         |
| • Circumcision was once the seal of the righteousness of the faith | Romans 4:11       |
| • Converts were the seal of Paul's apostleship                     | 1 Corinthians 9:2 |
| • Christians are forever secure because they are sealed by God     | 2 Timothy 2:19    |
| • The seal of God confirms the binding of Satan                    | Revelation 20:3   |

11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

22:11. He that is unjust...be unjust. The choices which individuals make will become permanent choices. Those who will not repent will come to a point they cannot repent. Judas travelled with the Lord Jesus for several years and was even appointed an apostle. But because he never repented of his sins, the time came when Satan literally entered into Judas and he was confirmed in evil so that it was said of him that it were better if he had never been born (John 13:27; Matthew 26:24).

22:11. he that is righteous...be righteous. Those who make righteous decisions will be confirmed in righteousness. Dorcas was a woman “full of good works and almsdeeds” (Acts 9:36). She lived a righteous life which was confirmed by all who knew her (Acts 9:39-42).

#### Choices Confirmed

##### The Unjust and Filthy

- He that is unjust, let him be unjust still.
- He which is filthy, let him be filthy still.

##### The Righteous and Holy

- He that is righteous, let him be righteous still.
- He that is holy, let him be holy still.

12 **And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.**

22:12. my reward is with me. In the New Testament there is the promise of rewards for various reasons. These rewards are spoken of as crowns.

#### Six Crowns of Glory

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| • There is the crown of joy which is the soul-winners crown      | 1 Thessalonians 2:19 |
| • There is the crown of righteousness                            | 2 Timothy 4:8        |
| • There is the crown of glory which is the shepherd's reward     | 1 Peter 5:4          |
| • There is the crown which is incorruptible for those who strive | 1 Corinthians 9:25   |
| • There is the crown of life for those who love Christ           | James 1:12           |
| • There is the crown of the martyrs                              | Revelation 2:10      |

#### *Special Note.*

“We must not be troubled by unbelievers when they say that this promise of reward makes Christian life a mercenary affair. There are different kinds of rewards. There is the reward which has no natural connection with the things you do to earn it and is quite foreign to the desires that ought to accompany those things. Money is not the natural reward of love; that is why we call a man a mercenary if he marries a woman for the sake of her money. But marriage is the proper reward for a real lover, and he is not mercenary for desiring it. [...]

The proper rewards are not simply tacked on to the activity for which they are given, but are the activity itself in consummation” (C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*).

### 13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

22:12. Alpha and Omega. Jesus said He was the Alpha and Omega at the beginning of the Revelation and He now repeats it at the end (Revelation 1:8, 11). With this title the Lord includes the ideas of completeness, eternity, and authority.

14 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.

22:14. Blessed *are* they that do his commandments. The Lord’s commandments are easy to bear when contrasted with not keeping His commandments.

- *Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

#### ***Special Note.***

The word “commandments” is plural in number for there are two great commandments: love God, love thy neighbor as thyself.

*Matthew 22:36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

22:14. the tree of life. Once guarded to keep individuals from the tree of life, in eternity future the tree of life is unguarded that individuals might freely enjoy.

#### **Two Rewards for Gospel Obedience**

- The right to eat of the Tree of Life which reminds the Christian of being a dependent creature.
- The right to enter through the pearly gates into the holy city, the New Jerusalem. Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden. Now the Christian is invited into the City of God.

15 For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, *and the bright and morning star.*

22:16. the offspring of David. the stock of David. Jesus is the stock, the offspring of David, as far as His human nature is concerned. But Christ is more. He is the “bright and morning star.”

***Special Note.***

The Old Testament prophets spoke of the celestial nature of the coming Messiah.

- *Numbers 24:17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.*
- *Malachi 4:2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.*

The Lord Jesus Christ fulfills the ancient prophesies.

- Jesus is the “Day Star.” *2 Peter 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:*
- Jesus is the “Morning Star.” *Revelation 2:28 And I will give him the morning star.*
- Jesus is the “Bright Morning Star.” *Revelation 22:16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.*

The “bright morning star” is Christ Himself. “If the Christian is true, when life comes to an end he will possess Christ, never to lose Him again” (Dr. William Barclay).

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

22:17. take the water of life freely. take the water of life without cost.

**A Threefold Express of Longing for Christ**

- The Spirit says, “Come.”
- The Bride says, “Come.”
- The One who hears says, “Come.”

### Come Sinners

- Come.
- Come thirsty.
- Come and take the water of life.
- Come freely.

22:17. And whosoever will. It is true that whosoever will may take of the water of life freely. But who wills to come to Christ and drink of the living water? Not man in his natural condition for "*There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God*" (Romans 3:11). Only those whom the Father draws will come to drink and be thirsty no more.

- *John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

### Words of Warning 22:18-19

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

22:18. the plagues that are written in this book. There are twenty-one plagues in this book.

#### The Plagues of the Seven Seals

- |                               |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| • Conquest                    | Revelation 6:1-2   |
| • War                         | Revelation 6:3-4   |
| • Famine                      | Revelation 6:5-6   |
| • Death                       | Revelation 6:7-8   |
| • Martyrdom                   | Revelation 6:9-11  |
| • Great earthquakes, darkness | Revelation 6:12-17 |
| • Thundering and lightning    | Revelation 8:1-5   |

#### The Plagues of the Seven Trumpets

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| • Hail and fire                             | Revelation 8:5-7   |
| • Water turned to blood                     | Revelation 8:8-9   |
| • Wormwood falls to earth                   | Revelation 8:10-11 |
| • Sun, moon, and stars do not give light    | Revelation 8:12    |
| • Locust invasion                           | Revelation 9:1-11  |
| • Death by smoke, fire, and sulfur          | Revelation 9:12-17 |
| • Thunder, lightning, earthquake, hailstorm | Revelation 9:15-19 |

**The Plagues of the Seven Bowls**

• Grievous sores	Revelation 16:1-2
• The sea turning to blood	Revelation 16:3
• The rivers and streams turning to blood	Revelation 16:4-7
• A scorching sun	Revelation 16:8-9
• Darkness and pain	Revelation 16:10-11
• Water shortage	Revelation 16:12-16
• Hail storms	Revelation 16:17-21

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

**Words of Blessing  
Revelation 22:20-21**

20 **He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly.** Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

### Final Thoughts on Revelation

1. The purpose of the book of Revelation was to bring comfort to God's people during the darkest period of Jewish history. These were days of vengeance.
  - *Luke 21:22 "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled."*
2. While God might not put His people through any ordeal like the great tribulation of AD 66-70, there will always be suffering for the saints.
3. Tribulation is designed by God to bring forth a patient spirit.
  - *Romans 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience.*
4. Tribulation is designed by God to test the level of spiritual maturity. Paul taught this truth in the city of Corinth.
  - *1 Corinthians 11:18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. 19 For there must be also heresies [erroneous teaching] among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.*
5. An erroneous teaching, or even an erroneous belief, which leads to unbiblical thinking and then unchristian behavior is often rooted in wanting something that the Bible does not authorize, or not wanting something the Bible does authorize.
6. For example, Joseph Smith wanted to have sex with more than one woman. It is as simple and crude as that. The result was the resurrection of the practice of polygamy. His heresy was rooted in wanting something the Bible does not authorize which is the multiplying of wives.
  - *Deuteronomy 17:17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.*
7. Miriam became angry at her brother Moses and moved against him to first undermine his leadership and then to substitute herself and Aaron for Moses. And she gained a following to be sure. The sad story is told in Numbers 12:1-3. An unholy thought led to unholy results.
  - *Numbers 12:1 And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. 2 And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it. 3 (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)*
8. Every Christian must make sure there is a biblical basis for their thoughts, their attitude and their actions.

9. God is looking for spiritual people with a high level of spiritual maturity and so tribulation comes to test the soul.
10. Tribulation is designed by God to allow Him to draw closer to the soul.
  - *2 Corinthians 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*
11. Despite the pressures of life God will always move to destroy the enemies of His people.
12. Sometimes the enemies of Christ and His people are in the religious assembly. The seven letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor revealed that truth.
  - In the church of Ephesus the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans was found.
  - In the church of Pergamos the Doctrine of Balaam was taught.
  - In the church of Thyatira there was that woman Jezebel.
13. Sometimes the enemies of Christ and His people are outside the religious assembly. The early church had to deal with opposition by The Beast from the Sea [Political Rome] and The Beast from the Land, the False Prophet [Emperor Worship and Judaism].
14. No matter how great the suffering may be the Lord will vindicate His people, reward them, and judge the unrighteous no matter how secure they might feel in their own position and place in life. Keep that truth in mind while reading the Revelation and it will be reaffirmed time and again.
15. In the last three chapters of this glorious book all the events of life move to a majestic crescendo. The vision of John moves along quickly. Rapid scenes appear before his mind.
16. John sees the binding of Satan (Revelation 20:1-3). The binding of Satan does not mean the cessation of activities only a limitation.
  - *Revelation 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*
17. John notices a blessing for those in the first resurrection. The first resurrection is spiritual and is the new birth.
  - *Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had*

*received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 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.*

- *John 5:25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.*

18. John sees a final rebellion as Satan is loosed (Revelation 20:7-9). Satan is hostile to the gospel going into the nations of the earth as many pastors have discovered.

- *Revelation 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.*

19. John witnesses the final destruction of Gog and Magog.

- *Revelation 20:8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.*

20. John notices judgment falling upon Satan.

- *Revelation 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

21. John is witness to the last great judgment of the wicked dead.

- *Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

22. The vision of John is brought to a conclusion by observing seven wonderful events.

- There is a new heaven                      Revelation 21:1
- There is a new earth                      Revelation 21:2-8
- There is a new city                      Revelation 21:9-23
- There is a new order of nations              Revelation 21:24-27
- There is a new river of life              Revelation 22:1
- There is a new tree of life              Revelation 22:2
- There is a new eternal throne              Revelation 22:3-5

23. Finally, the apostle John closes the book of the Revelation with three types of words.

- There are words of comfort              Revelation 22:6-17
- There are words of warning              Revelation 22:18-19
- There are words of blessing              Revelation 22:20-21

### ***Conclusion***

I trust God the Father will allow His children to find His glory and comfort through a continued study of the *“Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass“* (Revelation 1:1).