

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 1 - Introduction

“Signify”?

- † **semaino**: 24381 σημαίνω impf. ἐσημαίνον; 1aor. ἐσήμανα; with a basic meaning *intentionally produce an impression* to signal or signify something; (1) as making something clear *signify, indicate, show* (AC 25.27); (2) prophetically *foretell, signify (beforehand)* (JN 12.33) (Friberg).
- † 5 Other References: Each refers to veiled, symbolic, figurative speech.
- **Jesus’ Crucifixion** – “*If I am lifted up from the earth*” (John 12:33; 18:32)
 - **Peter’s Martyrdom** – “*When you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish*” (John 21:19)
 - **Agabus’ Foretelling of a Great Famine “by the Spirit”** – Acts 11:28
 - **Festus Indicating Paul’s Charges (Possible Exception)** – Acts 25:27

Writing Style

Breaking the Code

2. Define apocalyptic literature? Why encrypt the message in symbols if intent is to reveal? What are the best sources for decoding its usage in Revelation?
- † **Revelation (apokalupsis)** – uncovering, disclosure, revealing
- † **Apocalyptic** – Highly symbolic, dramatic, fantastic, cataclysmic
- † Precedent for simultaneously revealing truth while obscuring it, even hardening hearts (Matthew 13:10-17; 11:15-25; 2 Thess. 2:9-12).
- † Decryption Key – Zechariah & Daniel 7-12. Parts of Ezekiel, Isaiah, & Joel. Matthew 24.
- † Makes 260 to 400 allusions. No direct quotations. Only adaptations! **Daniel 7** comes closest to direct quote, similar to elaboration.

Literal Interpretation?

1. Should this book be interpreted *literally*? How do you know?
- The Revelation of Jesus Christ**, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near. (1:1-3)
- † “signs”, “visions”, “prophecy” – 1:3; 9:17; 10:11; 12:1, 3; 15:1; 22:6-10
- † “saw”, “heard”, “in the Spirit”, “come up” – 1:2, 10; 4:1-2

Date of Writing

Date of Writing

3. What are the two most common date ranges advocated for the writing of Revelation? What are the primary reasons for accepting each?
- † Early Date (AD 54-69)
- **Internal Evidence** – Somewhat fits destruction of Jerusalem & Judaism.
 - **External Evidence** – Well-documented persecutions of Nero.

Late Date Support (AD 95-97)

- † **Earliest Dating** – Irenaeus (AD 120-202), Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Victorinus, and Eusebius.
- † **Emperor Worship** – Domitian was first to demand it across the empire. Asia Minor suffered the worst, earliest.
- † **Global Persecution** – Nero’s persecution was limited to Rome. Domitian was first to persecute Christians across the empire.
- † **Global Harlot** – Description of harlot matches influence, power, and geography of Rome much better than Jerusalem.
- † **Church Decay** – Regression of Ephesian church suggests more time passed than just couple of years since positive epistles from Paul.
- † **Temple?** – Ezekiel (40) saw the temple in vision after destruction.

Early Date Support (AD 54-69)

- † **666** – Numerical value of Hebrew Letters for Greek, “Neron Caesar” (13:18).
- † **Horns** – Counting Julius Caesar as first emperor, Nero is 6th (17:9-11).
- † **Direct References**
- Jewish persecution is mentioned (2:9; 3:9).
 - “*great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified*” (11:8).
- † **Pre-Destruction** – Temple is mentioned, so it would likely still be standing (11:1-19).
- † **OT Prophecy** – Jerusalem had long history of killing saints *and prophets* (11:8; 16:5,6; 17:6; 18:20-24).

Occasion of Writing

Date of Writing

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- † Late Date (AD 95-97)
- **Internal Evidence** – Fits emperor worship & more broad persecution.
 - **External Evidence** – Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Victorinus, and Eusebius. Well-documented persecutions of Domitian & later emperors.

1st Century Climate & Timeline

- † Jesus Ministry, Crucifixion, Establishment of Church (AD 28-31)
- † Jewish Persecution
- † Gospel had been preached in “*all the world*” (Col. 1:5-6; Acts 17:6)
- † Nero’s Roman Persecution (AD 64-68)
- † Destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70)
- † Resumed Roman Persecution (AD 95-97)
- † Writing of Revelation (AD 95-97)

Persecuting Caesars

1. Nero (54-68) – Positioned Christians as scape-goat for burning Rome
2. Domitian (81-96) – first empire wide, severe, more political than religious
3. Trajan (98-117)
4. Marcus Aurelius (161-180)
5. Commodus (180-192)
6. Septimius Severus (193-211)
7. Caracalla (211-217)
8. Maximinus I (235-238)
9. Decius (249-251) – very severe and widespread
10. Valerian (253-260) – very severe and widespread
11. Diocletian (284-313) – most severe of all

Views of the Millennium

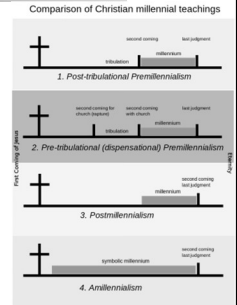
4. Name and define the 3 most common views for interpreting the millennium of chapter 20?

† Named, categorized according to Jesus return *relative* to millennium and its nature.

A. Premillennial – Jesus returns *before literal* 1000 year reign. May be dispensational.

B. Postmillennial – Jesus returns *after literal* 1000 year reign, *utopia*.

C. Amillennial – 1000 year reign is *symbolic*, long, indefinite time. Jesus returns *after* it.



Rome – Profound Decay

- † Wealthy, but empire grew mostly by conquest and slavery.
- † Huge portion of population was slaves, later German immigrants.
- † Sexual immorality & lust knew no bounds.
- † Leadership exemplified unbridled excess & madness.
- † Children were neglected & abused at early ages.

Views of Interpreting Revelation

5. Name and define the 5 most common views for interpreting the entire book of Revelation?
- † Categorized by time period of primary application: (How does it apply to us?)
- A. Futurist** – Literal. Always Premillennial. Typically Dispensational.
- B. Preterist** – Fulfilled in past. Often associated with Preterist view of NT (**2Tm.2:18**).
- **Full Preterist** – Orthodox or Hyper. May doubt inspiration or application.
 - **Partial Preterist** – May overlap **Historical Background**.
- C. Continuous Historical** – Ongoing record of specific history from early church to Reformation movement. (Favorite view of Restoration movement leaders.)
- D. Idealist (Philosophy of History, Spiritual, Symbolical)** – Never applies but always applies. Represents underlying mechanics of all spiritual conflicts.
- E. Historical Background** – Primarily fulfilled in the past (like **Preterist**), but emphasizes ongoing applicability (like **Idealist**).

Interpretation

Major Themes

6. What prominent themes appear throughout Revelation?
- † **Sovereignty of God** – War, Overcome, Victory (**Daniel 4:17**).
 - † **Righteousness of God** – Just in avenging saints upon persecutors. God wants us to understand He is just (**Hebrews 8:10-11; Romans 3:3-5, 24-26**). Common theme (**Eccles. 3:16-17; 4:1; Psalm 73**).
 - † **Worthiness of the Lamb** – Jesus alone is worthy to redeem, save His people, execute justice, lead God's army, judge, and provide light.
 - † **Love of God** – Cares for His people. Punishes incrementally, providing ample opportunity to repent.
 - † **Faithful unto Death** – Requires commitment, obedience, faithfulness.
 - † Does God know? Does He care? What is He doing? ... **Trust God!**

Significance of Numbers

7. How are numbers generally used to communicate in this book?
- † Symbolic, not literal. Maybe multiplied for emphasis, mingling.
 - † **1** – Unity, Unique (**17:13; Gen. 11:6; John 10:30; 17:22; 1 Cor. 3:8**).
 - † **2** – Reinforcement or Confidence (**Ecclesiastes 4:9-11; Luke 10:1; Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; 2 Corinthians 13:1; Zechariah 4:1-14**).
 - † **3** – Deity, Divinity, the Godhead – Repetition for super emphasis (**4:8; 8:13; Isaiah 6:3; Jeremiah 22:29**).
 - † $3\frac{1}{2}$ – Broken or Interrupted 7, Divine intervention.
 - † **4** – The Whole World (**7:1; 20:8; Isa. 11:12; Jer. 49:36; Eze. 7:2; 37:9; Dan. 7:2; 8:8; 11:4; Zechariah 2:6; Mat. 24:31; Mar. 13:27**)

Major Outline

- I. Introduction – Christ Judging the Lampstands (**1-3**)
 - II. Revealing God’s Plan for Judgment – Seven Seals (**4-7**)
 - III. Warning through Partial Judgment – Seven Trumpets (**8-11**)
 - IV. Flashback: Original source of conflict and agents (**12-14**)
 - V. Executing Final, Earthly Judgment – Seven Bowls (**15-16**)
 - VI. Doom of Harlot, Beasts and Dragon – Victory of Christ (**17:1-20:9**)
 - VII. Eternal Judgment, Reward – Conclusion, Invitation (**20:10-22:21**)
- † The “sevens” can be subdivided: Four → Interlude → Three

Significance of Numbers

- † **5** – Partial, Broken, or Interrupted **10**. (**Matthew 25:2**).
- † **6** – Man, Failure, Disapproval, Failure – falling short of **7** (**Rom. 3:23?**); Day of Creation (**Genesis 1:27-31; Revelation 4:8; 13:8**).
- † **7** – Divine Consummation, Extent or Measurement of God, Work or Capacity of God (**Genesis 2:1-3**). Limitation imposed by God. Occurs 54 times in Revelation. Examples: **Matthew 18:21-22**.
- † **8** – Exorbitant overflow of 7, very rarely used (**Micah 5:5**).
- † **10** – Human completion, power – Maybe based on 10 fingers?
- † **12** – God’s people in any one place or dispensation (based on 12 tribes, 12 apostles).
- † **Combinations: 1000=10x10x10; 144,000=12x12x10x10x10**

Reminders

- 1) First determine original applicability, then application to us.
- 2) **Daniel, Zechariah, Ezekiel** and other apocalyptic books came first.
- 3) Interpret difficult passages in light of clearer.
- 4) Don’t lose sight of the forest for the trees. Don’t fixate on details at expense of the primary point of any one scene.
- 5) Accept that some questions will remain about specific details (**2 Peter 3:15-18**), but overall message and general themes will be clear. ...

Summary

Overall Message

8. What is the overall message of the book?
- † *Worthy is the Lamb!*, Ray Summers
 - † *Overcoming with the Lamb*, Florida College Lectures 1994
 - † *More than Conquerors*, William Hendriksen, (**Romans 8:18-39**)
 - † *Visions of Victory*, Paul Earnhart
- † Jesus has already won. Will you win with Him?
- † **God is in control. Judgment is coming. Be faithful unto death.**
- † **Trust God!**

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 2 – Christ Judging the
Lampstands #1

Time of Fulfillment?

2. What general time frame was provided for the fulfillment of the visions recorded in Revelation? How does this impact the various views for interpreting Revelation?

*The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. **Blessed** is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near. (1:1-3)*

- † Eliminate **Futurist**, which makes application 2000+ years later.
- † Eliminate **Idealist** – never makes any application more specific, near.

Introduction

Revelation 1:1-7

Impact of Communication Language?

3. How does the method of communicating the message to John impact the various views for interpreting Revelation?

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near. (1:1-3)

- † “signify”: Always used by John with figurative speech (**John 12:32-33; 18:31-32; 21:18-19**). See also: **Acts 11:28; 25:27**.
- † Eliminates **Futurist** position which assumes it is literal.

Revelation “About” or “From” Jesus?

1. Grammatically, the “*Revelation of Jesus Christ*” could refer to a message *about* Jesus or a message *from* Jesus. From the context, can you tell which meaning is intended? If so, what are the implications?

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, (1:1)

- † Context, grammar lends itself to chain of revelation, “from” Jesus.
- † However, both Jesus and the Father are central figures in the book.
- † Revelation’s depiction of Jesus is unique, far surpassing the form shown in the gospels and OT (**Mark 9:1-6; Philippians 2:6-11**).
- † Better understanding true nature of Jesus will prove inspiring ...

Beloved Greetings

4. How is Jesus described in the greeting? How would this description help first-century Christians suffering persecution?

- Jesus Christ,
- the faithful witness,
- the firstborn from the dead,
- the ruler over the kings of the earth.
- Him who loved us
- and washed us from our sins in His own blood,
- and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father,
- to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. (1:5-6)
- Savior of Prophecy – fulfilled promises
- He Himself was faithful unto death
- Conquered death and resurrected
- Power over all earthly empires
- Being who cares – not callous
- Saved us by sacrificing His own life. Shows extent of love and commitment.
- Rewarded us with authority and a heavenly task to help save others.
- Truly worthy of praise
- Provides hope, courage, and confidence!

"The Day of the Lord"

Behold, **He is coming with clouds**, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. (1:7)

5. Does Jesus' coming – as recorded in verse 7 – necessarily refer to His return at the end of the world? Why or why not? If not, to what other events could it apply? Please investigate the phrase, "*the day of the Lord*", as used throughout the Bible.

† The terms, "*coming with clouds*" and "*the day of the Lord*", are **ambiguous**. They do **not necessarily** refer to end of the world.

† Refers to **any day** of sweeping destruction (for wicked) and salvation (for righteous) in which God acts in decisive judgment (Ex.14:19-20).

Destruction of Jerusalem?

Behold, He is **coming with clouds**, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And **all the tribes of the earth will mourn** because of Him. Even so, Amen. (1:7)

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then **the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven**, and then **all the tribes of the earth will mourn**, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matt. 24:29-30)

† No, despite similar references to destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70), also passed: But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus said, "I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14:61-62)

"The Day of the Lord"

† Egypt (Isaiah 19:1; Jeremiah 46:1-13; Ezekiel 30:3; 32:7)

† Babylon (Isaiah 13:1-19)

† Edom (Obadiah 1:1-15)

† Israel (Amos 5:1, 15-27)

† Judah (Ezekiel 34:12; Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11)

† Jerusalem (Ez.7:1-27; 13:5; Zeph.1:1-16; Mt.24:29-30; Mk.13:24-26)

† For each nation destroyed, to its people, it was *the end of their world!*

† End of the World (Acts 1:9-11; 1 The. 5:1-2; 2 Cor. 1:14; 2 Pt. 3:10)

† Establishment of the Church, Messianic Kingdom (Joel 2:31-32; 3:14; Isaiah 2:12; Malachi 4:1-6; Zec. 14:1; Acts 2:16-21)

Destruction of Rome!

Behold, He is **coming with clouds**, and every eye will see Him, **even they who pierced Him**. And **all the tribes of the earth will mourn** because of Him. Even so, Amen. (1:7)

Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. ... But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear ... For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken." And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced." (Jn. 19:31-37)

† Language used to apply to Jerusalem's rejection of Jesus and Messianic kingdom and their destruction are **figuratively** transferred to Rome, those who actually crucified Jesus. This would be a second or third fulfillment of Zec.

Establishment of Church?

Behold, He is **coming with clouds**, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And **all the tribes of the earth will mourn** because of Him. Even so, Amen. (1:7)

"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem ... In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." (Zechariah 12:10-13:1)

† No, despite similar references to day of Pentecost, church establishment had already long passed (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:6-8; 2:1-4, 16-32; Colossians 1:13).

The Risen Lord Revelation 1:8-20

Exiled to Patmos for Preaching Jesus

6. Where was John when he received these visions? Why was he there?
I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. (1:9)
- † Exiled to the island of Patmos.
 - † Irenaeus said he was working in the mines.
 - † Persecuted as a result of his preaching (**Matthew 5:10-12**).
“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day ...” (1:10)
 - † Same phrase is used by Ezekiel to indicate that he was seeing a vision, and by Jesus to indicate that someone was under inspiration – under influence of Holy Spirit (**Eze. 37:1; Mat 22:43; 2 Pet. 1:21**).

Victorious over Death

9. How did Jesus describe Himself to John? Why would it have been encouraging to John and other first century saints?
*And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “**Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.**” (1:17-20)*
- † Not asking John, them, or us to do what He has not already suffered.
 - † Not just defeated death, but **mastered** it! (**Hebrews 2:14-15**) ...
 - † Great confidence, comfort. No need to be afraid of Him, anything else

The Great Tribulation

7. Premillennialists believe that Revelation foretells of a great tribulation that precedes the future millennial reign of Christ on earth. How does John’s condition refute that?
I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. (1:9)
- † John was already **in** “the tribulation” and “the kingdom”.
 - † Neither the tribulation nor the kingdom **can** be **future**, since it was already **present** for John.
 - † Paul describes being moved into kingdom in past tense (**Col. 1:13**).

The Angels of the Churches

- “The **mystery** of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars **are the angels of the seven churches**, and the seven lampstands which you saw **are the seven churches. To the angel of the church of Ephesus write ...” (1:20-ff)***
10. With what would you associate the “angels of the churches” based on the usage of the term in verse 20 and the repeated address throughout chapters 2 and 3?
- † Natural stars provide light, direction.
 - † Symbolically, “stars” often represent significant political and thought leaders (e.g., Hollywood stars, celebrities, social media influencers).

Christ among the Lampstands

8. How is Jesus described in verses 10-16? What might these details represent about Jesus?
- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Alpha and Omega, the First and Last • in the midst of the seven lampstands • One like the Son of Man • Clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. • His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow • His eyes like a flame of fire • His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace • His voice as the sound of many waters; • He had in His right hand seven stars • Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword • His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. (1:11-16) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eternity and sovereignty • Oversight, administration of churches (Pro. 27:23) • King of Prophecy (Daniel 7:9-18) • Royalty and holiness • Ancient of days, eternity (Daniel 7:9) • Penetrating sight, omniscience • Experienced, proven power to tread kingdoms; proven worthiness. • Awesome power • Control, authority over the churches • Power to convict, judge (Joel 3:12-14; Heb. 4:12) • Ultimate glory, power, holiness |
|--|--|

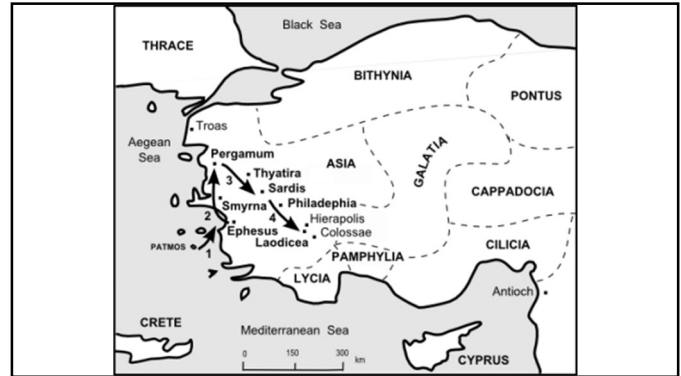
The Angels of the Churches

- “The **mystery** of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars **are the angels of the seven churches**, and the seven lampstands which you saw **are the seven churches. To the angel of the church of Ephesus write ...” (1:20-ff)***
- † Angels are servants of God who serve God’s people, doing His will, often proclaiming His will (**Heb. 1:7, 14; 2:2; Acts 27:3; Gal. 3:19**).
 - † Angels associated with **singular** protectors, leaders of a group – “prince”, who may be unseen but are highly influential, prominent in executing God’s will (**Daniel 9:25, 26, 10:13, 20, 21; 12:1** – Messiah, Michael, Gabriel, “people of the prince to come”?).

The Angels of the Churches

“The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches. To the angel of the church of Ephesus write ...” (1:20-ff)

† The “*stars of the churches*” and the “*angel of the churches*” represent the most influential leaders, “*pillars*” of the church, those best equipped to receive the written message, uphold it, and enact reform – such as elders, evangelists, “*sheep dogs*”, etc. (Galatians 2:9; Luke 12:48; Ezekiel 34:1-10; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Titus 1:5).



The Lampstands of the Churches

“The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches. To the angel of the church of Ephesus write ...” (1:20-ff)

† Lampstands were in tabernacle and are associated with being held high, giving light to others (Mat. 5:14-16; Mar. 4:21-22; Luke 11:33-36; Heb. 9:2). Represent a reputation of faithfulness?
 † If removed, would that represent loss of identity, reputation, and example of faithfulness to the world and other Christians?

Why Only Seven Churches?

11. Are these seven churches the only churches in Asia Minor? What does this fact and the number seven suggest about the role of these churches in conveying Jesus’ message?

- † “Seven Churches” – Symbolic, represents all churches recognized by God (because of “7” and omits Colossae, Hierapolis, and Troas).
- † Then, why only Asia Minor?
- † Severe Roman persecution associated with emperor worship may have first started in Asia Minor – hardest hit.
- † Alternatively, may be contemporary churches who best knew John.
- † Jesus’ self-designations form same, composite view from chapter 1.

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† Common outline (Harkrider):

1. Salutation
2. Christ’s self-designation
3. Commendation
4. Complaint
5. Counsel: warning and exhortation
6. Promises of reward to those who overcome
7. Closing invitation to hear

† Lessons to one intended to apply to many (2:7, “to the churches”).

Christ Starts by Judging His Churches

† Although Jesus will ultimately judge the nations, the wicked, and the Devil, He begins with correcting His own house, the church.

† Common theme throughout Scripture:

For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? (1 Peter 4:17)

"... Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were before the temple. (Ezekiel 9:1-6)

A Diligent, Sound Church

1. What positive virtues does Jesus acknowledge and commend in the Ephesian church? What lessons can we learn from what they did right?

"I know your ¹works, your ²labor, your ³patience, and that you ⁴cannot bear those who are evil. And you have ⁵tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have ⁶persevered and have ⁷patience, and have ⁸labored for My name's sake and have ⁹not become weary." (2:2-3)

† Diligent doing good for Jesus – not growing weary (Gal. 6:9-10).

† Diligent in testing and exposing false teachers (1 Jn. 4:1; 2 Jn. 9-11; Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 1:9-11; 3:10-11; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Mat. 7:15-20).

Revelation Trust God

Lesson 3 – Christ Judging the
Lampstands #2

Leaving Our First Love

2. What rebuke did Jesus provide the Ephesian church? Was this an issue of merely attitude or disposition? What lessons can we learn from their failures?

"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place – unless you repent." (2:4-5)

† They had "*left their first love*". No hint previously (Ephesians 1:16).

† 30 years had passed since Ephesians was written. 2nd generation Christians?

† Danger of losing "*lampstand*"! ... Not an inconsequential matter of preference.

† More than *just* attitude. Required: remembering, rising, repenting, and "*doing the first works*". ... Maybe level or *number* of works, "*first*" vs. "*last*" (2:19)?

† What works cease when love grows cold, while others continue?

† Personal evangelism? Brotherly love? Benevolence? Purity? ... How about us?

Church of Ephesus Revelation 2:1-7

Doctrine or Love?

3. Often people complain that churches spend too much time on doctrine, while others seem to over emphasize love and grace. Based on Jesus' review of the Ephesian church, what can we learn of His expectations for us? Should we focus on doctrine or love?

"But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." (2:6)

† *False dilemma* – not either-or! Jesus expects *both* (Matthew 23:23)!

† Jesus expected them to continue to expose false teachers ...

† *And* reestablish their first love and associated works!

Church of Smyrna Revelation 2:8-11

“Be Faithful until Death”

6. Jesus expected them to be prepared to suffer to what extent? Was this a literal “*ten days*”? If not, what did it represent? How would His final benediction to them have encouraged them?

“Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.” (2:10-11)

† Be prepared to suffer complete, full, *mortal* “tribulation” (10 days).

† Include imprisonment – possibly martyrdom, death (Mat. 10:28-33).

Credible Encouragement

4. How would Jesus’ introduction and revealing His knowledge of the church in Smyrna have strengthened their faith?

“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer.’” (2:8-10)

† Jesus also died and was resurrected.

† Jesus knows their current suffering and future suffering.

† Jesus knows their true wealth – labor not in vain, unnoticed (1Co. 15:58)

† Only Jesus could so authoritatively, effectively say, “Do not fear ...”.

“Be Faithful until Death”

6. Jesus expected them to be prepared to suffer to what extent? Was this a literal “*ten days*”? If not, what did it represent? How would His final benediction to them have encouraged them?

† Passing but first reference to “*the devil*” and his persecution of Christians. Part of a bigger struggle than mere men persecuting men.

† Needed to understand physical death was not end, but “*test*” with reward following.

† Overcoming would provide a reward of life and immunity to “*the second death*” (20:14-15; 21:8), more to be feared than the first.

Not True Jews?

“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer.’” (2:8-10)

5. Assuming these are literal Jews (compare to 2:2, 6), how might they have denied their heritage and contributed to the persecution of Christians?

† Symbolic of false Christians, supposed God’s people (Gal. 6:16; Rm. 9:6)?

† More likely literal Jews, like *literal* “*apostles*” & “*Nicolaitans*” (2:2, 6).

† Temple to Tiberius. Center of emperor worship.

† True Jews would *not* worship emperor (Est. 3:1-5; Dan. 3:1-18). These did.

† Whether literal or not, these Jews might have reported Christians to Rome.

Church of Pergamos Revelation 2:12-17

Living in Satan's Capital

7. What commendation did Jesus provide the church in Pergamos?

"I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells." (2:13)

- † Official capital of Asia Minor.
- † Legal, political center for district.
- † Pergamos was the most idolatrous.
- † Temples to Zeus, Athene, Dionysus, Aesculapius, Roma, & Augustus.
- † Center of Imperial Cult (emperor worship).
- † Lived in an extremely difficult place, where Satan ruled and lived.
- † Some had already given their life in faithfulness – not unseen or in vain.

Church of Thyatira Revelation 2:18-29

Deceived through False Doctrine

8. Beside the direct challenge of persecution, what other threats did they face in Pergamos? How might this symbol relate to them?

"But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate." (2:14-15)

- † Balaam counseled Balak how to make the Israelites compromise through idolatry, turning God against them (Num. 25:1-18; 31:1-16).
- † Used deception & seduction, when straightforward challenge failed (Gen. 3:1-6; 2 Cor. 11:3; 1 Cor. 10:1-22).

Omniscient King & Judge

10. How would Jesus' introduction of Himself to the church in Thyatira have supported His objections?

"And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, 'These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: ...'" (2:18)

- † **Sovereign** king who rules and judges forever (Daniel 7:9-14).
- † **Omniscient** being, who sees through every façade.
- † **Proven, purified** executioner, **worthy** and **capable** of treading out God's wrath.
- † Because of these qualities, He sees ... He warns ...

Undermining the Nicolaitans

9. What did the Nicolaitans teach? How would Jesus' closing benediction have diminished their appeal?

"Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. ... To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it." (2:15-17)

- † Associated with **early** Gnosticism: Flesh was already evil, and through secret knowledge, spirit was unaffected by deeds of the flesh.
- † True special, secret knowledge belonged to Jesus – **not** Nicolaitans.
- † Only by overcoming could one partake in the true hidden, secret.

The Prophetess, Jezebel

11. Why was Thyatira condemned for Jezebel's teaching? Was this a literal Jezebel? If not, who did she and her children represent?

"Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent." (2:20-21)

- † "allow" – broad semantic meaning, but same Greek as **forgive** (Mat. 6:14; Lk. 23:34; also, Rev. 2:4; 11:9).
- † Condemned for **forgiving** what God had not (2 Thess. 3:6; 1 Cor. 5).
- † If we are to forgive before people repent, why was Thyatira condemned?
- † Represents an aggressive, powerful, seductive agent of error (1 Kng. 21:25).
- † Even such a person was given ample opportunity to repent (2 Peter 3:9)!

The Doom of Jezebel & Her Children

"Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works." (2:22-23)

- † Condemnation and death loomed before her and her children.
- † Her children would be those who followed her, depended on her.
- † Further warns that sin may secretly occur in our "*minds and hearts*", for which we are responsible, must guard, and must repent (Matthew 5:27-30). ... Were these otherwise hidden sins?

Church of Sardis Revelation 3:1-6

"The Morning Star"

12. What reward did Jesus extend to those who overcame?

"Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say. I will put on you no other burden. But hold fast what you have till I come. And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations – 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' – as I also have received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star.'" (2:24-28)

- † Not deceived by promotion of knowledge of sin (Phi. 3:19; 1 Co. 14:20; Hb. 4:15).
- † Rewarded with powerful authority and influence.
- † Forgiven, we reign with Christ, transcending the power of men and even nations (5:9-10; Daniel 7:13-18; Romans 5:17; Matthew 10:28; Psalm 2:8-9).
- † May refer to power to appeal to God about nations (Daniel 9; 1 Tim. 2:1-2).
- † But, seems to point to *future* reward (compare, 2:7, 17, 26, 3:5, 12, 21; 22:5).

A Misleading Name

1. What was wrong with the church in Sardis? Why was this surprising? What lessons can we learn from this judgment?

"And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.'" (3:1)

- † They were in fact spiritually *dead* despite reputation to be *alive!*
- † We can be as good as dead, although living (1 Timothy 5:6).
- † Others' estimation is independent of reality (3 Jn. 9-12; 1 Cor. 4:1-5).
- † We must focus on God's approval – not man's (John 12:42-43).

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 4 – Christ Judging the
Lampstands #3

Forgetting the Past, Reaching Forward

2. What choice did Jesus provide for the church? And, what would be the outcomes of the 2 possible options? What lessons can we learn from this admonition?

"¹Be watchful, and ²strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. ³Remember therefore how you have received and heard; ⁴hold fast and ⁵repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you." (3:2-3)

- † Failure to "watch" would result in sudden destruction (1 Th. 5:1-4).
- † Some good, past good does not imply safety (Matthew 7:21-23).
- † Christians must continually press forward (Philippians 3:12-14).

"A Few Names Even in Sardis"

3. Did this pending judgment apply to everyone at Sardis? Why or why not? What can we learn about when to stay or leave a local church?

"You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels." (3:4-5)

- † No, "a few names" would "walk with" Jesus "in white".
- † Indicates that they had not participated in sin, prevalent with others.
- † A church with many who have "defiled garments" does not imply all.
- † However, collective action and fellowship with those in impenitent, public sin "defiles their garments" (2 John 9-11), requiring a break.
- † Also, may part ways amicably for matters of judgment (Acts 15:37-40).
- † Crushes Calvinism's abhorrence for considering one's self to be worthy in *any* way.

The Unshuttable, Open Door

5. Why was an "open door" presented to the church in Philadelphia? How else has this figure been used in the Bible? How might it apply to this church?

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens: I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you ^{1a}have a little strength, ^{1b}have kept My word, and ^{1c}have not denied My name.'" (3:7-8)

- † An "open door" represents a significant, rare opportunity (1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Colossians 4:3-6), often associated with preaching, evangelism.
- † "Key of David" from secondary fulfillment to establish a glorious throne over Judah, to one responsible, strong (Isa. 22:20-24). Evangelistic success?

Overcoming Fear that Silences

"He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels." (3:5)

4. In what other passage did Jesus promise to confess the name of saints before His Father? How might that relate to this context?

"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ... Do not fear therefore; ... Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 10:28-33)

- † Jesus identified persecution as a primary threat to deter public confession.

"To Everyone Who Has, Will Be Given"

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens: I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you ^{1a}have a little strength, ^{1b}have kept My word, and ^{1c}have not denied My name.'" (3:7-8)

- † "Closed door" would represent a missed opportunity for salvation (Mat. 25:10-12; Luke 13:25)
- † "Unshuttable" door indicates control, sovereignty, & deity (Ezekiel 44:1-3).
- † God always increases opportunities for those who seize them (Matthew 13:12; 25:29; Mark 4:23-25; Luke 19:24-26).
- † Likewise, He takes them away from those who overlook them!

Church of Philadelphia Revelation 3:7-13

Exempt from the Final Test

6. What *imminent* rewards did Jesus promise them? Why were they to receive this blessing?

"Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie – indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. ^{2a}Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will ^{2b}keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.'" (3:9-10)

- † Jesus would providentially arrange for external recognition of their relationship to Him (Exodus 3:21-22; 12:31-36).
- † Generally, persecution refines, tests those who suffer it (James 1:2-8).
- † Those overcoming *early* were granted extra opportunity to do God's work, to save others (Luke 16:9-12). Would be spared additional suffering.

“A Pillar in the Temple of My God”

7. What *eternal* rewards awaited them? What was expected of them to receive this final blessing?

“Behold, I am coming quickly! ^{1a}Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. ^{1b}He who overcomes, ^{2a}I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and ^{2b}he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the ^{2c}name of My God and the ^{2d}name of the city of My God, the ^{2e}New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him ^{2f}My new name.” (3:11-12)

† Two pillars were prominent monuments in Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 7:21):

- “Boaz” – Means “strength”; Ancestor of David the King (Ruth 4:13-22).
- “Jachin” – Means “He will establish”; Priest during David’s reign (1 Chr. 24:17).

† Christian’s Reward: Be part of God’s temple (1 Peter 2:4-5).

- Temples are where their gods dwell. Represent greatest *closeness* to God.
- Temples reflect glory of their gods. Highest *glory* to reflect God’s glory (Rom. 3:23).

“In the Beginning ...”

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the ¹Amen, the ²Faithful and True Witness, the ³Beginning of the creation of God’ (3:14)

8. Jesus claimed to be the “Beginning of the creation of God” (3:14).

Does this necessarily imply that He was created? What does this mean?

† *arche* – Meaning is the beginning as in *origin, first cause*. Secondary meaning is first in series. (Strong’s, Friberg, Barclay Newman, Louw-Nida, Liddell-Scott, Thayer’s, Lust-Eynikel-Hauspie).

† All things were created by Jesus as their source or origin “in the beginning” (Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:1; Genesis 1:1).

“Hold Fast”

7. What *eternal* rewards awaited them? What was expected of them to receive this final blessing?

“Behold, I am coming quickly! ^{1a}Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. ^{1b}He who overcomes, ^{2a}I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and ^{2b}he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the ^{2c}name of My God and the ^{2d}name of the city of My God, the ^{2e}New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him ^{2f}My new name.” (3:11-12)

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† Christian’s Reward: Be part of God’s temple (1 Peter 2:4-5).

† Be recognized and claimed by God (Exodus 6:7; Rev. 7:3; 13:16-18).

† Their crown & reward could be stolen if they did not “hold fast”. ... How about us?

The Vomit Inducing Church

9. What was the fundamental failure of Laodicea?

“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’ – and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked ...” (3:15-17)

A. Uncaring, do nothing, flat – neither good nor bad – just there.

B. Arrogant and Blind – Thought they needed nothing!

† Scary prospect to be so out of touch with reality, blind to ourselves:

- Must love truth profoundly (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).
- Must examine self regularly in light of truth – and act, reform (James 1:16-25)!

Church of Laodicea Revelation 3:14-22

A Desperate Need for Zeal

10. What remedy was provided by Jesus? What can we learn from Jesus’ message to this church?

“I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” (3:18-20)

† Do not become complacent! Submit to “fire”! Must be zealous (Jn. 2:13-17)!

† “Chastening” should be interpreted as sign of love, not rejection (Heb.12:4-13)

† What do we do well? Beware blinding pride (1 Cor. 10:12; Pro. 16:18; John 9:39-41).

Retrospective

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 5 – The Center of Existence

“I Know Your Works”

“I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars” (2:2, 9, 13, 19; 3:1, 8, 15)

11. What lessons are emphasized with the repeated phrase to each church, “I know your works”? Why might this have been needed?
- † Emphasizes accuracy of Christ’s judgment.
 - † He knows and has considered all they have done, not done, & endured.
 - † Seems obvious, but oppression makes us forget (Ecclesiastes 7:7).
 - † We need constant reminders & self-examination (1 Cor. 11:26-34).

One Seated on the Throne

Revelation 4:1-5

“He Who has Ears to Hear”

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22)

12. What does this phrase mean, “He who has an ear, let him hear”? Why is it repeated?
- † Means to pay careful attention, consider carefully (Psalm 10:17; Proverbs 22:17; Isaiah 28:23).
 - † Generally associated with statements that are difficult to either understand or accept (Matthew 11:7-15; 13:9, 43; Mark 4:23; 7:16; Luke 8:8; 14:35).
 - † God does not intend for all to understand (2Pt. 3:9; Js. 4:6-10; 2Th. 2:9-12)
 - † Serves as a warning! Dangers are pride, being stiff-necked, rebellious, arrogant (Jeremiah 6:10; 13:15; 17:23; Ezekiel 12:2).

A Door into Heaven

1. As this vision opens, where is John transported? What is the timeframe of its fulfillment? Implications?
- After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.” Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. (4:1-2)*
- † “Up here ... in heaven” – *perspective*, the “third heaven” (2 Cor. 12:1-4)
 - † The phrase, “after this”, suggests immediacy – not distant future.
 - † *Implications*: Eliminates **Futurist**, **Idealist**, & late-date **Preterist** positions.
 - † Being both “in heaven” and “in the Spirit” suggests requirement for figurative – not literal interpretation, again eliminating **Futurist** position.

The King of Existence

2. Who is represented by the One sitting on the throne? How is He described? What does this description suggest about Him?
Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. (4:2-3)
- † King of Existence – God, the Father (20:11-12).
 - † “jasper stone” – precious gemstone stone, commonly red today, probably green in NT day, but “clear as crystal” (21:11, 18).
 - † “sardius stone” – reddish precious stone.
 - † First and Last stones for God’s people (Exodus 28:17-21; 39:10-14).
 - † First and Last of list representing “every precious stone” (Ezekiel 28:13).
 - † In Him dwells all that is good, desirable, beautiful, and precious.

The Elders’ Crowns & Robes

4. What is the significance of the elders’ crowns and robes?
Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. (4:3-4)
- † “crown” (stephanos) – crown of victory, prize, accomplishment (Matthew 27:29; 1 Cor. 9:25; Philippians 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10; 3:11).
 - † stephanos – worn by Christians, elders, rider on white horse (6:2), locusts (9:7), glorious woman (12:1), “One Like the Son of Man” (14:4)
 - † diadema – royal crown, kingly headdress; worn by Christ (19:12) and the dragon (12:3) and his sea beast (13:1)
 - † “white robes” – holiness, purity, righteousness, victory (Isa. 1:18; Mk. 9:3).

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- † If gems are identified with virtues, maybe represent specific characteristics or actions proceeding from throne?
 - “righteousness and justice”, Psalm 89:14; 9:4, 7; 47:8; 93:2; Pro. 16:12; 20:8
 - “mercy ... truth ... lovingkindness”, Proverbs 20:28
 - supremacy, Psalm 103:19
 - † Rainbow could represent tranquility (calm after storm), inherent beauty or glory (10:1; Eze. 1:28), or that God keeps His promises (Gen. 9:13-16).

“The Seven Spirits of God”

5. Who or what is represented by the 7 burning lamps of fire before the throne? What attributes does this description suggest?
And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. (4:5)
- † Not idle. Powerful activity, expression (1Kgs.18:17-40; Ex.19:16-17;20:18-19)
 - † Holy Spirit – 7 simultaneous spirits represents omnipresence, omniscience: *Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. If I say, “Surely the darkness shall fall on me,” Even the night shall be light about me; Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You. (Psalm 139:7-12)*

Identifying the 24 Elders

- Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. (4:3-4)*
3. Who do the 24 elders represent?
- † Elders associated with leadership of the people, often spiritual (Exo. 12:21; Num. 11:16-17; Deu. 31:9; 1 Chr. 11:3; Mat. 15:2; Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2-23; 20:17; Titus 1:5). Elders of: cities, tribes, nations, and churches.
 - † 2 x 12 – Leaders for all of God’s people (associated with wisdom, judgment, discernment: Job 12:20; Psalm 105:22; Ezekiel 7:26), specifically?
 - Probably not Jew & Gentile (Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:11-15).
 - In heaven and on the earth – saints past and living?
 - OT authorities (sons of Jacob, heads of tribes) & NT apostles (Mat. 19:28; Lk. 22:29-30)

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- And he said to me, “What do you see?” So I said, “I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. ... So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, “What are these, my lord?” ... So he answered and said to me: “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit.’” Says the LORD of hosts. ... For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.” (Zechariah 4:2-10)*

“The Seven Spirits of God”

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What attributes does this description suggest?

And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. (4:5)

† Golden lampstand with 7 lamps in tabernacle (Exodus 25:31-40; 40:24; Num. 8:1-4)

† “Copies of the things in the heavens”? (Hebrews 9:23)

The Sea before the Throne

Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. (4:6)

A. “sea” may represent churning chaos from which empires arise (13:1), **Society, political world**

- Imagery of the “sea” seems to represent churning, chaotic political society, with rising & falling nations, just like the waves (Psalm 65:7; Isaiah 17:12-13; 57:20-21; Jeremiah 49:23; 51:54-55).
- Loss of dominion is compared to falling back into the sea, or being covered by it (Jer. 51:41-42; Eze. 26:3-4).
- Powerful nations sit upon or by many waters with “nations streaming” to it (Jeremiah 51:13, 36, 44).

B. “of glass, like crystal” can indicate transparency or tranquility:

- **Clarity, Transparency:** God sees, knows – nothing escapes Him (Daniel 4:17, 25, 34-37).
- **Calm, Tranquility:** Peace of God’s abode, far removed from chaos of human machinations and schemes.

C. Barrier, Boundary, Aquarium-Wall between us and God (compare Ezek. 1 to Rev. 4)

- A. From God’s perspective (“come up here ... heaven”), we are contained in a transparent sea “before the throne”.
- B. From our perspective, God sits high above us, separated by a “firmament”, great sky, sea of stars (Ezek. 1:22-28).
- C. Saints “stand on the sea of glass ... mingled with fire” (15:2), possibly as they die, martyred – crossing barrier.
- D. Does not exist in eternity, heaven (21:1) – no barrier, no death, no separate society, governments of men.

Those Before the Throne Revelation 4:6-11

The Four Living Creatures

*Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And ¹in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were **four living creatures** ²full of eyes in front and in back. The first living creature was ^{3a}like a lion, the second living creature ^{3b}like a calf, the third living creature had ^{3c}a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was ^{3d}like a flying eagle. The four living creatures, each having ⁴six wings, were ⁵full of eyes around and within. And they ⁶do not rest day or night, ⁷saying: “**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!**” (4:6-8)*

7. Please compare this description of the “four living creatures” to the four beings mentioned in Ezekiel 1 & 10. How are they similar? How are they different? Who are these creatures, and what can we learn of them from these 2 depictions? Also see Exodus 25:17-22; 1 Samuel 4:4; Psalm 18:9-11; Isaiah 6:1-7; and Ezekiel 41:18-20.

The Sea before the Throne

Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. (4:6)

6. What is the significance of the “sea before the throne”? Please consider other references to “the sea” in Revelation before answering (4:6; 5:13; 7:1-3; 8:8-10; 10:1-8; 12:12; 13:1; 14:7; 15:1-2; 16:3; 18:17-21; 20:8, 13; 21:1).

† Sometimes, “the sea” means literal ocean (5:13; 14:7; 18:17-21; 20:8).

† “Bronze Laver” (tabernacle) and “Sea of Bronze” were used for ritual cleansing of priests “lest they die” (Exodus 30:18-21; 40:30-32; 1 Kings 7:23-26, 39, 47; 2 Chronicles 4:2-10).

† Symbolically ...

Pinnacle of Creation – Closest to God

<p>Revelation 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> † In the Midst of the Throne † “Holy, Holy, Holy” † 4 Living Creatures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lion • Calf • Face like a Man • Flying Eagle † Six Wings † Full of Eyes 	<p>Ezekiel 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> † Cherubim † Under the Throne † 4 Living Creatures † Likeness of a Man † 4 Faces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face of a Man • Lion (right) • Ox (left) • Eagle † Four Wings † Straight legs, calves feet (hooves) † Sparkled, burnished bronze † Human hands under wings † Touched other by pair of wings † Covered with pair of wings. † Did not turn. † Like burning coals † Had burning fire, like torches † Darted like lightning † Accompanied by “wheel” † Directed by the Spirit 	<p>Ezekiel 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> † Cherubim, like Ezekiel 1 † Under the Throne † God’s glory above them † Human hands under wings † Have fire † Covered with eyes † 4 Faces like Ezekiel 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cherub • Man • Lion • Eagle † Four wings † Accompanied by “wheel” † Directed by the Spirit
<p>Exo. 25:17; 1 Sam. 4:4; Psa. 18:9-11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> † Cherubim, cover mercy seat. † Wings † God’s glory above, between them † God rides upon flying cherub † Genesis 3:24 – Guarded Eden, Fiery Sword 	<p>Ezekiel 41:18-20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> † Cherubim † Carved into temple walls † Two faces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man • Lion 	<p>Isaiah 6:1-7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> † Seraphim (“fiery ones”) † Above the throne .. † “Holy, Holy, Holy” † Six wings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered Face • Covered Feet • Flew † Cleansed Isaiah with live coal.

Will Heaven Be Boring?

The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" (4:8)

8. Could there really be creatures immediately before God who "do not rest day or night", constant in refrain of praise to God? How could heaven be paradise with such monotonous tasks?
- † Mischaracterization of heaven & living creatures – other activities (14:3; 19:4 – 15:7).
 - † **Boring?** Want to do something more fun, valuable; or grow tired of empty repetition.
 - † More **fulfilling** than seeing, examining, talking with eternal Creator, Father, Savior?
 - † More **stimulating, edifying** than listening, interacting, and asking God questions, basking in His wisdom without limit?
 - † More **sincere** than offering thanks and praise to Creator, Savior, and eternal Provider?
 - † What is an improvement upon God? How could our praise ever be empty, tedious?
 - † He is the reason everything **else** is boring (Ecclesiastes 3:11; 12:13; Hebrews 8:11)!
 - † Enjoy tasks at which we excel. New bodies, new voices (1 Corinthians 15:35-58).

The Point of this Scene?

11. What do you think are the main points, lessons of this throne scene?

- † The unique significance of God:
 - Power, Authority
 - Creation
 - Eternity
 - Sovereignty
 - Judgment
 - Praised by all that is good, powerful
 - Pinnacle of all things worships Him
 - Center of existence
- † **Reassurance:** God is still on His throne, in total control.
- † **Defends, Vindicates God:** Theodicy (Ecclesiastes, Psalm 73 ...)
- † **Perspective, Priority:** Insignificance of all else, crumbling dust.
- † **Home:** Ultimate peace, joy, fulfillment; no evil, suffering, frailty.
- † Instills, rekindles desire, motivation to join in that scene – with **Him!**
- † Sets up significance of chapter 5, the scroll in **His** right hand.

Songs of Eternity & Creation

9. What are the central themes of the songs proclaimed by the creatures and the 24 elders?

The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created." (4:8-11)

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| † Holiness | † Worthy of Honor |
| † Might, Power | † Worthy of Power |
| † Eternity | † Creator |
| † Worthy of Glory | † Sustainer |

What is Wrong with This Picture?

12. Who is conspicuously missing from this scene that should be present?

- † Jesus! ... See chapter 5 ☺
- † At what time would Jesus have ever been absent from heaven? ...
- † Please compare to **Daniel 7:9-14**.
- † Much of **Revelation** seems to be a continuation, elaboration, expansion of visions from **Daniel**, especially chapters 2 and 7, more so than any other Old Testament book.
- † Pause to study some related visions in **Daniel** to better understand **Revelation**, chapters 2 and 7.
- † **Daniel 8** and **9** are also relevant and helpful, but omitted for brevity.

The Creator, Provider of Crowns

...the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created." (4:10-11)

10. Why would the elders "cast their thrones before the throne"? What is symbolized by this gesture?
- † Casting them before the throne indicates surrendering the crowns & their meaning to God. Giving Him the glory.
 - † *Stephanos* represents award, honor, accomplishment, victory.
 - † Shows **thankfulness** – Would have no crowns, no victory except by Him.
 - † Shows **humility** – God is worthy of whatever honor comes to them.

Revelation

Trust God

Appendix:
Related Prophecies of Daniel

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Daniel 2

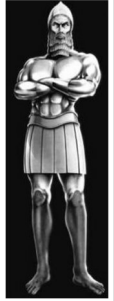
"A Great Image"

3. Describe the image or statue that

Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream? What did each of these segments represent?

"You, O king, were watching; and behold, a **great image!** This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image's **head was of fine gold**, its chest and arms of **silver**, its belly and thighs of **bronze**, its legs of **iron**, its feet **partly of iron and partly of clay**." (2:31-33)

Gold
Silver
Bronze
Iron
Iron & Clay



The Changer of Times and Seasons

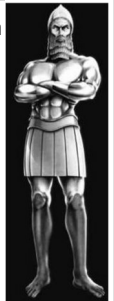
1. How does Daniel's prayer of thanksgiving for God revealing the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream describe God relevant to nations, kings, and the future? Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For ¹wisdom and ²might are His. And He ³changes the times and the seasons; He ⁴removes kings and ⁵raises up kings; He ⁶gives wisdom to the wise And ⁷knowledge to those who have understanding. He ⁸reveals deep and secret things; He ⁹knows what is in the darkness, And ¹⁰light dwells with Him." (2:19-22).

- † Ascribes knowledge, wisdom, and power to God. ... Are *you* similarly impressed?
- † Recognizes God as the one Who "changes the times and the seasons".
- † Acknowledges God as the one Who raises and overthrows kingdoms.
- † Theme: In summary, He *knows* and *controls* the rise and fall of kings and kingdoms.

Interpretation: Four Kingdoms

"This is the dream. Now we will tell the **interpretation** of it before the king. You, O king, are **a king of kings**. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom ... **you are this head of gold**. But after you shall arise **another kingdom inferior to yours**; then another, **a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth**. And the fourth kingdom shall be as **strong as iron**, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and **crush all the others**." (2:36-40)

Babylonian
Medo-Persian
Grecian
Roman



"What Will Be in the Latter Days?"

2. What was the occasion for Nebuchadnezzar's dream? What provoked God to reveal it to him? What was the time of its applicability?

"But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in **the latter days**. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: As for you, O king, **thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this**; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you **what will be**." (2:28-29)

- † Seems Nebuchadnezzar was wondering about events after his present time, nation.
- † God through Daniel applies them to "the latter days" or "the last days".
- † So, "end days ... after this", but end of what? World? Epoch? Empire? Life? ...
- † Don't assume. Must look to the inspired interpretation of the dream.
- † (Other references to "latter days": Isaiah 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-8; Hosea 3:4-5)

Interpretation: Four Kingdoms

- † Each segment represents a kingdom and closely associated with it, its leading, conquering king.
- † Are there 4 or 5 kingdoms in the statue?
- † Only 4 kingdoms are mentioned in the interpretation.
- † The "feet and toes" are still part of "the kingdom", "the fourth kingdom" – no fifth kingdom – no Futurist view.

Babylonian
Medo-Persian
Grecian
Roman



Nature of the Fourth Kingdom

4. What did the unique composition of the image's fourth segment represent?

"And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others. Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay." (2:40)

Babylonian

Medo-Persian

Grecian

Roman



Conquering, Enduring Kingdom of God

"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold – the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure." (2:44-45)



Nature of the Fourth Kingdom

4. What did the unique composition of the image's fourth segment represent?

† The kingdoms have descending superiority or value.
 † Descending value may be a representation of reduced unity (e.g., iron & clay), as opposed to moral, spiritual value.
 † Regardless, the fourth, the iron kingdom would be the strongest, breaking and consuming other nations.
 † But, it would have internal division because of conglomeration of differing peoples.
 † "They will mingle with the seed of men", could be an allusion to political efforts to enforce interracial marriages.
 † Regardless, all efforts to mix, unify the people will fail, leaving it divided, fragile in the end.

Babylonian

Medo-Persian

Grecian

Roman



Failed, Stalled Prophecy?

6. Has this prophecy been fulfilled? If not, what remains?

- As Nebuchadnezzar personified Babylon, both it and he were its "head of gold", so the kingdom of God is personified in its conquering King, Christ (2:36-39).
- Fundamentally fulfilled in Christ the King having "all authority" over all kingdoms and "dashing them to pieces" as He pleases (Psalm 2; Matthew 28:18-20). Nothing remains.
- Failure to accept His rule does not imply no jurisdiction, unconquered (Luke 19:12-27).



An Even Greater Stone, Mountain

5. What happened to the statue? How would this one be different than those represented by the statue? What is represented by this?

"You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." (2:34-35)



The Kingdom of God Came? When?

... Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:14-15)

And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power." (Mark 9:1)

- † Kingdom came in the church on Pentecost with power (Acts 1:3-8; 2:1-41).
- † Kingdom was both present (Revelation 1:9) and accessible (Colossians 1:13) in 1st century.

Unconquered, Enduring Church

- † Last kingdom would originate with God and arrive in the days of the 4th kingdom, Rome (“*without hands*”, see: **8:25; Job 34:13-20**).
- † Will conquer all earthly kingdoms – not using any as foundation – and never be conquered (“*judge all surrounding nations*”, **Joel 3:11-17**).
- † Fulfillment? Since the days of “*these kings*”, Christ’s church has continued to “*consume all kingdoms*”. How?
- † Individually spreads through the gospel, evangelism, faith, voluntary conversion (**Ps.110:3; Rm. 1:16; Acts 2:41, 47; 5:14; 17:6; Col. 1:6**).
- † Not carnal conflict (**John 18:33-37**), but spiritual (**2 Cor. 10:3-5**).
- † If we are citizens of this kingdom, what are we doing to contribute to its growth? What optional preoccupations have taken greater priority?

The Origin of the Four Beasts

7. What is the origin of these four beasts? What is suggested by this symbol? *Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.” (7:2-3)*



Relevance to Revelation

- † Four succeeding, earthly empires starting with Babylonian.
- † Learn from **Daniel 8** other 3 are: Medo-Persian, Grecian, Roman.
- † However, events related to 4th kingdom additionally establish identity.
- † God’s kingdom, the church, is established during days of Roman empire.
- † The Messianic kingdom will crush the other kingdoms and never be destroyed.
- † Depicts a conflict of some kind between God’s kingdom and the other kingdoms of the earth.
- † But, what would be the nature of this conflict?
- † Why would there be conflict? Cannot dwell together in harmony?

The Origin of the Four Beasts

7. What is the origin of these four beasts? What is suggested by this symbol? *Daniel spoke, saying, “I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other.” (7:2-3)*
- † Imagery of the “*sea*” seems to represent churning, chaotic political society, with rising & falling nations, just like the waves (**Psalm 65:7; Isaiah 17:12-13; 57:20-21; Jeremiah 49:23; 51:54-55**).
 - † Loss of dominion is compared to falling back into the sea, or being covered by it (**Jeremiah 51:41-42; Ezekiel 26:3-4**).
 - † Powerful nations sit upon or by many waters with “*nations streaming*” to it (**Jeremiah 51:13, 36, 44**).

The Four Beasts versus the Son of Man Daniel 7

Imagery of the Sea

You who still the noise of the seas, The noise of their waves, And the tumult of the peoples. (Psalm 65:7)

Woe to the multitude of many people Who make a noise like the roar of the seas, And to the rushing of nations. That make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters! The nations will rush like the rushing of many waters; But God will rebuke them and they will flee far away, ... (Isaiah 17:12-13)

But the wicked are like the troubled sea, When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. “There is no peace,” Says my God, “for the wicked.” (Isaiah 57:20-21) Against Damascus. “Hamath and Arpad are shamed, For they have heard bad news. They are fainthearted; There is trouble on the sea; It cannot be quiet.” (Jeremiah 49:23)

“Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against you, as the sea causes its waves to come up. And they shall destroy ...” (Eze. 26:3-4)

Imagery of the Sea

O you who dwell by many waters, Abundant in treasures, Your end has come, The measure of your covetousness. ... Therefore thus says the LORD: "Behold, I will plead your case and take vengeance for you. I will dry up her sea and make her springs dry. ... Oh, how Sheshach is taken! Oh, how the praise of the whole earth is seized! How Babylon has become desolate among the nations! The sea has come up over Babylon; She is covered with the multitude of its waves. ... I will punish Bel in Babylon, And I will bring out of his mouth what he has swallowed; And the nations shall not stream to him anymore. Yes, the wall of Babylon shall fall. ... The sound of a cry comes from Babylon, And great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans, Because the LORD is plundering Babylon And silencing her loud voice, Though her waves roar like great waters, And the noise of their voice is uttered, (Jeremiah 51:13, 36, 41-42, 44, 54-55)

The Four Beasts – #3

8. Describe the four beasts. What is suggested by their descriptions?

"After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it." (7:6)

- † "leopard" – not as strong as lion or bear, but powerful predator, very fast
- † "four wings of a bird" – very fast; 4 might symbolize spreading out, world number.
- † "four heads" – intelligence, or spreading out in all 4 directions (broken into 4 kingdoms; 8:8).



The Four Beasts – #1

8. Describe the four beasts. What is suggested by their descriptions?

"The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it." (7:4)

- † "lion" – most ferocious predator, king of beasts, powerful conquest (Proverbs 22:13; 28:1).
- † "eagle's wings" – fast, greater reach, rapid conquest (Exo. 19:4; Deu. 28:49; Isa. 40:31)
- † "man's heart given" – conscience was pricked, possibly converted (Daniel 4).



The Four Beasts – #4

8. Describe the four beasts. What is suggested by their descriptions?

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns." (7:7)

- † Not like any beast known to man at that time.
- † "dreadful, terrible, exceedingly strong" – more terrifying, ferocious
- † "huge iron teeth" – great power to consume, devour
- † "devouring, breaking, trampling" – leaving no remnant of predecessors
- † "different" – emphasizes uniqueness compared to others, but how?
- † "ten horns" – full, complete power to conquer – peak of human empire, power

The Four Beasts – #2

8. Describe the four beasts. What is suggested by their descriptions?

"And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!'" (7:5)

- † "bear" – not as fast, but great strength, endurance
- † "raised up on one side" – ready to attack, hostile; or, stronger in one half (8:3).
- † "three ribs in its mouth ... devour much flesh" – emphasize not satisfied, continuing to conquer – aggressive, ambitious consumer of nations



Four Beasts = Four Kingdoms

9. How do these beasts compare to the segments of the statue from Nebuchadnezzar's dream (2:28-45)?

I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within my body, and the visions of my head troubled me. I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: "Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth. ... The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces." (7:15-23)

- † Like Daniel 2, each represents a different kingdom, world empire.
- † Like Daniel 2, kingdoms are personified by their leading king.

Four Beasts = Four Kingdoms

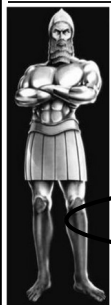
- † Four kingdoms of **Daniel 2** are *same kingdoms* of **Daniel 7**.
- History does not permit other “world empires” from Nebuchadnezzar to Jesus.
- † 4th kingdom of **Daniel 2** has multiple similarities to 4th beast:
- Iron, breaks in pieces, shatters, crush all other kingdoms (2:40).
 - Huge iron teeth, devouring, breaking in pieces, trampling residue (7:7, 19, 23).
- † Similar judgment is executed against the whole in the 4th beast’s reign:
- Stone cut without hands, strikes image in 4th segment, destroys image, no trace of previous, turns into a kingdom that covers the whole earth (2:34-35, 44-45).
 - Ancient of Days issues judgment, 4th beast slain, body destroyed, Son of Man receives a kingdom over the whole earth (7:9, 11-14, 22, 26-27).

Rome: Blasphemous, Persecuting

10. How is the nature, character, and activities of the fourth kingdom expanded in comparison to **Daniel 2**?

...Then I wished to know the truth about the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its nails of bronze, which devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet; and the ten horns that were on its head, and the other horn which came up, before which three fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth which spoke pompous words, whose appearance was greater than his fellows. I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them” (7:19-21)

Comparing the Visions



History	Daniel 2	Daniel 7
Babylon 612-539 B.C. (73)	Head of Gold	Lion
Medo-Persia 539-331 B.C. (208)	Arms & Chest of Silver	Bear
Greece 331-64 B.C. (267)	Belly and Thighs of Bronze	Leopard
Rome 64 B.C. - 476 AD (540)	Legs of Iron with Feet mixed with Clay	Dreadful with Iron Teeth and 10 Horns and Great Words
4 World Empires	4 Sections – 1 Body	4 Beasts

Rome: Blasphemous, Persecuting

Thus he said: “The fourth beast shall be A fourth kingdom on earth, Which shall be different from all other kingdoms, And shall devour the whole earth, Trample it and break it in pieces. The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings. He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.” (7:23-25)

- † Try to subvert God’s charter for kings (to serve **Him** as avenger of evil), and extend his “season” (2:21; 7:12; Rom. 13:1-6; Acts 1:7; 1 The. 5:1).
- † Limited to 3½ times, “a time and times and half a time” (Revelation 11:3; 12:6, 14, 13:5). A seven cut in half, significantly interrupted by God.

Rome: Pompous, Arrogant

10. How is the nature, character, and activities of the fourth kingdom expanded in comparison to **Daniel 2**?

After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.” (7:7-8)

“Running with Horses”

- † Foretells an unusual, unprecedented prolonged persecution against God’s “saints” during Roman empire (“making war ... prevailing”).
- God’s saints did not bring this upon themselves, like period of Judges, Assyrian captivity, or Babylonian captivity.
 - Not since **beginning of nation**, Egyptian bondage. ... Parallel?
 - Whole of greatest human world empire was mobilized against God & His saints, and it succeeded – for a time.
- † Are we prepared to suffer persecution like the saints of early church?
- † If we cannot prioritize God now, while living in lap of luxury, what will we do at the point of a sword (Luke 16:10-12; Jeremiah 12:5)?
- † Even if it does not come to us, are we preparing future generations?

Seating God's Court

11. Who interrupts the rampage of this fourth beast? How is He described? Why might He interject at this point?

"I watched till thrones were put in place, And the ¹Ancient of Days was seated; His ²garment was white as snow, And the ³hair of His head was like pure wool. His ³throne was a fiery flame, Its ⁴wheels a burning fire: A ⁵fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A ⁶thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The ⁷court was seated, And the books were opened." (7:8-10)

† God Almighty calls a court of judgment to examine and judge these beasts, especially the last.

Christ's Ascension & Coronation

12. Who is brought near to the One seated on the throne? How is He described? What event is suggested by this description? What parts of Revelation are parallel to this event?

"I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed." (7:13-14)

† Parallel to rock striking the great image's feet, and mountain consuming all preceding kingdoms and their residue, "the one" (2:44-45).

† Parallel to Jesus' appearance at God's throne, receiving scroll (Rev. 4-5).

Seating God's Court

11. Who interrupts the rampage of this fourth beast? How is He described? Why might He interject at this point?

† White snow implies purity, holiness, righteousness (Job 9:30; Psalm 51:7; Isaiah 1:18).

† Hair of pure wool may imply purity again, or just His age, the "Ancient of Days" (compare to Revelation 1:14).

† Images of fire represent consuming judgment, similar to Eze. 1, 9-10.

† Wheels are reminiscent of cherubs from Ezekiel 1, 10.

† Innumerable hosts emphasize His recognized authority & power.

† The "pompous words" imply the worst blasphemy considering its already pagan peers. Its war, persecution, & words demand judgment.

Judgment and Prolonging of Beasts

13. What happens to the beasts, and what is suggested by this?

"I watched then because of the sound of the pompous words which the horn was speaking; I watched till ¹the beast was slain, and ²its body destroyed and ³given to the burning flame. As for the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." (7:11-12)

† Ultimately, they are all destroyed as part of God's judgment.

† But, the last beast is killed and destroyed immediately after its judgment.

† The other beasts live on, even though their authority is taken a way.

† This may suggest that the 4th beast, Rome, was a composite of all 4 kingdoms in one of two ways:

Christ's Ascension & Coronation

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† Heaven's perspective of Jesus ascension, revealed in symbols (Acts 1:9-11).

† Coronation, seated at God's right hand (Psa. 2; Acts 2:30-36; Heb. 1:8-13)

Judgment and Prolonging of Beasts

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- Spiritually – Defeating, judging Rome implied moral condemnation, defeat, judgment of all 4 empires and their authority.
- Nationally – The preceding empires were decapitated, one government replaced with another, but populous remained the same. However, much of Rome's people were destroyed and replaced.
- Option C: Both could be true and intended.

God's Judgment for Christ & His Saints

"I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. ... He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. **But the court shall be seated, And they shall take away his dominion, To consume and destroy it forever.** (7:21-22, 25-26)

† After God rules in favor of His saints, Rome is destroyed, never to return. Eliminates **Futurist** position looking for a "revived Rome".

Taking Possession like Israel?

"Pass through the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.'" (Joshua 1:11)

Now Joshua was old, advanced in years. And the LORD said to him: "You are old, advanced in years, and there remains very much land yet to be possessed." (Joshua 13:1)
So the LORD gave to Israel all the land of which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it. (Joshua 21:41)

"You have seen all that the LORD your God has done to all these nations because of you, for the LORD your God is He who has fought for you. See, I have divided to you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from the Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, as far as the Great Sea westward. And the LORD your God will expel them from before you and drive them out of your sight. So you shall possess their land, as the LORD your God promised you. Therefore be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left, and lest you go among these nations, these who remain among you. You shall not make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause anyone to swear by them; you shall not serve them nor bow down to them, but you shall hold fast to the LORD your God, as you have done to this day. ... Therefore take careful heed to yourselves, that you love the LORD your God." (Joshua 23:3-11)

"Saints to Possess the Kingdom"?

14. Who will be granted rule? Is this equivalent to the establishment of the church?
Practically, how is this accomplished?

"Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed. ... judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. ... Then the kingdom and dominion, And the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, Shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And all dominions shall serve and obey Him." (7:14, 22, 27)

† Rule was turned over to Christ, which in some measure was granted to the saints.
† **Cannot** refer to establishment of church, because saints were persecuted by Rome, the 4th beast, well **after** church was established ("making war against the saints").

"Saints to Possess the Kingdom"!

† Lesson is parallel to others (Joshua 1:11;13:1; 21:41; 23:3-11):

- Parable of the Faithful Steward (Matthew 24:45-51; Luke 12:4-48)
- Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)
- Parable of the Minas (Luke 19:11-28)

† But, more grand, more inspiring, more encouraging, and provoking a greater sense of ownership, responsibility, & duty (Luke 12:48).

† If we were make too much of this granted "rule", we would be no better than the:

- Builders of the Tower of Babel
- Unfaithful Steward
- Jehu
- "little horn ... speaking blasphemous" things

"Saints to Possess the Kingdom"

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† Not mere inhabitation, since already in the kingdom (Rev. 1:9; Col. 1:13).
† Meaning? We have been entrusted with oversight of expansion, success of kingdom – actualizing God's will, Jesus' rule on earth. ... Similarly taught elsewhere ...

Proverbs for Kings? Saints!

These things also belong to the wise: It is not good to show partiality in judgment. He who says to the wicked, "You are righteous," Him the people will curse; Nations will abhor him. But those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, And a good blessing will come upon them. (Proverbs 24:23-25)
Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool, Much less lying lips to a prince. (Proverbs 17:7)

Also, to punish the righteous is not good, Nor to strike princes for their uprightness. (Proverbs 17:26)

If a ruler pays attention to lies, All his servants become wicked. (Proverbs 29:12)

† As judges, rulers, stewards in "possessing the kingdom", we must exhibit the wisdom of kings in our everyday relationships & interactions.

Relevance to Revelation

- † The description, ascension, coronation, and commissioning of Jesus is very similar to content of expanded scenes in **Revelation 1, 4-5**.
- † Beasts and related symbols are very similar to those in **Revelation 13**.
- † Indicates that the beasts, especially the 4th, war against God's saints.
- † Shows that persecution will last for 3½ times – an interrupted 7.
- † Ultimately, all beasts will be judged and destroyed *after* Messianic kingdom is established.
- † Elaborates on significance and *application* of saints ruling *with* Jesus and possessing the kingdom after other kingdoms are destroyed.
- † Helps to further eliminate false interpretations, like **Futurist, 70 AD**.
- † Sets context and best hint for correct interpretation of **Revelation**.

God's Scroll

1. How is the scroll described? What do you suppose is the significance of this description?
And I saw ¹in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll ²written inside and on the back, ³sealed with seven seals. (5:1)
 - † The “right hand” represents a position of *favor & skill* (**Gen. 48:14-20; Jdg. 5:26; 1 Kings 2:19; Ps. 16:8-11; 89:13; 110:1-5; 137:5; Ecc. 10:2**).
 - † “inside and on the back” indicates it was full, overflowing with content.
 - † Seals show ownership, authority, and requires authority to open (**1 Kings 21:8; Isaiah 29:10-12; Daniel 6:17; 8:26; 12:4, 9; Matthew 27:66**).
 - † “Seven” represent the completeness, perfection of both content & required authority to open – hand of God in both writing and opening.

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 6 – The Worthy Executor

Example of Sealed Papyri



Who Will Open the Scroll?

Revelation 5:1-4

The Essential Scroll

2. How important is this scroll? How do you know from the context?
Then I saw a ¹strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” And no one ²in heaven or ³on the earth or ⁴under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. So ⁵I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. (5:2-4)
 - † By implication, even the “strong angel” could not open it (**1 Peter 1:12**).
 - † John thought it so significant that he “wept much” because it was not read.
 - † John’s reaction is parallel to Daniel’s from similar visions (**Dan. 7:28; 8:27**).
 - † Recall, scroll proceeds from God, extended by His “right hand”. God wants it read as indicated by His gesture, announcement, conducted search.

The One Worthy to Open the Scroll Revelation 5:5-10

Messiah of Prophecy

3. How is this description of Jesus in chapter 5 different than the description of chapter 1? What is the meaning of the description provided here? What OT prophecies used similar descriptions?

*But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, ¹the **Lion of the tribe of Judah**, ²the **Root of David**, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." And I **looked**, and **behold**, ³in the **midst of the throne** and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, **stood ⁴a Lamb as though it had been ⁵slain, having ⁶seven horns and ⁷seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. (5:5-6)***

† "**Lion of Judah**" – Genesis 49:9-10 (Zechariah 9:13-15 – Maccabees)

† "**Root of David**" – Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Isaiah 4:2; 11:1; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12

† "**Lamb of God**" – Genesis 22:8; John 1:29, 36; 1 Peter 1:18-21; Revelation 13:8

† "**Seven Horns**" – Perfect, complete **power** (Daniel 8:5-9).

† "**Seven Eyes**" – Complete **knowledge** (omniscience) – Zec. 3:9; John 16:7-15.

The Lion Slain as a Lamb

3. How is this description of Jesus in chapter 5 different than the description of chapter 1? What is the meaning of the description provided here? What OT prophecies used similar descriptions?

- Jesus Christ,
- the faithful witness,
- the firstborn from the dead,
- the ruler over the kings of the earth.
- Him who loved us
- and washed us from our sins in His own blood,
- and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father,
- to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. (1:5-6)
- the Alpha and Omega, the First and Last
- in the midst of the seven lampstands
- One like the Son of Man
- Clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.
- Head & hair were white like wool, white as snow
- His eyes like a flame of fire
- His feet were like fine brass, as refined in a furnace
- His voice as the sound of many waters;
- He had in His right hand seven stars
- Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword
- His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. (1:11-16)

"Worthy Is the Lamb"

4. Why was Jesus **worthy** to "to open the scroll and loose its seven seals" according to the elders and His description?

*But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, ¹the **Lion of the tribe of Judah**, ²the **Root of David**, has ³prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals." And I looked, and behold, ⁴in the **midst of the throne** and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, **stood a ⁵Lamb as though it had ⁶been slain, having ⁷seven horns and ⁸seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders ⁹fell down before the **Lamb**, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: "You are **worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; ⁶For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have ¹⁰made us kings and ¹¹priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." (5:5-10)*****

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† Ch. 1 stresses more His power, authority, knowledge, & oversight.

† Ch. 5 **visually** stresses what He did to "prevail" and **why** He is "worthy".

† Vision of "lamb slain" is more shocking, profound when introduced as a "lion".

"Worthy Is the Lamb"

4. Why was Jesus **worthy** to "to open the scroll and loose its seven seals" according to the elders and His description?

† Fulfilled Prophecy (#1, #2 – "Lion of Judah ... Root of David")

† Overcame Extreme Test & Challenge (#3 – "prevailed" – Hebrews 4:15)

† Belongs with God & Zenith of Creation (#4 – "in the midst of the throne")

† Sacrificed His Life (#5, #6 – "Lamb ... slain")

† Perfected, Complete Power (#7 – "seven horns")

† Perfected, Complete Knowledge (#8 – "seven eyes")

† Creation Bows to Him (#9 – "creatures ... and ... elders fell down before the Lamb")

† Established a Kingdom for Us (#10 – "made us kings ... we shall reign on the earth", "made us a kingdom")

† Established a Priesthood for Us (#11 – "made us ... priests to our God")

“A New Song”

5. What is implied by the 24 elders falling down before Jesus with harps and incense, singing a “*new song*”? What was their expectation of Jesus?
Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.” (5:8-10)
- † Natural Reaction: Jesus’ death & resurrection was surprising, although foretold (1 Peter 1:12; Psalm 2; 16:10; Isaiah 52:15; Acts 3:17).
- † Incense, harps represent “*prayers of the saints*” and likely their praise.

The Heavenly Hosts & All Creation

6. In addition to the elders, who else praised Jesus?
Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ... 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, I heard ... (5:10-11)
- † Added *all* of the angelic beings.
- † Then, adds all creatures of the *earth*.
- † Represents addition of all heaven & earth, everything created that is good – all giving praise to Jesus.

“A New Song”

5. What is implied by the 24 elders falling down before Jesus with harps and incense, singing a “*new song*”? What was their expectation of Jesus?
Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.” (5:8-10)
- † Previously, songs pointed toward God (4:8-10), but *now* to Jesus → Deity?
- † Sin has been defeated (“*have redeemed us*”). Time has come for “*saints to possess the kingdom*”, while serving as priests (Dan. 7:13-27; 1 Pt. 2:9-10).

The Song of All Creation

7. How are the songs offered by the whole host different than the elders’ song?
... saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!” 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, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!” Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever. (5:12-14)
- † Offers praise to Jesus, but does not mention thanks for redemption.
- † All of creation recognizing Christ’s and God’s worthiness (Psalm 19:1-4).
- † First song is devoted entirely to Jesus. Last one includes Jesus *and* God.

Recognition and Praise by All Creation Revelation 5:11-14

The Deity of Christ

- And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth ..., I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!” Then the four living creatures said, “Amen!” And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever. (5:12-14)*
8. What is implied by Jesus accepting the same praise and worship from all of creation as the one who sits on the throne – in His presence?
- † Both humans and angels *turn* away worship not due them, redirecting it toward God (Acts 10:25-26; Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9).
- † If Christ *accepts* the same worship as the Father – *in the presence of the Father*, then He is equal to the Father and approved by Him (Phil. 2:6).
- † Profound emphasis for final reason He is worthy – He is divine!

The Deity of Christ

*"Truly I know it is so, But how can a man be righteous before God? If one wished to contend with Him, He could not answer Him one time out of a thousand. ... If it is a matter of strength, indeed He is strong; And if of justice, who will appoint my day in court? For He is **not a man**, as I am, That I may answer Him, And that we should go to court together. Nor is there any mediator between us, **Who may lay his hand on us both.**" (Job 9:2-33)*

† Jesus is worthy, just mediator, being both human ("Son of Man") & divine.

† However, in this position, He is also a worthy and just **Judge!**

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 7 – Revealing the Plan

Scroll Is Plan of Salvation?

9. Looking back on the chapter, does this scroll refer to the plan of salvation, the gospel, and Jesus "*slain from the foundation of the world*" (13:8; 1 Peter 1:20) – or something else? How do you know?

† No, not plan of salvation. It is something else. ... Why?

† Jesus is originally **missing** from heaven scene (chapter 4), **already returned**.

† Jesus does **not leave** heaven to execute plan (chapter 6 and following).

† Jesus "**prevailed**" to open scroll (5:5) – had already overcome, past tense.

† Appeared to already have been "**slain**" (5:6).

† Praised as already having been "**slain**" (5:9).

† "**Redeemed us**", past tense (5:9).

† "**Made us kings and priests**", past tense (5:10).

† Praised again as having already been "**slain**" (5:12).

The Four Horsemen

Revelation 6:1-7

Scroll Is Plan of Salvation?

9. Looking back on the chapter, does this scroll refer to the plan of salvation, the gospel, and Jesus "*slain from the foundation of the world*" (13:8; 1 Peter 1:20) – or something else? How do you know?

† Praised as already having been "**worthy**", past tense (5:9, 12).

† If not plan of salvation, then what?

† Represents expanded narration of **Daniel 7:9-27**: executing judgment against Rome and turning the kingdom over to the saints for possession.

*"And have **made us kings and priests** to our God; And **we shall reign on the earth.**" (5:10) ... Note contrast between past and future tenses.*

† Not prophetic past tense. Occurs before "*kingdom given to saints*"!

† Scroll is **plan of judgment** – as the worthy, conquering King, only He can execute it (Psa. 2; Mat. 28:18-20) and deliver the kingdom to the saints!

First Four Seals: The Four Horsemen

*Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." And I looked, and behold, ¹a **white horse**. He who sat on it **had a bow**; and a **crown was given to him**, and he went out **conquering and to conquer**. When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come and see." Another ²horse, **fiery red**, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it **to take peace from the earth**, and that **people should kill one another**; and there was given to him **a great sword**. When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, ³a **black horse**, and he who sat on it had **a pair of scales** in his hand. (6:1-5)*

Who Are the Four Horsemen?

And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine." When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, **a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth. (6:1-8)**

1. Please compare the four horseman of **Revelation 6** to similar visions found in **Zechariah 1:7-11** and **6:1-8**. How are the images of the horseman similar and different? What is their overall significance in **Revelation 6**?

The Four Horsemen of Revelation

Revelation 6

- † Each unleashed by opening a seal.
- † Each introduced by a different "living creature".
- † **White Horse**
 - Bow
 - Given a Crown (stephanos)
 - "Went out conquering and to conquer"
- † **Fiery, Red Horse**
 - Granted to take peace from earth
 - People kill one another
 - Given a great sword
- † **Black Horse**
 - "Pair of scales in his hand"
 - Common foods increase price
 - "Do not harm the oil and the wine"
- † **Pale Horse**
 - "Name of him who sat on it was Death"
 - "Hades followed with him"
 - "Power given to them over fourth of earth to kill"
 - With sword, hunger, death, and by beasts of earth.

- † Like in **Zechariah**, unleashed agents of vengeance sent to reckon and bring peace to God's Spirit.
- 1. Represent military conquest – victory of external conquerors and invaders (e.g., Parthia).
- 2. Represent internal strife, treachery, people turning on each other ("spirit of ill will", **Judges 9:7-24; Zec. 8:10-17; 14:13**; "iron, clay", **Dan. 2:41-43**).
- 3. Represent economic disasters – eating food by measure (**Lev. 26:26-29; Lam. 5:10**) – famines, siege, etc. (**Eze. 4:9-17; 2 Kings 6:25-30**).
- 4. Represent significant death (but not everyone) caused by all the previous and additional natural disasters (**Ezekiel 5:5-17; 14:13-21**, "My **four** severe judgments").

The Four Horsemen of Zechariah

- † God sent them.
- † Travel throughout the earth.
- † Found resting – reporting earth at rest.

Zechariah 1:7-11

- † **Horses of Three Colors**
 - Red
 - Sorrel (Reddish-Brown)
 - White
- † Resting in the hollow, myrtle trees
- † "Lord has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth"
- † "Earth is resting quietly"

Zechariah 6:1-8

- † From between 2 Bronze Mountains (Witnesses of Judgment?)
- † **Chariots with Horses of Four Colors**
 - Red
 - Black
 - White
 - Dapple (Spotted Gray)
- † "Four spirits of heaven go out from their station before Lord"
- † "Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth."
- † "those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country"
- † North associated with Babylon (2:1-7)

- † Represent spirits, agents of God.
- † Commissioned by God to go and **give rest to His Spirit** – restore peace.
- † Agents of God's vengeance (**Deu. 32:35; Heb. 10:30**).

Alternative Idealist View

- † Chapter 5 represents the worthiness of Christ to execute the gospel (i.e., come to earth, become the Lamb).
- † Rider on **white** horse is Jesus, through Christianity converting lost souls, conquering in the Messianic kingdom (**Daniel 2:44; Ephesians 2:17**).
- † God is referred to using a bow to conqueror (**Psalm 7:10-13; 45:3-6; Hab. 3:8-9**).
- † **Red** horse represents persecution that follows conversion (**Matthew 10:16-42**. Compare parallel usage of sword, peace, and family).
- † **Black** horse represents economic persecution. Rich will oppress poor Christians by overcharging them.
- † **Gray** horse represents death that follows – both to Christians and persecutors.
- † Although there is much truth to this being a valid timeline or process ...
- † Which view best fits OT usage of symbols?
- † Which view fits timeline of context? (See chapter 5 and 7.)
- † Which view best addresses the tribulation of the saints?

Comparing Revelation to Zechariah

Revelation 6

- † Each unleashed by opening a seal.
- † Each introduced by a different "living creature".
- † **White Horse**
 - Bow
 - Given a Crown (stephanos, victory crown, not royalty)
 - "Went out conquering and to conquer"
- † **Fiery, Red Horse**
 - Granted to take peace from earth
 - People kill one another
 - Given a great sword
- † **Black Horse**
 - "Pair of scales in his hand"
 - Common foods increase price
 - "Do not harm the oil and the wine"
- † **Pale Horse**
 - "Name of him who sat on it was Death"
 - "Hades followed with him"
 - "Power given to them over fourth of earth to kill"
 - With sword, hunger, death, and by beasts of earth.

Zechariah 1:7-11

- † **Horses of Three Colors**
 - Red
 - Sorrel (Reddish-Brown)
 - White
- † Resting in the hollow, myrtle trees
- † "Lord has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth"
- † "Earth is resting quietly"

Zechariah 6:1-8

- † From between 2 Bronze Mountains
- † **Chariots with Horses of Four Colors**
 - Red
 - Black
 - White
 - Dapple (Spotted Gray)
- † "Four spirits of heaven go out from their station before Lord"
- † "Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth."
- † "those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country"
- † North associated with Babylon (2:1-7)

Could Jesus Be Rider on White Horse?

2. Who could be represented by the rider on the white horse? How does this fit with the chronology established in chapters 1, 4, and 5? Now I saw **when the Lamb opened one of the seals**; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." And I looked, and behold, **a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. (6:1-2)**
 - † Especially odd that Jesus is unleashed by **Himself** – even as a symbol.
 - † Jesus appears on white horse later, but so do His saints (**19:11-14**).
 - † This rider is **given a stephanos**. Later, Jesus has many **diadems** (**19:12**).

Could Jesus Be Rider on White Horse?

2. Who could be represented by the rider on the white horse? How does this fit with the chronology established in chapters 1, 4, and 5?
- † This rider has a bow. Later Jesus has a sword (19:15).
 - † This rider conquers and seeks to conquer. Jesus “*strikes the nations, rules them with a rod of iron, treads winepress of fierceness of and wrath of Almighty God*” (19:15).
 - † **Anachronism:** Time of gospel’s revealing already passed, persecution already begun. This is time of vengeance, judgment against Rome.

“Souls Under the Altar”

- When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. (6:9)
4. What is the significance of the souls being “under the altar”? Was the altar covering these people, hiding them, or minimizing them?
- † The blood of sacrifices was poured, splashed on the altar, running under it (Exodus 29:12-20; Leviticus 1:5-15; 3:2-13; 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34; 7:2; 8:15, 19, 24; 9:9, 12, 18; 16:18; 17:6, 11-14; Deuteronomy 12:27; 2 Chronicles 29:22-24).
 - † The blood of sacrifices represented their life (Leviticus 17:11).
 - † The “souls ... under the altar” compares martyrs to lives sacrificed with their blood pooled “under the altar ... slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held” – just because they would not forsake God’s command and testimony, like John and “souls who had been beheaded” (1:9; 20:4).
 - † Compare to Paul’s “drink offering” (Philippians 2:17; 2 Timothy 4:6).

Unbalanced Scales

When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come and see.” So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.” (6:5-6)

3. Who would be most injured by the economic disruption caused by the 3rd seal?
- † “Wheat” and “barley” would be staples of common people.
 - † “Oil and the wine” would have only been afforded by wealthy.
 - † Common, middle-class, laboring people most affected by this “harming”.
 - † Effectively deepened, widened class divide. Hurting common man the most.
 - † Possibly destabilizing country. Weakening its core, laboring population.

“How Long until You Avenge?”

5. What is the complaint of those revealed by the 5th seal? What can we learn about the nature of God and His judgments based on His revealed response?
- And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed. (6:10-11)
- † Cry of unjustly shed blood represents severe injustice that God ultimately avenges (Gen. 4:10-11; 9:5-6; Num. 35:33; Job 16:18; Isa. 26:21; Eze. 24:7-8; Heb. 11:4; 12:24).
 - † God delays because of patience, desire to save, and displeasure in destruction (2 Peter 3:9; Ezekiel 18:23-32; 33:11-20). However, He is a “holy and true” God, so ...
 - † His patience has its limits. He delays “until there is no remedy”, while “iniquity is not yet complete” (2 Chr. 36:15-16; Gen. 15:16; Matt. 23:32-36; Luke 14:34-35; 18:1-8).
 - † Notice, their sacrifice is rewarded. They are patiently answered, comforted.
 - † Notice, delay was only for “a little while longer” (12:12). Eliminates Futurist & EoW.

The Fifth Seal Revelation 6:9-11

The Sixth Seal Revelation 6:12-17

The End of the World?

I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was ¹a great earthquake; and ²the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and ³the moon became like blood. And ⁴the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then ⁵the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and ⁶every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And ⁷the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (6:12-17)

6. Do the events caused by the opening of the 6th seal refer to literal earthquakes, eclipses, red moons, falling stars, receding skies, and displaced mountains? If not, how are these symbols used in the Old Testament prophets? What do these symbols here foretell? Does this represent the end of the world?

The End of the World – for Some Nation

† Stars = Rulers (Genesis 1:14-18) – Numbers 24:17 (David, Messiah); Isaiah 14:12 (King of Babylon); Daniel 8:10 (Antiochus Epiphanes, Grecian King).
 † Heavens Receding – All lights, people are rolled up, carried away.
 † Mountains Moving – Symbols of permanence, centers of power; shaking unshakable
 † Islands = Remote Lands – News, horror, & disassociation of remote lands
 "Thus says the Lord GOD to Tyre: 'Will the coastlands not shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded cry, when slaughter is made in the midst of you? ... Now the coastlands tremble on the day of your fall; Yes, the coastlands by the sea are troubled at your departure. ... In their wailing for you They will take up a lamentation, And lament for you: 'What city is like Tyre, Destroyed in the midst of the sea?' ... All the inhabitants of the isles will be astonished at you; Their kings will be greatly afraid, And their countenance will be troubled.'" (Ezekiel 26:15-18; 27:32-35)

Lights Failing, Earth Moving

The burden against Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw: ... "They come from a far country, From the end of heaven – The LORD and His weapons of indignation, To destroy the whole land. Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. Therefore all hands will be limp, Every man's heart will melt, ... Behold, the day of the LORD comes, Cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, To lay the land desolate; And He will destroy its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not give their light; The sun will be darkened in its going forth, And the moon will not cause its light to shine. ... Therefore I will shake the heavens, And the earth will move out of her place, In the wrath of the LORD of hosts And in the day of His fierce anger. ... Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, Who will not regard silver; And as for gold, they will not delight in it. ... And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, The beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. (Isaiah 13:1-19)

† See also: Isaiah 29:6; Jeremiah 4:23-28; Matthew 24:29 (Jerusalem); Joel 2:31 (Messianic, Pentecost – Acts 2:16-21); Isaiah 50:3

The End of the World – for Some Nation

† Stars = Rulers (Genesis 1:14-18) – Numbers 24:17 (David, Messiah); Isaiah 14:12 (King of Babylon); Daniel 8:10 (Antiochus Epiphanes, Grecian King).
 † Heavens Receding – All lights, people are rolled up, carried away.
 † Mountains Moving – Symbols of permanence, centers of power; shaking unshakable
 † Islands = Remote Lands – News, horror, & disassociation of remote lands
 † Men Hiding & Asking for Rocks to Cover – Hosea 10:8 (Israel ← Assyria); Isaiah 2:19 (Jerusalem ← Assyria); Luke 23:30 (Jerusalem ← Rome).
 The idol also shall be carried to Assyria As a present for King Jareb. Ephraim shall receive shame, And Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel. As for Samaria, her king is cut off Like a twig on the water. Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, Shall be destroyed. The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars; They shall say to the mountains, "Cover us!" And to the hills, "Fall on us!" (Hosea 10:6-8)

The End of the World – for Some Nation

† Stars = Rulers (Gen. 1:14-18; Psalm 136:7-9) – Numbers 24:17 (David, Messiah); Isaiah 14:12 (King of Babylon); Daniel 8:10 (Antiochus Epiphanes, Grecian King).

† Heavens Receding – All lights, people are rolled up, carried away.

All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll; All their host shall fall down As the leaf falls from the vine, And as fruit falling from a fig tree. For My sword shall be bathed in heaven; Indeed it shall come down on Edom, And on the people of My curse, for judgment. (Isaiah 34:4-5)

The End of the World – for Some Nation

† Stars = Rulers (Genesis 1:14-18) – Numbers 24:17 (David, Messiah); Isaiah 14:12 (King of Babylon); Daniel 8:10 (Antiochus Epiphanes, Grecian King).

† Heavens Receding – All lights, people are rolled up, carried away.

† Mountains Moving – Symbols of permanence, centers of power; shaking unshakable
 † Islands = Remote Lands – News, horror, & disassociation of remote lands

† Men Hiding & Asking for Rocks to Cover – Hosea 10:8 (Israel ← Assyria); Isaiah 2:19 (Jerusalem ← Assyria); Luke 23:30 (Jerusalem ← Rome).

† Who Can Stand? – Nahum 1:6 (Nineveh), Malachi 3:2 (Messianic)

The burden against Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. ... The mountains quake before Him, The hills melt, And the earth heaves at His presence, Yes, the world and all who dwell in it. Who can stand before His indignation? And who can endure the fierceness of His anger? His fury is poured out like fire, And the rocks are thrown down by Him. (Nahum 1:1-6)

The End of the World – for Some Nation

- † Stars = Rulers (Genesis 1:14-18) – Numbers 24:17 (David, Messiah); Isaiah 14:12 (King of Babylon); Daniel 8:10 (Antiochus Epiphanes, Grecian King).
- † Heavens Receding – All lights, more people are rolled up, carried away?
- † Mountains Moving – Symbols of permanence, centers of power; shaking unshakable
- † Islands = Remote Lands – News, horror, & disassociation of remote lands
- † Men Hiding & Asking for Rocks to Cover – Hosea 10:8 (Israel ← Assyria); Isaiah 2:19 (Jerusalem ← Assyria); Luke 23:30 (Jerusalem ← Rome).
- † Who Can Stand? – Nahum 1:6 (Nineveh).
- † End of the world for the nation or empire oppressing God’s people.
- † Answers the question asked by 5th seal, the saints under the altar.
- † But, if end of world, then how does it address 5th seal? Or, set stage for chapter 7?
- † Not the end of world. It comes suddenly (1 Thessalonians 5:2-3; 2 Peter 3:10-11).

Holding Back the Wind

- After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Then 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 granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” (7:1-3)
1. What is suggested by the imagery of the four angels holding back the four winds of the earth?
 - † “Four” is world number (Dan. 8:8). Represents farthest, remotest corners of the world (“from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven”, Mark 13:27).
 - † Think about the edges or corners of a map depicting accessible, relevant world.
 - † When let loose from the “four corners”, these winds will cover all the earth.
 - † Suggests far-reaching, unforeseen impact of suspended winds – controlled by God.

Revelation Trust God

Lesson 8 – Protecting
the Lamb’s Saints

Harmful, Blowing Winds

- † Wind’s effects are often associated with acts of God, typically in judgment or doom:
 - Represents remotest reaches, corners of the world (Dan. 8:8-9; 11:4; Ez. 5:2, 10, 12; 12:14; 17:21)
 - Brings blessing or salvation (Numbers 11:31; Isaiah 11:15; Ezekiel 37:9).
 - Blights trees and plants, dries them out (Eze. 17:10; 19:10-14; Gen. 41:6, 23, 27; Psalm 103:16).
 - Carries plagues (Exodus 10:13, 19; 15:10; Psalm 11:6).
 - Destroys like in a tornado or whirlwind (Jer. 4:11-13; 22:22; Ezekiel 13:11-13; Job 30:15, 22).
 - Scatters people and nations, especially like chaff (Jeremiah 49:32-36; 51:1-2; 13:24; 18:17; Daniel 2:35; Zechariah 2:6; Isaiah 17:13; 27:8; 41:16; 57:13; Job 21:18; 27:21; Psalm 1:4-6; 35:5).
 - Understood, controlled only by God (Job 28:25; Psalm 107:25; 135:7; Proverbs 30:4; Ecclesiastes 1:14; 11:5; Jeremiah 10:13; 51:16; Amos 4:13).
- † Not blessing – context is judgment, and saints are spared from it.
- † Not scattering – wrong direction; coming from four winds, not driven to them
- † Winds of destruction, blowing and bringing “harm ... on the earth, sea, and trees”.
- † Therefore, the judgment unleashed by previous seals is being stalled, waiting on ...

The Sealing of Israel Revelation 7:1-8

“Making A Difference”

... saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” (7:1-3)

2. Why would they wait until God’s people were sealed?

- † Apparently, the “sealing of the servants of our God” made a distinction, offered them some kind of protection.

“And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there, in order that you may know that I am the LORD in the midst of the land. I will make a difference between My people and your people. Tomorrow this sign shall be.” (Exodus 8:22-23; 9:4, 25-26; 10:22-23; 11:5-7)

Marking God's People

3. Please compare and contrast this message to that depicted in **Ezekiel 9**? How does this enrich the meaning of the sealing of **Revelation 7**?

† Preceded by God showing Ezekiel the elders' hidden, grotesque sins (**Ezekiel 8**). Then He called out in my hearing with a loud voice, saying, "Let those who have charge over the city draw near, each with a deadly weapon in his hand." ... One man among them was clothed with linen and had a writer's inkhorn at his side. ... and the LORD said to him, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it." To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary." So they began with the elders who were before the temple. ... Just then, the man clothed with linen, who had the inkhorn at his side, reported back and said, "I have done as You commanded me." (**Ezekiel 9:1-11**)

† Followed by God departing from temple, killing 1 elder, and announcing judgment (**Ezekiel 10-12**).

The Eternal Home & Paradise Revelation 7:9-17

Protecting God's People

† God's wrath is not blind, hasty, or uncontrolled.

† God knows His people and makes a distinction, protecting them from the punishment due sinners.

Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Timothy 2:19; see also, 1 Kings 19:18; Isaiah 40:26-27)

† Do we "sigh and cry over all the abominations", or do we secretly partake them, even if only vicariously? Do we also silently think, "God does not see"?

... take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out. (**Numbers 32:23**)

† Judgment begins at the house of God!

† For those who "sigh and cry" (compare to 2 Peter 2:7-9) – comfort and confidence.

† God's angels will not fail – "I have done as you commanded me".

† Even if the saint suffers with the sinner now (**6:9**), God ultimately reckons ...

An Innumerable, Heavenly Host

5. How is this heavenly host described? What might be the significance of the "palm branches"?

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (7:9-10)

† 144,000 – Numerable and were sealed on earth!

† Innumerable and Before the Throne – All the redeemed in heaven (**Gen. 13:16**).

† White Robes – symbols of victory, purity, and holiness.

† Proscribing Salvation to God – Acknowledging that God is the source, owner of their salvation. (Incidentally, this would likely preclude angels, **Hebrews 2:16**.)

† Palm Branches – Feast of Tabernacles (**Leviticus 23:40-43; Nehemiah 8:14-18**)? Triumphant Entry (**John 12:12-21**) → victory, joy, beauty, security, dependence

Who Was Sealed?

And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed: of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed; ... of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed. (7:4-8)

4. Who does Israel represent in this chapter? What is the significance of their number, 144,000?

† "Israel" represents God's spiritual people (**Rom. 2:28-29; 9:3-6; Gal. 6:16**).

† "Twelve Tribes" also represent the church (**Mat. 19:28; Luke 22:30; James 1:1**).

† 144,000 = 12 x 12 x 10 x 10 x 10 – All of God's people everywhere throughout the entire earth. No one is overlooked (**Matthew 10:28-31**)!

† Missing Dan, Ephraim? Leaders in idolatry (**1 Kings 11:26; 12:25-33; Jdgs. 18**)?

† Ephraim often used to represent idolatrous northern kingdom.

† Judah Leads = King, tribe of David and Messiah. Received blessing (**Gen. 49:8-10**).

An Innumerable, Heavenly Host

All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen." Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" (7:11-13)

† Entire heavenly host – including all angels, elders, and 4 living creatures.

† Raise 7-fold blessing and praise to God, who makes this scene of salvation possible.

† Returns attention to identity and condition of those robed in white before the throne.

Made White in the Blood of the Lamb

6. What is ironic about the color of their robes and how they obtained that color?
And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (7:14)
- † "Washed" clean in "blood".
 - † Shocking that what produces the worst stains removes the unremovable stains.
 - † ... Only because it is "the blood of the Lamb"!
 - † Meaning of "the great tribulation"?
 - Could refer to all saints of all time, because we all suffer to some extent as Christians (Acts 14:22; 2 Timothy 3:12; John 16:33).
 - Could refer to all saints who died specifically during the time of extraordinary persecution associated with the establishment of the church and its triumph over human empires.
 - Either would be of special comfort to them, and even to us.

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 9 – The First Four Trumpets

"I Will Dwell Among Them"

7. What state is described for God's people? What application would this hold 1st century saints? How does it help us? At what other time or times is this expression used?
- "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (7:15-17)*
- † God would provide temple, sanctuary for protection (Isaiah 4:5-6; 25:8; 49:10; Ezekiel 37:27-28).
 - † No "temple" in heaven, because "the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are in His temple" (21:22).
 - † God's promise to "dwell among them" has been extended, rejected multiple times (Gen. 3:8; Exo. 25:8; 29:45-46; Eze. 43:1-12; 1 Kgs. 6:13). Here, finally realized.

Seals, Trumpets, and Vials

- † Revelation 4-16 contains Three sets of Seven:
 - Opening Seven Seals (4-8)
 - Sounding Seven Trumpets (8-11)
 - Pouring Seven Vials, Bowls (15-16)
- † Represent a progressive, escalating, incremental judgment from God and the Lamb with multiple opportunities for man to repent. ... Significance of sevens?
 - Opened seals reveal and initiate judgment (Amos 3:6-9; Genesis 18:17-19).
 - Trumpets warn of incoming judgment (Num. 10:1-10; Eze. 33:3-6; Joel 2:1).
 - Vials destroy, yet even still incrementally, providing final opportunities to repent.
- † Interludes explain motivation, background, justification, consequences, elaboration:
 - Flashbacks – Ascension of Christ (4-5), Introduction of Devil, Agents, and Opposing Response (12-14)
 - Cut-scenes – Sealing of Saints (7), Little Book and Two Witnesses (10-11)
 - Close-ups – Fall of Babylon (17-18), Armageddon (19), Eternity (20-22)

Present or Future Bliss?

8. Does this image represent the then current state of those saints or does the symbol allow for this to pertain to the future? How do you know?
- "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." (7:15-17)*
- † Transitions from present tense to future tense. Significance?
 - Could be transition in time, from present state to future reality?
 - Could be emphasizing ongoing bliss – present and future?
 - Could be both?
 - † Sneak peek of final vision in Revelation 21-22.
 - † Provides hope now for the persecuted, troubled saint (Hebrews 6:17-19).
 - † Motivates us to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Mat. 6:33).

Opening the Seventh Seal

Revelation 8:1-6

The Significance of Silence

When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. (8:1)

1. What is the significance of the "silence in heaven for about half an hour"?
 - A. Draws attention for **emphasis** and **dramatic** effect for following awesome events.
 - B. Indicates **respect** and **reverence** as heaven waits on God and the Lamb to act
- Men listened to me and waited, And kept **silence** for my counsel. After my words they did not speak again, And my speech settled on them as dew." (Job 29:21-22)*
*So when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a **great silence**, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, saying, (Acts 21:40)*
*Let your women **keep silent** in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be **submissive**, as the law also says. (1 Corinthians 14:34)*
*But **the LORD** is **in His holy temple**. Let all the earth **keep silence** before Him. (Habakkuk 2:20)*

The Just Judge of All the Earth

Then He spoke a parable to them, that men **always ought to pray** and **not lose heart**, saying: "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man. Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, '**Get justice for me from my adversary**.' And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, yet **because this widow troubles me I will avenge her**, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'" Then the Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not **avenge His own elect** who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will **avenge them speedily**. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really **find faith on the earth?**" (Luke 18:1-8)

- † Argue from lesser to greater; selfish judge to just "Judge of all earth" (Gen. 18:25).
- † Comforting God "avenges" quick as possible (Exo. 2:23-25; 1 Pt. 3:12; 2 Pt. 3:9).
- † **Lesson:** God hears, even if He waits, so "always pray" and do "not lose heart".

"Much Incense with the Prayers"

And I saw the **seven angels** who stand before God, and to them were given **seven trumpets**. Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given **much incense**, that he should offer it **with the prayers** of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. (8:2-3)

2. If incense previously represented the "prayers of the saints" (5:8), then what is the "much incense" offered "with the prayers of the saints" in 8:3?
 - † Represents, emphasizes something added to make prayers acceptable.

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh ... (Hebrews 10:19-20; see also, Romans 8:26-27, 34; Hebrews 7:25; John 9:31)

 - † Purified prayers, removed of selfish and destructive content (James 4:1-4).
 - † Comforting to know that He hears our prayers, but He also **fixes** them.
 - † Implies, as a consequence, they will not be denied, but certainly provoke action.

Sounding of the First Four Trumpets Revelation 8:7-13

Casting Down Censer Filled with Fire

And the smoke of the **incense**, with the **prayers** of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. Then the angel took the censer, **filled it with fire from the altar**, and **threw it to the earth**. And there were ¹noises, ²thunderings, ³lightnings, and an ⁴earthquake. So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound (8:4-6)

3. What is implied by the angel filling his censer with "fire from the altar" and throwing it "to the earth"?
 - † Prayers ascending before God indicate that the prayers were heard.
 - † Filling the censer with fire implies that a fiery answer was prepared in response (Ezekiel 10).
 - † Throwing the fire down to the earth clarifies the recipient beyond all doubt.
 - † This concludes the opening of the seventh seals and prepares the way for the escalating sounding of the seven trumpets. ... Trumpets are response to prayers.

The First Four Trumpets Sound

The ¹**first angel sounded**: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up. Then the ²**second angel sounded**: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. Then the ³**third angel sounded**: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter. Then the ⁴**fourth angel sounded**: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. (8:7-12)

4. Compare and contrast the sounding of the first two trumpets to the 10 plagues of Egypt. What was the purpose of those plagues? How might these trumpets be similar?

“That You May Know”

4. Compare and contrast the sounding of the first two trumpets to the 10 plagues of Egypt. What was the purpose of those plagues? How might these trumpets be similar?

10 Plagues (Exodus 7-12)

1. Water to Blood
2. Frogs
3. Lice
4. Flies
5. Pestilence of Cattle
6. Boils
7. Hail
8. Locusts
9. Darkness
10. Death of the Firstborn

4 Trumpets (8)

1. First, Second, and Third
2. —
3. —
4. —
5. —
6. —
7. First
8. First (½ of trees, all grass burned)
9. Fourth
10. —

“... for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, **that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth.** Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth. **But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. As yet you exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go.**” (Exodus 9:14-17)

Why Is a Mountain on Fire?

“*Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.*” So Jesus answered and said to them, “**Have faith in God.** For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to **this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’** and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. **Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.**” (Mark 11:19-24)

- † Also used as hyperbole for maintaining faith in God answering prayer.
- † Coincidentally prompted by reaction to Jesus cursing the barren fig tree, a symbol of Jerusalem’s fruitlessness and pending destruction.

Why Is a Mountain on Fire?

Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. (8:8-9)

5. Based on OT prophets’ usage of “mountain”, what might be symbolized by a “burning mountain” being cast into “the sea”?

† Mountains represent centers of power & defense – large, powerful cities.

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD’S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains. And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. (Isaiah 2:2)

† Casting mountains down and burning them represents destruction of such cities.

Who Is Wormwood?

Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter. (8:10-11)

6. Can you find reference to another falling star in the Old Testament prophets? Assuming the meaning is similar, how might this produce bitter water?

Why Is a Mountain on Fire?

Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. (8:8-9)

5. Based on OT prophets’ usage of “mountain”, what might be symbolized by a “burning mountain” being cast into “the sea”?

“And I will repay Babylon And all the inhabitants of Chaldea ...Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, Who destroys all the earth,” says the LORD. “And I will stretch out My hand against you, Roll you down from the rocks, And make you a burnt mountain.” (Jeremiah 51:24-25)

† This represents destruction of a yet unnamed city of power (Jer. 51:41-42).

† Significantly damage politics, government, society, etc..

The Fall of Lucifer

The burden against Babylon which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw. ... “Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them. Who will not regard silver; And as for gold, they will not delight in it. ... And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, The beauty of the Chaldeans’ pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. ... For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land. The strangers will be joined with them, and they will cling to the house of Jacob. ... you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: “How the oppressor has ceased, The golden city ceased! The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked. The scepter of the rulers; He who struck the people in wrath with a continual stroke, He who ruled the nations in anger. Is persecuted and no one hinders. The whole earth is at rest and quiet; They break forth into singing. ... Hell from beneath is excited about you, To meet you at your coming; It stirs up the dead for you, All the chief ones of the earth; It has raised up from their thrones All the kings of the nations. They all shall speak and say to you: “Have you also become as weak as we? Have you become like us? Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, And the sound of your stringed instruments; The maggot is spread under you, And worms cover you.” How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer (Heb. light-bearer, morning-star), son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.” Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: “Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, Who did not open the house of his prisoners?” All the kings of the nations, All of them, sleep in glory, Everyone in his own house; But you are cast out of your grave Like an abominable branch, Like the garment of those who are slain, Thrust through with a sword, Who go down to the stones of the pit, Like a corpse trodden underfoot. You will not be joined with them in burial, Because you have destroyed your land And slain your people. The brood of evildoers shall never be named. Prepare slaughter for his children Because of the iniquity of their fathers, Lest they rise up and possess the land, And fill the face of the world with cities. For I will rise up against them,” says the LORD of hosts, “And cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, And offspring and posterity,” says the LORD. (Isaiah 13:1-14:22)

Who Is Wormwood?

*Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. **The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter.** (8:10-11)*

6. Can you find reference to another falling star in the Old Testament prophets?
 Assuming the meaning is similar, how might this produce bitter water?
 † Star falling was associated with destruction of mighty king of Babylon (**Isa.13-14**).
 † “Wormwood” was often associated with miserable food & drink in captivity: *therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, **I will feed them, this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.** I will scatter them also among the Gentiles, whom neither they nor their fathers have known. And I will send a sword after them until I have consumed them.* (**Jer.9:15-16;23:15;Lam.3:15-19**)
 † Associated with **injustice, idolatry, harlotry** (**Am. 5:7; 6:12; Deu. 29:18; Pro. 5:4**)
 † Combining the symbols: Fall of a great persecuting, idolatrous king that would have made the world’s people bitter, sorrowful, maybe leading to captivity for some.

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 10 – The First Two Woes

Overcoming Danger of Wormwood

- † How do we overcome the dangers associated with bitterness?
looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. (**Hebrews 12:6-17; Deu. 29:18**)
 † How does bitterness consume a person, destroy them (**Gn. 25:29-34**)?
 † Each have unique, but not too unique (**Pro. 14:10; 1 Cor. 10:13**).
 † Do not be distracted by others’ state (**Eph. 4:31-32; John 21:18-22**).
 † Focus on the blessings you have (**Acts 8:19-24**).
 † Be thankful for those and make the most of them (**2 Tim. 3:2**).
 † By faith, focus on blessings produced by trial (**James 1:2-12**).

The First Woe

(Trumpet #5)

Revelation 9:1-12

Introducing the Three Woes

7. According to the flying angel (or eagle), what was to be associated with each of the three remaining trumpet blasts? They were considered as what?
*And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “**Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!**” (8:13)*
 † “Eagle” (Gr., *aetos*) – omen of destruction (**Matthew 24:28; Luke 17:37**)
 † Remaining blasts (#5-#7) would be so severe as to be classified as “woes”.
 † “Historians agree that **three major factors** contributed to Rome’s demise: **natural calamity, internal rottenness, and outside invasion.** It seems these three areas are symbolized, first, in the warning sounds of the trumpets, and again, but more completely, in the outpouring of God’s wrath from the seven bowls which are yet to be revealed.” (**Harkrider, 103**)

The Source of the First Woe

1. What was the source of the first woe (sounding of the 5th trumpet)? What does this represent?
Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then ²out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. (9:1-3)
 † Associated with realm of dead, perdition (**Romans 10:7; Revelation 11:7; 17:8**).
 † Associated with realm of demons (**Luke 8:31**).
 † The Devil later cast into it before millennium and arise after it (**20:1-7**).
 † This suggests that the ultimate source of this woe is the Devil and his demons....
 † “Fallen star” could be ruler, like **8:10**, or the Devil (**Luke 10:18; Rev. 12:9-12**).
 † But, this “fallen star” affects the earth-dwellers, not Christians (**9:4**).

Darkening the Heavens

2. What effect did it have on the elements? Is this literal? If not, what does it mean? *And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. (9:2-3)*

- † Could be emphasizing the extreme torment associated with this woe.
- † Or, loss of light indicates loss of direction, often associated with rulers' guidance (6:12-14).
- † Light, hope, guidance, wisdom must be visible to be noticed when lost, which indicates the one opening the pit is human, although influenced himself.

Locusts of Judgment & Warning

Their appearance is like the appearance of horses; And like swift steeds, so they run. With a noise like chariots Over mountaintops they leap. Like the noise of a flaming fire that devours the stubble, Like a strong people set in battle array. Before them the people writhe in pain; All faces are drained of color. They run like mighty men, They climb the wall like men of war; Every one marches in formation, And they do not break ranks. They do not push one another; Every one marches in his own column. Though they lunge between the weapons, They are not cut down. They run to and fro in the city, They run on the wall; They climb into the houses, They enter at the windows like a thief. The earth quakes before them, The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness. The LORD gives voice before His army, For His camp is very great; For strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; Who can endure it? (Joel 2:4-11)

Locusts from the Abyss

3. Describe what came out of the pit? Please provide your best guess as to the significance of each attribute? Please compare and contrast their description to that of the day and army described in Joel 2:1-11?

Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. ... Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. (9:3-10)

- † National judgment from God (Ex. 10:1-20; Deu. 28:38; 2 Chr. 7:13; Ps. 105:34).

Locusts from the Abyss

3. Describe what came out of the pit? Please provide your best guess as to the significance of each attribute? Please compare and contrast their description to that of the day and army described in Joel 2:1-11?

Revelation 9:3-10	Joel 1:4-2:11	Meaning – Revelation 9:3-10
1. Sun and air darkened	1. Darkness, sun darkened, earthquake	1. Loss of direction, guidance
2. Torment like scorpions	2. —	2. Power to torture (Mat.8:6; 2Pet.2:8)
3. Shaped like war horses	3. Appearance of horses, swift steeds	3. Strong, fast, enduring (Jer. 12:5)
4. Gold-like crowns (stephanos)	4. —	4. Appearance of victory
5. Men's faces	5. —	5. Not animals: smart, strong, cunning
6. Women's hair	6. —	6. Appealing, beautiful, charming
7. Lion's teeth	7. Lion's teeth and fangs	7. Voracious, aggressive (Gal. 5:15)
8. Breastplates of iron	8. —	8. Resistant to defeat, being stopped.
9. Sounded like many chariots	9. Noise like chariots, fire, army	9. Intimidating, overwhelming
10. Barbed scorpion tails.	10. —	10. Unexpected, poisonous attack – worst consequences do not occur immediately, delayed agony – treachery, lying, backstabbing (Eze. 2:6; Deu. 32:24-35; Psalm 58:3-4; 140:1-5; James 3:8).
	11. Nation without number	
	12. Devour the land like fire	
	13. Organized	
	14. Cannot be stopped by weapons.	
	15. Get into everything	

Locusts of Judgment & Warning

What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten; What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten; And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten. ... a nation has come up against My land, Strong, and without number: His teeth are the teeth of a lion, And he has the fangs of a fierce lion. He has laid waste My vine, And ruined My fig tree; He has stripped it bare and thrown it away; Its branches are made white. ... Blow the trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; For the day of the LORD is coming, For it is at hand: A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness, Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains. A people come, great and strong, The like of whom has never been; Nor will there ever be any such after them, Even for many successive generations. A fire devours before them, And behind them a flame burns; The land is like the Garden of Eden before them, And behind them a desolate wilderness; Surely nothing shall escape them. (Joel 1:4-2:3)

The Locusts' Target

4. Who was their target? What can we learn from this? *They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. (Rv.9:4)*

- † Not natural locusts, because only attacked men – not “grass, green thing, tree” ...
- † Not natural disaster, because only affects unbelievers – not green, fruitful plants.
- † Comforting that:
 - God knows us and makes a distinction (Ex. 8:22-23; 2 Tim. 2:19; Eze. 9:1-11).
 - We do can avoid some punishment and “torment” through righteousness.
 - Wickedness brings its own penalty even now.

Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; (Romans 1:27-28)

Limited Authority to Torment

5. How long did they afflict men? What might this mean?

*And they were **not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months.** Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. (9:5-6)*

† Would have killed, but limited in authority; therefore, God restrained them:

*And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, **all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.**" So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. ... And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, **he is in your hand, but spare his life.**" (Job 1:12, 2:6)*

† The "five months" may indicate only part of man's capacity, whether to endure or to torment, as interrupted by God (Matthew 25:1-2; 1 Corinthians 10:13).

† Maybe coincidentally, this is supposed to be the lifetime of a literal locust, again implying limited time of torment and effectiveness.

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 10 – The First Two Woes

The Destroyer

6. Who is their king? How is he their king?

*And they had as **king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon.** (9:11)*

Hell and Destruction are before the LORD; So how much more the hearts of the sons of men. (Proverbs 15:11)

Hell and Destruction are never full; So the eyes of man are never satisfied. (Pr. 27:20)

Destruction and Death say, 'We have heard a report about it with our ears.' (Jb.28:22)

*You are of your father **the devil**, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a **murderer from the beginning**, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. (John 8:44)*

† "Destroyer" is opposite of "Creator" (Isaiah 40:28; Romans 1:25).

† Reference to the Devil, or those influenced by him (John 8:44; 13:2).

The Second Woe (Trumpet #6) Revelation 9:13-21

Internal, Moral Rottenness

*One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are **coming after** these things. (9:12)*

7. What might this woe represent? What are these locusts? How do they really torment men?

Is it suggesting a plague of demon possession?

† Most likely **not** demon possession because ended with Messianic age (Luke 10:17-20; Zechariah 13:1-3).

† People may perform the will of the Devil and demons as much as they give themselves over to do their will (James 3:14-16; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; John 8:44; 13:2).

*There is a **generation that curses its father. And does not bless its mother.** There is a generation that is **pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness.** There is a generation – oh, how **lofty are their eyes!** And their eyelids are lifted up. There is a **generation whose teeth are like swords, And whose fangs are like knives, To devour the poor from off the earth, And the needy from among men. The leech has two daughters – Give and Give! There are three things that are never satisfied, Four never say, "Enough!": ... The eye that mocks his father, And scorns obedience to his mother.** The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it. (Proverbs 30:11-17)*

† Just one example of destruction arising from within because of internal, moral rottenness.

The Four Angels Bound

*Then the **sixth angel sounded:** And I heard a voice from the four horns of the **golden altar which is before God**, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "**Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.**" So the **four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind.** (9:13-15)*

8. Do the four angels bound at the Euphrates represent real angels? Are they good or evil? What is the significance of these angels having been "prepared for the hour and day and month and year"? What could these angels represent?

† Providentially, God may "prepare" things for His purpose (Jonah 1:17; 4:6-8).

† Angels over nations fought against other angels & nations (Daniel 10:13, 20-11:1).

† Seems to represent external nations waiting to attack the persecuting empire.

† "Four" represents the world, so maybe armies from all over the relevant world?

† Associated again with "prayers of the saints" (8:3-5). Represents answered prayers.

Significance of Euphrates

Caird has succinctly commented on the use of the Euphrates:

The threat of invasion by armies from beyond the Euphrates was guaranteed to produce a grue of apprehension in both Roman and Jew. For beyond the great river lay the empire of Parthia, which superstitious imagination was always ready to people with inexhaustible hordes of barbarian warriors (cf. I Enoch 56:5; 90:13, 16). The Roman neurosis about Parthia began in 53 B.C. with the defeat of Crassus at Carrhae and the loss of the eagle standards of his legions, was renewed by the disgraceful capitulation of Paetus to Vologeses in A.D. 62, and was not finally exorcised until Trajan earned the title Parthicus by his victories of A. D. 114-116. To the Roman the Euphrates was the eastern frontier, but to the Jew it was the northern frontier of Palestine, across which Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian invaders had come to impose their pagan sovereignty on the people of God. All the Scriptural warnings about a foe from the north, therefore, find their echo in John's bloodcurdling vision (Isa. 14:31; Jer. 1:14f; 6:1, 22; 10:22; 13:20; 25:9, 26; 46:20, 24; 47:2; Ezek. 26:7; 38:6, 15; 39:2).

Jenkins, p. 116: ²⁵ Caird, p. 122. See also Beckwith, p. 565 and Swete, p. 121 for the view that Parthia is under consideration here.

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 11 – Proclamation of Delay
No Longer

An Unimaginable Army

9. Describe the army lead by them? Do they represent good or evil forces? How can you tell?

Now *the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery ¹red, hyacinth ²blue, and sulfur ³yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came ¹fire, ²smoke, and ³brimstone. By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed – by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. (9:16-19; see also, 16:12-14)*

- † Represent a deadly external army (Jeremiah 46:1-10)? Multiple external armies?
- † 200,000,000 (2 x 10⁸) – A more than sufficient army, doubled.
- † Could this also include various “plagues” – natural disasters?
- † Again limited to affecting only “one third of mankind”, but that’s a lot!

The Mighty Angel and the Little Book Revelation 10:1-7

Result of the First Two Woes

10. What was the expected result of these woes and trumpet blasts? From this, what can we learn about the nature of God and our own human nature?

But *the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. (9:20-21)*

- † Hope and expectation that they should *repent*.
- † God does not want anyone to be lost, destroyed (2 Peter 3:9; Ezekiel 18:23, 30-32).
- † Multiple opportunities are extended “until there is no remedy” (2 Chr. 36:15-16).
- † Generally, men do *not* respond to these warnings (Matthew 7:13-14).

The Mighty Angel

1. Describe this “mighty angel”? How does he compare to descriptions of other beings recorded thus far in Revelation?

I saw still another mighty (Gr., ischuros) angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. (10:1)

“Then I saw a strong (Gr., ischuros) angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?” (5:2)

Then 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 granted to harm the earth and the sea, (7:2)

- † Most powerful one observed thus far. Cloud associated with divine judgment.
- † Description seems to enhance impression of his power (wisdom, glory, power).
- † Scale suggests he was giant (compared to cloud, rainbow, sun, and pillars).

Is the “Mighty Angel” Jesus?

I saw still another mighty (Gr., *ischuros*) angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. (10:1)

2. Could this “mighty angel” be Jesus?

† His oath seems to be unique. Could that help us narrow down his identity?

Standing on the Sea and Land

He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land. ... (10:2)

3. What is the significance of him standing on both the sea and the land?

† Suggests power, authority *over* all aspects, domains of our world (land and sea). All things political, national, governmental (i.e., sea) and religious (land, earth). See: 13:1, 11.

† Emphasizes his might and power ... and credibility and significance of his words and his “little book”.

† Implies broad applicability of the “little book”.

Who Is Swearing by God?

† God swore by Himself:

For I raise My hand to heaven, And say, “As I live forever, ...” (Deu. 32:40)

† Swore by Himself to Abraham (Hebrews 6:12-16), showing “immutability” of His word, filling us with assurance, hope.

† Angels have similarly sworn by God to show solemn certainty (Dan. 12:7).

† As have men (Genesis 14:22-23; 24:3; Deuteronomy 6:13).

† Therefore, cannot establish identity of one taking oath simply by his taking oath, or manner of it.

Sealing the Seven Thunders’ Words

and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices. Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.” (10:3-4).

4. Why were the words uttered by the seven thunders sealed? Why is this told to us, if we cannot know what they said?

† By contrast, Jesus previously *loosed* the “scroll ... sealed with seven seals” (5-6).

† Daniel was to “shut up the words and seal the book” ... because they applied to “the time of the end” (Daniel 9:24; 12:3-4, 9). Required preservation, not hiding.

† Paul “heard *inexpressible* words ... *not lawful for a man to utter*” (2 Cor. 12:1-4).

† “The secret things belong to God” (Deu. 29:29). *More plans than revealed.*

† Enhances image, credibility of angel, his words recorded by John, and “little book”.

† Roar of lion often associated with God’s revelation, judgment, and protection (Jeremiah 25:30; Hosea 11:10; Joel 3:16; Amos 3:8).

Is the “Mighty Angel” Jesus?

I saw still another mighty (Gr., *ischuros*) angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. (10:1)

2. Could this “mighty angel” be Jesus?

† Comparable to angel swearing about completion of sealed prophecy (Dan. 12:4-13).

† “another” (Gr., *allos*) – another of the *same* kind (in contrast to *heteros*) – not Jesus.

† Other angels who could be mistaken for Jesus (8:3-5; 14:14-20).

† John does not fall down and worship this angel, like with Jesus (1:17).

† However, the shared characteristics with the divine (cloud, rainbow, sun, fire) indicate not only his power but his divine authority, commissioning.

† In other words, he was sent and empowered by God – represents God’s will and word more than any other angel in the book. Emphasizes importance of his words.

Thunderous Voice of God

Give unto the LORD, O you mighty ones, Give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. The ¹voice of the LORD is over the waters; The God of glory thunders; The LORD is over many waters. The ²voice of the LORD is powerful; The ³voice of the LORD is full of majesty. The ⁴voice of the LORD breaks the cedars. Yes, the LORD splinters the cedars of Lebanon. He makes them also skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox. The ⁵voice of the LORD divides the flames of fire. The ⁶voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; The LORD shakes the Wilderness of Kadesh. The ⁷voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth, And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everyone says, “Glory!” The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood, And the LORD sits as King forever. The LORD will give strength to His people; The LORD will bless His people with peace. (Psalm 29:1-11)

† Thunder associated with God’s voice, judgment, redemption, and answered prayer: John 12:27-31; 1 Samuel 2:10; 2 Samuel 22:7-21; Isaiah 29:6).

Which Mystery?

The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created ¹heaven and the things that are in it, the ²earth and the things that are in it, and the ³sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets. (10:5-7)

5. What is this "mystery"? The Messiah dying on the cross? Unification of Jews and Gentiles? how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, ...to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, (Ephesians 3:3-10)

† That mystery is already "made known", "revealed". This "mystery" is something else ...

A Parallel Vision?

At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?" (Daniel 12:1-6)

"Delay No Longer"

The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created ¹heaven and the things that are in it, the ²earth and the things that are in it, and the ³sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets. (10:5-7)

5. What exactly is no longer delayed? What can we conclude from learning that "in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel ... the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets" regarding the applicability of the OT?

† End of time for patience, mercy, warning – only unavoidable destruction remains (2 Peter 3:9; 2 Chr. 36:16; 2 Kings 21:6-16; Jeremiah 7:16-20; 11:11-14; 14:10-12).

† If terminating judgment is beginning, what is "finished mystery to His prophets"?

A Sealed Vision, Unsealed!

Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished. Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what shall be the end of these things?" And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days. (Daniel 12:7-13)

† All the events of Daniel 2, 7-12 are coming to their conclusion.

"Delay No Longer"

† Most far-reaching OT prophecies point to Messiah, establishment of His kingdom.

† Very few foretell events after Messiah and destruction of Jerusalem (Daniel 2:44; 7:11-27; 9:20-27; 10-12; possibly Zechariah 13-14, although this may point to destruction of Jerusalem).

† These few point to the destruction of the persecuting empire, which was ruling when the Messianic kingdom was established – and they were about to be fulfilled!

† Eliminates application to destruction of Jerusalem, because of prophecies about Rome being destroyed would not have been fulfilled then (Dan 2:44; 7:11-27).

† Again, eliminates Futurist position because "no delay" approaching 2000 years.

† Finally brings absolute close to OT mentioned in Matthew 5:17-19. All would then be "fulfilled".

John Eats the Little Book Revelation 10:8-11

Eating the Little Book

Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth." So I went to the angel and said to him, "Give me the little book." And he said to me, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth." Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter." (10:8-10)

7. What other prophets were commanded to eat books and scrolls? What is this significance of them eating these messages? What is implied by the book being "as sweet as honey in your mouth" but making John's stomach bitter?
- † Similar thoughts in **Ezekiel 2-3** and similar issue in **Jeremiah 15:16-18**.

Final Chapters Yet to Be Written

And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings." (10:11)

8. What was the meaning behind John's prophetic work being unfinished at this point in the book?
- † Although the OT prophets' mystery was now made manifest ...
- † Although John had preached and foretold so much already ...
- † He personally was not yet finished (i.e., prepare yourself, **Acts 9:15-16**).
- † There was more that he was to proclaim that would apply to "many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings".
- † Could apply to last half of **Revelation**, chapters **12-22**, which specifically targets many such people.
- † Or, it might refer to the recording and distribution of the entire epistle, **Revelation**, which John would not have yet written during his observation on Patmos (**1:9**).

Ezekiel's Bitter-Sweet Message

"But you, son of man, hear what I say to you. Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you." Now when I looked, there was a hand stretched out to me; and behold, a scroll of a book was in it. Then He spread it before me; and there was writing on the inside and on the outside, and written on it were laments and mourning and woe. Moreover He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll. And He said to me, "Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you." So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness. ... Moreover He said to me: "Son of man, receive into your heart all My words that I speak to you, and hear with your ears. And go, get to the captives, to the children of your people, and speak to them and tell them, "Thus says the Lord GOD," whether they hear, or whether they refuse." ... So the Spirit lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the LORD was strong upon me. Then I came to the captives at Tel Abib, who dwell by the River Chebar; and I sat where they sat, and remained there astonished among them seven days." (Eze. 2:8-3:15)

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 12 – Two Witnesses and the Seventh Trumpet

Eating Our Little Book

7. What other prophets were commanded to eat books and scrolls? What is this significance of them eating these messages? What is implied by the book being "as sweet as honey in your mouth" but making John's stomach bitter?
- † God's teachers must **first** fill themselves with His Word (**Matthew 7:1-5; 1 Timothy 4:15-16; Ezra 7:10**).
- † **Honey** – Learning God's Word **first** brings joy, satisfaction (**Psa. 19:7-11; 119:103**).
- † **Bitterness** – **Eventually**, it will produce unhappy conflict (**Matthew 10:16-42**).
- † Bitterness is not the end of His Word for the humble and obedient (**James 1:2-14**).
- † God's Word ultimately produces great joy in saving others and ourselves (**3 John 4**).
- † But, there is inevitable bitterness along the way. Don't be naïve. Be prepared.
- † Count the cost in **advance** (**Luke 14:25-35; James 3:1; Daniel 1:8**).

Measuring the Temple

Revelation 11:1-2

Measuring the Temple

1. In **Ezekiel 40-48**, a similar symbol of measuring and proclaiming the temple's dimensions is employed. What is the purpose of that symbol as originally used (**Ezekiel 40:1-5; 43:1-12; 48:35**)? How is this measuring of the temple used in **Revelation 11**?

† Original purpose was to emphasize failure to conform to original law, design:
"Son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the pattern. And if they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple and its arrangement, its exits and its entrances, its entire design and all its ordinances, all its forms and all its laws. Write it down in their sight, so that they may keep its whole design and all its ordinances, and perform them." (**Ezekiel 43:10-11**).

Treading Underfoot the Court & City

Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. (11:1-2)

2. How would "Gentiles ... tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months"?

† God knows & will preserve a remnant of His people (**2 Timothy 2:19**).

Measuring the Temple

1. In **Ezekiel 40-48**, a similar symbol of measuring and proclaiming the temple's dimensions is employed. What is the purpose of that symbol as originally used (**Ezekiel 40:1-5; 43:1-12; 48:35**)? How is this measuring of the temple used in **Revelation 11**?

† Original purpose was to emphasize failure to conform to original law, design.

† Additional purpose emphasized holiness, so God could dwell among them:

The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple. Then I heard Him speaking to me from the temple, while a man stood beside me. And He said to me, "Son of man, this is the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever. No more shall the house of Israel defile My holy name, ... Now let them put their harlotry and the carcasses of their kings far away from Me, and I will dwell in their midst forever." (**Ezekiel 43:4-9**).

Treading Underfoot the Court & City

"And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the LORD. "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: I will bring the one-third through the fire. Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.' Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. (Zechariah 13:8-14:3)

Measuring the Temple

1. In **Ezekiel 40-48**, a similar symbol of measuring and proclaiming the temple's dimensions is employed. What is the purpose of that symbol as originally used (**Ezekiel 40:1-5; 43:1-12; 48:35**)? How is this measuring of the temple used in **Revelation 11**?

† Original purpose was to emphasize failure to conform to original law, design.

† Additional purpose emphasized holiness, so God could dwell among them.

† However, in **Revelation 11** the point is to show protection of God's people:

Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months." (11:1-2).

† Message of assurance and protection similar to numbering in 7:1-8.

Treading Underfoot the Court & City

Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. (11:1-2)

2. How would "Gentiles ... tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months"?

† God knows & will preserve a remnant of His people (**2 Tim. 2:19, Zec. 13:8-14:3**).

† Possible applications of destruction of outer court, preserving inner court, sanctuary:

- Persecution may physically destroy outer body of kingdom citizens, but soul & kingdom cannot be touched (**Matthew 10:16-28; Isaiah 57:1-2**).
- Institution of church, worship of God, avenue of sanctified prayer would remain.
- Persecution may spiritually destroy cultural, nominal, shallow, social Christians, but true Christians will stand firm (**Matthew 13:18-43**).

† All applications are taught, encouraging commitment and realistic hopefulness.

The Two Witnesses Revelation 11:3-14

Introducing the Two Witnesses

3. How are these two witnesses described? What Old Testament prophets had similar powers? Who could these two witnesses represent? Please also consider **Zechariah 4:1-14**.
- † Represents the church, especially her inspired apostles and prophets, proclaiming God's Word to the world during a time of intense persecution shortly after establishment of church – miraculous verification of revealed Word (**Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4**).
 - † If this "1260 days" is same as **11:2** and **12:14**, then also includes confirmation of church as "kingdom of God" (**Acts 5:33-39; Daniel 2:34-45; 7:13-27**).

Introducing the Two Witnesses

3. How are these two witnesses described? What Old Testament prophets had similar powers? Who could these two witnesses represent? Please also consider **Zechariah 4:1-14**.

"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will ¹prophesy ²one thousand two hundred and sixty days, ³clothed in sackcloth. These are ⁴the two olive trees and ⁵the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, ⁶fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These ⁷have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they ⁸have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to ⁹strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire. (11:3-6)

Death of the Witnesses

When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. (11:7-8).

- † Introduced to "beast out of the bottomless pit", elaborated in **Rev. 13, 17**.
- 4. What cities have been "spiritually called Sodom and Egypt"? What did these symbols convey when originally used? Is this a literal reference to Jerusalem? How do you know?
- † "Great city" has been used to refer to Gibeon, Jerusalem, Nineveh (**Joshua 10:2; Jeremiah 22:8; Jonah 1:2; 3:2-3; 4:11**).
- † "Great city" here refers to "Babylon", captors of God's people (**14:8; 16:19; 17:5, 18; 18:2, 10, 16, 18, 19, 21; Isa. 13:19; Mic. 4:10; Zec. 2:7**).

Introducing the Two Witnesses

3. How are these two witnesses described? What Old Testament prophets had similar powers? Who could these two witnesses represent? Please also consider **Zechariah 4:1-14**.

- † Two = Confidence, reliability, legal veracity (**Ecc. 4:9-11; Deu. 17:16; Mat. 18:16**)
- † Prophecy refers to their proclamation of truth, God's Word.
- † Fire represents the convicting, condemning power of the Word (**Jer. 5:14; 23:29**).
- † Sackcloth is associated with mourning (**Genesis 37:34; Jeremiah 6:26**).
- † Olive trees and lampstands are combined to represent all officers & institution which provides God's light to the world (**1:20; 1 Tim. 3:15; Zec. 4:1-14; Mat. 5:14-16**).
- † Figures of Moses and Elijah suggest all verified NT spokesmen, who came in their same power and mission, as John the Baptist did of Elijah (**Mat. 11:1-15; 17:1-5**).
- † "1260 days"? Symbolic anchor tying visions to same timeline (**11-12**). ...

Death of the Witnesses

When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. (11:7-8).

- 4. What cities have been "spiritually called Sodom and Egypt"? What did these symbols convey when originally used? Is this a literal reference to Jerusalem? How do you know?
- † "Sodom" represents a morally depraved city, judged by God – originally applied figuratively to Jerusalem (**Isa. 1:10; 3:9; Jer. 23:14; Eze. 16**).
- † "Egypt" represents rebellious nation enslaving God's people, not Jerusalem.
- † "Where our Lord was crucified" represents city and nation rejecting, killing God's prophets (**Matthew 21:33-46; 23:33-38; Luke 13:33-35**).

Death of the Witnesses

When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. (11:7-8).

4. What cities have been “spiritually called Sodom and Egypt”? What did these symbols convey when originally used? Is this a literal reference to Jerusalem? How do you know?
- † If Nineveh/Babylon, Sodom, & Egypt are figurative, would not Jerusalem be figurative too?
 - † Represents either city of Rome or Roman empire – ultimate combination of all these cities: powerful, corrupt, persecuting, and rebellious.

Climax of the Second Woe

7. What events climax the second woe? How is this target different than recipients of previous judgments?

In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly. (11:13-14)

- † Earthquakes symbolize catastrophic judgment from God (**Isaiah 24:17-23; 29:5-6; Jeremiah 10:10; Psalm 97:1-5**).
- † Tenth of the city falling and destruction of a portion represents partial destruction.
- † Result produced fear and acknowledgement of God, but not true repentance (**James 2:19; Matthew 27:3-5**).
- † Third woe – the 7th trumpet – was nearing ...

A Short-Lived Celebration

5. Why would “peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations” celebrate the death of these two witnesses?

Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. (11:9-10)

- † The “peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations” represents all people of this “great city”, encompassing the whole empire. (Notice use of 4, world number.)
 - † 3½ days is parallel to 1260 days in general meaning, but different specific application – a broken, interrupted period of complete time (½ of 7), even less than 1260 days in this case.
- “And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.” (John 3:19-20)*
- † They were hated for making people feel guilty and robbing them of excuses for their sin and lack of repentance (**John 15:18-25**).

Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet Revelation 11:15-19

Triumph of the Witnesses

Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. (11:11-12)

6. What is symbolized by the death, resurrection, and ascension of these two witnesses?
- † Compare to “resurrection” of Israel “from graves”, returning home (**Eze. 37:1-14**).
 - † Prophet’s message – the gospel and kingdom – were vindicated (**Isaiah 26:17-19**).
 - † Their ministry appeared to be defeated, but even after literal death, the truth continued to be proclaimed and spread.
 - † Many had assumed their defeat of God’s people proved they were frauds. But ...
 - † Their endurance, unstoppable message proved they were from God (**Acts 5:34-39; 2 Cor. 6:4-10; 11:20-33**).

Celebration & Thanksgiving in Heaven

8. Summarize the declarations and worship extended after the seventh trumpet sounded?

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!” And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying: “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints. And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth.” (11:15-18)

- † Recognizes God no longer warning, but seizing control – doom & destruction.
- † Thankful for God’s vindication of His servants and saints (**Matthew 19:28**).
- † Contrast with short-lived celebration on earth when witnesses were killed.

The End of the World?

9. Does this refer to the literal end of the world? If not, what does it mean?
- † No, refers to destruction of empire challenging the church:
- Interpreted in harmony with finishing the mystery delivered to the OT prophets (10:7).
 - Declares God has actively begun to reign in kingdoms of men, not end the world.
 - Plus, judgment and doom will continue to *escalate* in the pouring of the seven bowls of wrath.
- † At this point, there is no turning back – “*Prepare to meet your God!*”

Big, Open, Remaining Questions

- † Who or what is the “*beast out of the bottomless pit*” (11:7)?
- † Related to the “*king*” over “*locusts from the bottomless pit*” (9:1-11)?
- † Why is he “*warring against the saints*” (11:7; Daniel 7:21)?
- † How can the saints “*overcome*” him in this war (2:1-3:22)?
- † What all is happening during period of “*forty-two months*” (11:2)?
- † “*How long until You judge and avenge?*”
- † What happens after God’s judgment & avenging (Daniel 7:22-27)?
- † Then, what will be conditions of God’s people on earth?
- † What is the conclusion? How will it *all* end (Mat. 24:3; Dan. 12:8)?
- † *Must first take a step back, enlarge our view, see a bigger picture ...*

“Prepare to Meet Your God”

† As God dealt with all nations prior, this persecuting empire faces unavoidable judgment after 7th trumpet.

Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, Who oppress the poor, Who crush the needy, Who say to your husbands, “Bring wine, let us drink!” The Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness: “Behold, the days shall come upon you When He will take you away with fishhooks, And your posterity with fishhooks. ... I gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, And lack of bread in all your places; Yet you have not returned to Me.” Says the LORD. “I also withheld rain from you, When there were still three months to the harvest. I made it rain on one city, I withheld rain from another city. One part was rained upon, And where it did not rain the part withered. So two or three cities wandered to another city to drink water, But they were not satisfied; Yet you have not returned to Me.” Says the LORD. “I blasted you with blight and mildew. When your gardens increased, Your vineyards, Your fig trees, And your olive trees, The locust devoured them; Yet you have not returned to Me.” Says the LORD. “I sent among you a plague after the manner of Egypt: Your young men I killed with a sword, Along with your captive horses; I made the stench of your camps come up into your nostrils; Yet you have not returned to Me.” Says the LORD. “I overthrew some of you, As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, And you were like a firebrand plucked from the burning; Yet you have not returned to Me.” Says the LORD. “Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel; Because I will do this to you, Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!” For behold, He who forms mountains, And creates the wind, Who declares to man what his thought is, And makes the morning darkness, Who treads the high places of the earth – The LORD God of hosts is His name. (Amos 4:1-13)

† After failing to respond to 7 plagues of warning, only doom remains. ... No turning back now, for the *empire*.

Revelation Trust God

Lesson 13 – The Child, the Woman,
and the Dragon

Displaying the Ark

Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail. (11:19)

10. What is the significance of manifesting the temple containing the ark of the covenant from heaven in verse 19?
- † Expressed foreboding doom.
- † The ark of the covenant was carried by Israelites when the army was on the march, expressing that God acts and fights for His people (Joshua 3; 6; 1 Samuel 4).
- † Here implies that God is keeping His covenant and going to war for His people!

The Long-Awaited Birth Revelation 12:1-6

Appearance of Great Signs

Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. (12:1-5).

1. When are we first introduced to a serpent at war with a woman and her male child? What could this symbol represent? Who is represented by the woman, the child, and the dragon?

The Glorious Woman

1. When are we first introduced to a serpent at war with a woman and her male child? What could this symbol represent? Who is represented by the woman, the child, and the dragon?
 - † Refers to an ancient conflict that began in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:13-15).
 - † Splendor of woman and 12 indicates all of God's people at any time (Gen. 37:9-10): "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting." Therefore He shall give them up, Until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; Then the remnant of His brethren Shall return to the children of Israel. And He shall stand and feed His flock In the strength of the LORD, In the majesty of the name of the LORD His God; And they shall abide, For now He shall be great To the ends of the earth; And this One shall be peace... (Micah 5:2-5).

Ancient Conflict

1. When are we first introduced to a serpent at war with a woman and her male child? What could this symbol represent? Who is represented by the woman, the child, and the dragon?
 - † Refers to an ancient conflict that began in the Garden of Eden: And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed: He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel." (Gen. 3:13-15).
 - † Foretells ongoing struggle between mankind and the Devil, ultimately decided by Jesus, who was crucified (i.e., Devil "bruised" Jesus' "heel") but resurrected (i.e., Jesus "bruised" the Devil's "head", Hebrews 2:9-15).

The Glorious Woman

1. When are we first introduced to a serpent at war with a woman and her male child? What could this symbol represent? Who is represented by the woman, the child, and the dragon?
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 - † Micah 4:10-5:2 emphasizes faithful remnant of Israel laboring until Messiah came.
 - † Isaiah 66:7-9 emphasizes the nation born to her in a day in addition to male child: "Before she was in labor, she gave birth; Before her pain came, She delivered a male child. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children. Shall I bring to the time of birth, and not cause delivery?" says the LORD. "Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb?" says your God. (Isaiah 66:7-9 ; for "suddenly", see also, Malachi 3:1).

The Glorious Woman

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 - † Splendor of woman and 12 indicates all of God's people at any time (Gen. 37:9-10): And you, O tower of the flock, The stronghold of the daughter of Zion, To you shall it come, Even the former dominion shall come, The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem." Now why do you cry aloud? Is there no king in your midst? Has your counselor perished? For pangs have seized you like a woman in labor. Be in pain, and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, Like a woman in birth pangs. For now you shall go forth from the city, You shall dwell in the field, And to Babylon you shall go. There you shall be delivered; There the LORD will redeem you From the hand of your enemies. (Micah 4:8-10).

The Glorious Woman

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 - † Micah 4:10-5:2 emphasizes faithful remnant of Israel laboring until Messiah came.
 - † Isaiah 66:7-9 emphasizes the nation born to her in a day in addition to male child.
 - † Being adorned with the sun, positioned over the moon, and crowned with 12 stars may not only indicate her exaltation (Psalm 8:1-6), but imply that she is the channel, vehicle through which God provides all spiritual light (revelation) to the world (Psalm 19:1-6; 136:8-9; Jeremiah 31:34-36), eventually replaced by God Himself (21:23; Isaiah 60:19-20).

The Male Child

- When are we first introduced to a serpent at war with a woman and her male child? What could this symbol represent? Who is represented by the woman, the child, and the dragon?
 - † Refers to an ancient conflict that began in the Garden of Eden (**Gen. 3:13-15**).
 - † Splendor of woman and 12 indicates all of God's people at any time (**Gen. 37:9-10**);
 - † **Micah 4:10-5:2** emphasizes faithful remnant of Israel laboring until Messiah came.
 - † **Isaiah 66:7-9** emphasizes the nation born to her in a day in addition to male child.
 - † The "Male Child" is obviously the Christ born from the faithful remnant of Israel: *Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed ... "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion. ... You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel."* (**Psalm 2:1-9**).
 - † See also: **2:26-27; 19:15-16; Psalm 110:1-5; Acts 4:24-28**

The Male Child's Victory

- What was the dragon's intention? Why did he not succeed?

His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. (12:4-5)

 - † Specific, known attacks by the Devil in Jesus' lifetime:
 - Assassination attempt by Herod at birth (**Matthew 2:1-18**)
 - Temptation in the wilderness by the Devil (**Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:1-13**)
 - Discouragement by disciples (**Matthew 16:21-23; Mark 8:31-33**)
 - Examination by Pharisees & scribes (**John 8:44-47; Matthew 12: 15; 22-23**)
 - Betrayal & Crucifixion (**Luke 22:2-6; John 6:70-71; 13:1-2, 21-30**)
 - † Summarizes birth, ministry, death, resurrection, ascension of Jesus in one statement.
 - † Emphasizes not that Jesus escaped, but that He *succeeded* in defeating the Dragon.
 - † ... and the dragon no longer had the opportunity to attack Jesus, at least not directly.

The Dragon

- When are we first introduced to a serpent at war with a woman and her male child? What could this symbol represent? Who is represented by the woman, the child, and the dragon?
 - † Refers to a conflict that began in the Garden of Eden:
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 - † **Isaiah 66:7-9** emphasizes the nation born to her in a day in addition to male child.
 - † The "Male Child" is obviously the Christ born from the faithful remnant of Israel.
 - † The Dragon is directly identified as "that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan" (**12:9; Genesis 3:1, 13-14**)

The Woman Escapes

- What happened to the woman? What does this signify?

Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. (12:6)

 - † Similar to Elijah fleeing to wilderness where God cared for him (**1 Kings 17:1-6**).
 - † Israelites being fed with manna in the wilderness (**Exodus 16**).
 - † Could be reference to spiritual provisions and ultimate salvation from both God and the Male Child (**John 6:31-58; Isaiah 51:3; Ezekiel 34:25**).
 - † Essentially, "the woman" will be secured. Dragon cannot access her.
 - † 1260 days = 42 months = 3 ½ years = "time and times and half a time"
 - † Established symbol for an indefinite, interrupted period of intense persecution: *He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time. (Daniel 7:25)*

The Dragon's Power

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. (12:3-4)

- What is the significance of the dragon having 7 heads, 10 horns, and 7 crowns? What does it mean that he used his tail to knock down one third of the stars of heaven?
 - † Seven Heads – Complete intelligence, maximum intelligence gifted by God
 - † Ten Horns – Complete power, exercises maximum power of mankind
 - † Seven Diadems – Complete authority within his realm (**9:11; Eph. 2:2; Mat. 4:8-9**)
 - † Drawing and casting a third of stars to earth. Could refer to:
 - His rebellion and leading to the fall of many angels to also rebel (**2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6**).
 - His deceiving many leaders and rulers to do his will, maybe saints (**Daniel 8:10, 24**).

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 - † 1260 days = 42 months = 3 ½ years = "time and times and half a time"
 - † Established symbol for an indefinite, interrupted period of intense persecution: *Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished. (Daniel 12:7)*

The Woman Escapes

4. What happened to the woman? What does this signify?

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- † Essentially, "the woman" will be secured. Dragon cannot access her.
- † 1260 days = 42 months = 3 ½ years = "time and times and half a time"
- † Established symbol for an indefinite, interrupted period of intense persecution:
 - Period of time that woman is persecuted but nurtured in wilderness (12:6, 14).
 - Period of time that the witnesses testified until testimony was done, while city trodden (11:2-3).
 - Period of time that the beast will blaspheme (13:5).
 - Period of time that the beast will wage war against the saints (Daniel 7:25).

Who Exactly Is "The Woman"?

- † The "daughter of Zion" carries an extra level of meaning, representing true faithful people of God within Israel (Romans 9:6), the "remnant" (Malachi 3:16; Luke 1:5-7; 2:21-38) through whom Jesus came "according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:5).
- † This same remnant would respond to the gospel, becoming the church, which would continue to represent God's true, faithful people on earth.
- † **Meaning of Woman's Preservation and Children's War:**
- † The church would be protected as a *collective institution* during this intense persecution (Matthew 16:18), but her "children", the *individual saints*, would face suffering and death (12:17).

Who Exactly Is "The Woman"?

- † "Daughter of" *any* nation often associated with a people, a city, especially a nation's capital, stronghold (Isa. 1:4-8; 10:30-32; 23:7-14):
 - Jerusalem, Zion (Psalm 9:14; Isaiah 1:4-8; 10:30-32; 16:1; 22:4; 37:22; 52:1-9; 62:11-12; Jer. 4:11, 31; 6:2, 23, 26; 8:11-22; 9:1, 7; 14:17-18; Lamentations 1:1-16; 2:1-18; 3:48; 4:3-22; Micah 1:13; 4:8-5:1; Zephaniah 3:1-14; Zechariah 2:4-10; 9:9)
 - Babylon (Psalm 137:8; Isaiah 47:1-15; Jeremiah 50:42; 51:33; Zechariah 2:7)
 - Edom (Lamentations 4:21-22)
 - Egypt (Jeremiah 46:11-26; Nahum 3:8-10)
 - Nineveh (Nahum 3:1-7)
 - Tyre, Sidon, Tarshish (Isaiah 23:7-14)
- † But, why represented as a "daughter" or a "woman"?

War in Heaven Revelation 12:7-11

Who Exactly Is "The Woman"?

- † "Daughter of" *any* nation represents the *feminine* aspects of its core, collective people:
 - "virgin": never invaded, conquered (2 Kings 19:21-22; Isa. 22:4; 37:22; 47:1-3; Jer. 14:17-18; 46:11-26; Lam. 1:10).
 - Produce many "children" (Lamentations 1:5-16; Galatians 4:23-31).
 - "sons, children" may be killed by an invading army (Isaiah 47:8-9; 51:17-20; Lam. 1:5-16).
 - Exalted as a "lady" by ruling over other kingdoms (Isaiah 47:5-10).
 - Exalted as a "princess" over other daughters by her father, the King (Lam. 1:1).
 - Commit "adultery", become a "harlot", by abandoning her "husband" (Isaiah 1:21; 23:15-18; Jer. 2:20; 3:1-20; 13:27; Lam. 1:8-9; Ezekiel 16:1-63; 23:1-49; Hosea 1-6, 9; Micah 1:3-7).
 - "widowed" by the execution of her gods, without protector (Jdg. 11:24; Isa. 21:9; 46:1-2; 47:9-15; Jer. 50:2; Lam. 1:1).

"War Breaks Out in Heaven"

- 5. What happened in heaven? Do you think this represents a literal war? What changed for the Devil after these events?

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down." (12:7-10)
- † He and his angels started a war in heaven, but were defeated by Michael and angels.
- † Not literal any more than woman & other "signs" are literal (Eph.6:10-19; Jude 9).
- † The Devil lost his legal right to *accuse* God and His people (Job 1-2; Zechariah 3).

Overcoming When Judged

For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect? Certainly not! Indeed, **let God be true but every man a liar.** As it is written: “**That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged.**” But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.) Certainly not! For then **how will God judge the world?** ...But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, **to all and on all who believe.** For there is no difference; for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, **to demonstrate His righteousness,** because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, **to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.** (Romans 3:3-26)

The Devil Persecutes the Woman

7. After the failed assassination and war, what general tactic did the dragon choose next? Why?

“Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For **the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.**” Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, **he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child.** (12:12-13)

- † The Devil pours his wrath, contempt upon the only person he can touch, the woman.
- † Represents Devil’s effort to destroy the **early church as an institution** by persecuting the faithful remnant of Israel, through whom the Messiah came, that also became the faithful **spiritual** Israel, early Christians (Rom. 9:6; Gal 6:16).
- † Notice “short time”, again eliminating **Historicist, Futurist, & Idealist** positions, and also connecting it to 42 months, 1260 days, 3½ years.

The Secret to Overcoming

6. How did “they” overcome? What lessons can we learn from this statement? Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “**Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.**” (12:10-11)

- † Three essential requirements:
 - Grace and forgiveness provided by Jesus’ sacrifice.
 - Willingness to testify and receive the word of testimony (i.e., the apostles’ witness, the gospel).
 - Commitment even unto death.
- † Commitment even unto death is hardest part.
- † Jesus’ sacrifice frees us from the bondage associated with fear of death: *Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.* (Hebrews 2:14-15)

The Woman Escapes – Revisited

8. How was the woman attacked and saved? What does this represent?

But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. (12:14-16)

- † **1st Attempt:** Direct persecution, brute force attempt to destroy early church.
- † **1st Escape:** She’s carried to wilderness on wings of a great eagle (Exodus 19:4; 23:20; Isaiah 40:31; Colossians 3:3).
- † **2nd Attempt:** Flood represents overflowing invaders, army – intensified, more widespread persecution (Psa. 144:7; Isa. 8:5-8; Jer. 46:7-10; 47:1-7).
- † **2nd Escape:** Earth helped through political, civil distractions (uprisings, wars, etc.)

The Dragon’s Wrath Revelation 12:12-17

The Woman Escapes – Revisited

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But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. (12:14-16)

- † **1st Attempt:** Direct persecution, brute force attempt to destroy early church.
- † **1st Escape:** She’s carried to wilderness on wings of a great eagle (Exodus 19:4; 23:20; Isaiah 40:31; Colossians 3:3).
- † **Alternative 2nd Attack:** Devil emits flood of lies, false doctrine, & propaganda, which is exposed by world’s acceptance, application (John 8:44; 1 John 4:1-6).
- † Harder to see how world helped in this way, plus OT support, so other preferred ...

Targeting the Woman's Children

9. With the woman out of reach, whom did the dragon target next? What lessons can we learn from this verse and chapter as a whole?

*And the dragon was **enraged with the woman**, and he went to **make war with the rest of her offspring**, who **keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ**. (12:17)*

- † No longer able to directly attack the “*male child*” or “*the woman*”, the dragon pours his contempt and indignation on the accessible individuals, “*her offspring*”.
- † If we “*keep the commandments of God*” and “*have the testimony of Jesus Christ*”, we can expect both the dragon’s rage and persecution (2 **Tim. 3:12**; **Mat. 5:10-16**).
- † It is our turn to “*overcome*”, and we can only do so as they did!

The Sea Beast Revelation 13:1-10

Targeting Us

*And they **overcame him** by:*

1. *the **blood of the Lamb** and by*
2. *the **word of their testimony**, and*
3. *they **did not love their lives to the death** (12:11)*

† Have we:

- “*Counted the cost*” (**Luke 14:25-35**)?
- “*Prepared our hearts to seek God*” (**Ezra 7:10**; **2 Chronicles 12:14; 19:3; 30:19**)?
- “*Made no provision for the flesh*” (**Romans 13:11-14**)?
- Been “*faithful in little*” (**Luke 16:8-12; 19:17-26**)?

† Do our deeds match our claims? Do we do as we say?

† If not, how will we “*overcome him*”, when he “*wars against*” us?

Rise of the Sea Beast

1. What was the origin of the first beast? How might this help us understand what the beast represents?

*Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up **out of the sea**, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. (13:1)*

- † The “*sea*” represents churning, chaotic society, with rising & falling nations, just like the waves (**Psalms 65:7; Isaiah 17:12-13; 57:20-21; Jer. 49:23; 51:54-55**).
- † Loss of dominion is compared to falling back into the sea, or being covered by it (**Jeremiah 51:40; Ezekiel 26:3-4**).
- † Powerful nations sit upon or by many waters with “*nations streaming*” to it (**Jeremiah 51:13, 44**).
- † Very similar to the four beasts arising from the sea in **Daniel 7**.

Revelation

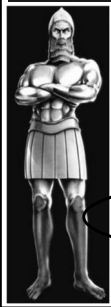
Trust God

Lesson 14 – The Sea and Earth
Beasts

What Is the Sea Beast?

2. Describe this first beast, and compare it to the beasts described in **Daniel 7:1-28**. What did the beasts and their attributes in **Daniel 7** originally represent? How does this help us better understand this first beast of **Revelation 13**?
*Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and **ten horns**, and on his horns **ten crowns**, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a **leopard**, his feet were like the feet of a **bear**, and his mouth like the mouth of a **lion**. The **dragon** gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. (13:1-2)*

Comparing the Visions



History	Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Revelation 13
Babylon 612-539 B.C.	Head of Gold	Lion	Lion's Mouth
Medo-Persia 539-331 B.C.	Arms & Chest of Silver	Bear	Bear's Feet
Greece 331-64 B.C.	Belly and Thighs of Bronze	Leopard	Leopard's Body
Rome 64 B.C. - 476 AD	Legs of Iron with Feet mixed with Clay	Dreadful with Iron Teeth and 10 Horns and Great Words	7 Heads and 10 Horns, Blasphemous
4 World Empires	4 Sections – 1 Body	4 Beasts	4 Sections – 1 Body – 1 Ultimate Enemy

What's New?

4. What general events are provided in **Revelation 13:1-8** that were *not* disclosed in **Daniel 7**?

And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" ... All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (13:3-8)

† **Revelation 13** reveals some new facts not shown in **Daniel 7**:

- "The dragon" gave the sea beast "his power, his throne, and great authority".
- The sea beast has 10 heads, and one of them was almost killed, but it was healed.
- All those lost, unregenerate in the world were amazed and followed the beast.
- The lost world worshipped the dragon and the beast.
- The lost world thought no one could challenge the beast.

The Composite Sea Beast

2. Describe this first beast, and compare it to the beasts described in **Daniel 7:1-28**. What did the beasts and their attributes in **Daniel 7** originally represent? How does this help us better understand this first beast of **Revelation 13**?
- Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. (13:1-2)*
- † Like **Daniel 2**, all of the elements are combined into a composite entity.
- † Corresponds to the first three beasts, whose "lives were prolonged for a season and a time" (**Daniel 7:12**), presumably in the fourth beast.
- † Also, indicates combined power, ability, and influential source – "the dragon".
- † "sea beast ... ten diadems" – royalty, king, exercises maximum human authority.
- † Versus "the dragon ... seven diadems" – demonic royalty, maximum from God.

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- † Reveals and emphasizes that **the Devil** is behind the beast and its war against God and His saints. ... We're ultimately fighting the Devil (**1 Pet. 5:8; Eph. 6:10-19**)!
- † Learn that the persecuting force will appear to be **halted**, but then it will **resume**.
- † Discover that **diverting worship** from God to the beast and the dragon is part of the goal for this war, in addition to his "great wrath" – to produce **unbelief, apostasy**.

The Beast's War against God's Saints

3. Compare the description and activities of the horns of this beast of **Revelation 13:1-7** to the horns of the fourth beast in **Daniel 7:8, 19-22**. Explain.
- ... on his heads a blasphemous name... And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. (13:1-7)*
- † Like **Daniel 7**, this represents a huge empire, spanning many peoples.
- † Like **Daniel 7**, there is a **pompous, blasphemous mouth** associated with this beast.
- † Like **Daniel 7**, this beast **makes war** against **God's saints** and overcomes them.
- † Like **Daniel 7**, the time of **persecution** is **limited** to "forty-two months" (3½ years).
- † "Sea beast" (**Rv.13**) → "dreadful beast" (**Dn.7**) → "4th kingdom" (**Dn.2**) → **Rome**

"The Patience and Faith of the Saints"

5. What instruction is provided in the "patience and faith of the saints", requiring extra attention?
- All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. (13:8-10)*
- "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22)*
- † Associated with statements that are either **difficult to understand** or **difficult to accept** (**Matthew 11:7-15; 13:9, 43; Mark 4:23; 7:16; Luke 8:8; 14:35**).
- † Calls for careful attention, consider carefully (**Psalms 10:17; Proverbs 22:17; Isaiah 28:23**).

“The Patience and Faith of the Saints”

5. What instruction is provided in the “*patience and faith of the saints*”, requiring extra attention?

All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear, let him hear. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. (13:8-10)

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22)

- † Specifically, provides **warning** to those who **use** or **respond** to persecution to conform.
- † This is inevitable end of such violent, persecuting forces – will receive what they dispense.
- † This is what the “*saints believe*” and trust, which enables them to be “*patient*”. ... Us?
- † God’s people **trust** that He will avenge them upon those who persecute, oppress & kill them.
- † Provide **comfort** God will take care of us when **mistreated** – eventually (**Luke 18:1-8**).
- † Provide **courage** that we should **not fear** what man will do to us (**Hebrews 13:5-6**).

Deceiver and Liar

7. Describe the second beast and explain how this depicts his true nature and behavior. *Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. (13:11)*

- † Has the **deceitful appearance** of sacrifice, attempting to subvert the true Lamb (5:6): *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. (2Co. 11:13-15)*

The Earth Beast Revelation 13:11-18

Deceiver and Liar

7. Describe the second beast and explain how this depicts his true nature and behavior. *Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. (13:11)*

- † Has the **deceitful appearance** of sacrifice, attempting to subvert the true Lamb (5:6).
- † The Devil – the dragon – only speaks lies; therefore, this lamb is also a liar: *You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. (John 8:44)*
- † Jesus warned that false-teachers may appear as sheep or “*lambs*”, but their works – their words – reveal their true nature (**Matthew 7:15-20; 12:33-37**).
- † His “*two horns*” suggest power in confirmation and verification, so either he will be confirmed, or he will be confirming someone else ...

The Earth Beast

6. What was the origin of the second beast? How might this help us understand what the beast represents?

Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. (13:11)

- † Few possibilities for interpreting “*the earth*” are:
 1. Realm of the unregenerate. All lost in contrast to those who are saved, sealed.
 2. Realm of false religion and religious institutions, in contrast to both political (i.e., “*the sea*”) or true religion.
 3. Preterist Position: Land of Judea and Jerusalem versus the Gentiles.
- † Without explanation, “*the earth beast*” is later called “*the false prophet*” (**16:13; 19:20; 20:10**); consequently, option #2 seems the best.
- † “*Sea*” and “*earth beasts*” represent institutions God created to serve Him, mankind, now corrupted (**Rom. 13:1-4; Gen. 14:18; Lam. 2:6; Zec. 6:10-15; Heb. 7**).

The Cult of Emperor Worship

8. What kinds of things does this second beast do? What seems to be its primary purpose or role?

And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. (13:12-14)

- † He operates under the first beast’s authority – under Roman government’s authority.
- † Performs fake miracles, “*deceptive ... signs*”, like Pharaoh’s magicians (**Exodus 7:11-14, 22-23; 8:7, 18-19**).
- † “*For false christis and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.*” (**Matthew 24:24**)

The Cult of Emperor Worship

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The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (2 The. 2:9-10)

† Competes with “two witnesses” who produced fire to confirm their message (11:5).

Who Is 666?

10. What number is associated with which beast? What is the significance of this number? What lessons can we learn from this numerical assignment?

Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666. (13:18)

† By swapping letters for numbers – and even languages, 666 can be summed from:

- Neron Caesar (Latin)
- Hitler
- Various Popes
- Napoleon, etc.

The Cult of Emperor Worship

8. What kinds of things does this second beast do? What seems to be its primary purpose or role?

And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. (13:12-14)

† He will use these signs to direct worship to the first beast and its image (Daniel 3).

† Refers to the religious cult that worshipped the emperor as divine.

† Temple erected in Pergamum as early as 29 B.C. (Jenkins).

† Nero and Domitian were the earliest emperors to both exalt themselves as gods and persecute Christians for not worshipping them.

Who Is 666?

10. What number is associated with which beast? What is the significance of this number? What lessons can we learn from this numerical assignment?

Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666. (13:18)

† 6 – Represents man (day of creation), falls short of God’s perfection, 7.

† 3 – Represents extreme emphasis (4:8; 8:13; Isaiah 6:3; Jeremiah 22:29).

† In essence, 666 means: *failure, failure, failure*; or *man, man, man*.

† Represents the colossal, spectacular failure of the persecuting, Roman emperor and his kingdom – not any one specific person – just the end of any man opposing God.

† $666 = 6 \times 10 \times 10 + 6 \times 10 + 6$... No matter you how multiply, organize, amplify, optimize man, without God → sums to failure, doom – just man.

Mortal & Economic Persecution

9. What restriction does this second beast impose that will make life difficult for Christians?

He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. (13:15-17)

† Comparable to the Lord numbering or sealing His people (7:1-8), this second beast “marks” those who are his. ... How would these “marks” be evident?

† Marks on “foreheads” and “right hands” may indicate difference in thoughts (or words expressed) and deeds. Compare to “fruit of the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16-26).

† Failure to worship would result in economic persecution, even death.

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 15 – The Lamb and His Army

The Lamb of Zion and His Saints Revelation 14:1-5

God's King on the Holy Hill of Zion

*Why do the nations rage. And the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, **Against the LORD and against His Anointed**, saying, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: "Yet I have set **My King On My holy hill of Zion**. I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You **The nations for Your inheritance**, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a **rod of iron**; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'" Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. **Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.** (Psalm 2:1-12)*

"The Lamb Standing on Mount Zion"

- Where does the Lamb stand? What is the significance of this, especially when contrasted with the origin of the preceding beasts?
*Then I looked, and behold, a **Lamb standing on Mount Zion**, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. (14:1)*
So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" (13:4) ... Answers question, challenge of beast's followers.
† "Zion" was originally a Jebusite **stronghold**, captured by David and rebuilt as "the City of David" (2 Samuel 5:7-9; 1 Chronicles 11:5-8).
† Solomon's temple was erected on "Mount Zion". Came to mean God's dwelling (Psa. 9:11; 20:2; 48:2-3; Isaiah 8:18).

The 144,000 with the Lamb

- How does the Lamb's host compare to those who followed the beast in chapter 13? Who do these people represent?
Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. (14:1)
† In 13:15-17, the "earth beast" causes the earth to:
 - Worship the image of the sea beast.
 - Accept the "mark or name of the beast ... on their right hand or on their foreheads".
 † Here, these worship God and the Lamb. They wear **God's** name on their foreheads.
† These 144,000 with the Lamb are **parallel** as followers, but stand in **contrast** to the earth dwellers.

"The Lamb Standing on Mount Zion"

- Eventually, represented both physical Jerusalem, national Israel, even if wicked (Isaiah 3:16-17, "daughters of Zion are haughty").
- Represented the spiritual remnant of Israel as "the daughter of Zion" (2 Kings 19:21-31; Isaiah 1:8-9; Micah 4:7-13).
- Represent the Messianic Kingdom (Isa. 2:2-3; 24:14-23; Mic. 4:2; Psa. 110:1-2; Joel 2:32; Mat. 21:4-5; Joh. 12:15-16; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:6; Rom. 11:26).
- Ultimately, represents the heavenly kingdom (Heb. 12:22-28; Gal. 4:23-31).
- Note, "the Lamb" does not "arise" from "Mount Zion". He simply there "stands", contrasting His eternal nature with temporal nature of the beasts!

Who Are the 144,000?

- Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him **one hundred and forty-four thousand**, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. ... These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God. (14:1-5)*
- 7:1-8 presents 144,000 who were sealed on their foreheads.
 - In the OT, God's people were numbered often for military purposes (1 Sam. 13:15; 15:4; 2 Sam. 18:1; 24:9; 2 Chr. 12:3).
 - 144,000 = 12 x 12 x 10 x 10 x 10 = All of God's people at any time.
 - The Lamb's saints represent all of God's people – as **an army at war** on earth!
 - Ultimately, the 144,000 will dwell in heaven (7:9-17), but their Judge has already proclaimed them guiltless ("without fault before the throne").
 - "Firstfruits" always were given to God - His share (Ex. 23:19; 13:2; Lev.2:12-14).

Lessons from the Symbols

And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard ¹the sound of harpists playing their harps. They ²sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and ³no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. These are the ones who were ⁴not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who ⁵follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. And ⁶in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are ⁷without fault before the throne of God. (14:2-5)

3. What lessons are implied in the text by these symbols? What applications can we make for us?

"The Everlasting Gospel"

Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth – to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people – saying with a loud voice, ¹"Fear God and ²give glory to Him, for ³the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water." (14:6-7)

4. How does the first angel's proclamation represent "the everlasting gospel"? To whom is it directed?

† **Warning** – God's judgment has come.

† Calls the "earth dwellers" (unregenerate, followers of false religion) to **Repentance**:

- "Fear God"
- "Give glory to Him"
- "Worship Him"
- Implies that repentance is desired & accepted – *mercy is available – good news!*

† More inspiring than Jonah's, successful proclamation of doom on Nineveh (**Jon. 3**).

† Directed to those facing judgment in destruction of Rome, extending mercy to individuals.

Lessons from the Symbols

3. What lessons are implied in the text by these symbols? What applications can we make for us?

† **Joyful & Thankful People** – "sound of harpists playing ... sang a new song"

† **Worthy People** – "before the throne ... four living creatures ... the elders"

† **Special People** – "no one could learn that song except" them

† **Saved People** – "redeemed from the earth", realm of false-religion, unregenerate

† **Morally Pure & Holy People** – "not defiled with women ... virgins"

† **Convicted, Committed, Loyal** – "follow the Lamb wherever He goes" (**John 6:68**)

† **Honest People** – "in their mouth was no deceit". May additionally imply that they neither blasphemed nor renounced God.

† **Righteous, Justified People** – "without fault before the throne of God"

† As much as depends on **us**, **are we** joyful, thankful, pure, holy, loyal, and honest?

† As much as depends on **God**, **do we trust** Him to make us worthy, special, saved, righteous, and justified? Do we take courage and comfort in these promises?

Who is "Babylon"?

And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." (14:8)

5. Who is Babylon that the second angel references?

† Discussed in more detail in chapters 17-18. Few characteristics introduced here:

- "That great city" – Represents at least a large, powerful city, if not something greater (i.e., empire).
- "She" – Personified as a woman, like wisdom (**Pro. 1:20-33; 7:4; 8-9**), Israel as "daughter of Zion" (**2 Kings 19:21-31; Isaiah 1:8-9**), ancient Babylon (**Jer. 51:33**).
- "Made all nations" – Center of influence upon many if not all nations, a global force.
- Seduces with "wine of the wrath of her fornication" – Persuaded to great wickedness with intoxicant:
 - Alcohol may taste good, make you feel good, but it destroys in following time (**Pro. 23:29-35**).
 - Intoxicant lowers inhibition to join her in sin which is bringing wrath from God (**Hab. 2:14-15**).

The Three Angels' Proclamations Revelation 14:6-13

Babylon the Seductress

"Flee from the midst of Babylon. And every one save his life! Do not be cut off in her iniquity. For this is the time of the LORD'S vengeance; He shall recompense her. Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD'S hand, That made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; Therefore the nations are deranged. Babylon has suddenly fallen and been destroyed. Wait for her! Take balm for her pain; Perhaps she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, But she is not healed. Forsake her, and let us go everyone to his own country; For her judgment reaches to heaven and is lifted up to the skies. The LORD has revealed our righteousness. Come and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God. (**Jeremiah 51:6-10**)

† God made and appointed the governing authorities (**Romans 13:1-6; Daniel 4:17**).

† Ancient Babylon was a tool, weapon used by God (**Habakkuk 1:1-10**).

† However, Babylon used success for idolatry, arrogance, and cruelty (**Hab. 1:11-17**).

† The Devil and wicked men twist God's government for their purposes (**13:1-4**).

† Like ancient Babylon, this Babylon spreads intoxicating idolatry & immorality.

“Babylon Is Fallen”

And another angel followed, saying, “**Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.**” (14:8)

6. How do you explain the angel referring to the fall of Babylon in the past tense? Had it fallen at that time? If not, why use the past tense?
- † The “*prophetic past tense*”, referring to future events so certain as already passed: ... also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, “**I have made you a father of many nations**”) in the presence of Him whom he believed – God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist **as though they did**; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, “**So shall your descendants be.**” (Romans 4:16-18)
- † Other examples ...

“The Patience of the Saints”, Revisited

8. What is the “*patience of the saints*” in this verse? How does it help them endure? Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “**If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.**” **Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.** Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: **Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.**” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.” (14:9-13)

“Babylon Is Fallen”

“And look, here comes a chariot of men with a pair of horsemen!” Then he answered and said, “**Babylon is fallen, is fallen! And all the carved images of her gods He has broken to the ground.**” (Isaiah 21:9)

“Declare among the nations, Proclaim, and set up a standard; Proclaim – do not conceal it – Say, ‘**Babylon is taken, Bel is shamed, Merodach is broken in pieces; Her idols are humiliated, Her images are broken in pieces.**’ For out of the north a nation comes up against her, Which shall make her land desolate, And no one shall dwell therein. ...” (Jeremiah 50:2)

“The Patience of the Saints”, Revisited

8. What is the “*patience of the saints*” in this verse? What application can we make?

† Worshipping the beast and receiving his mark may make things easier now:

- Avoid physical death.
- Avoid economic hardship – not being able to buy or sell.

† However, torment in hell will be much worse ...

† ... and it will last much longer.

† Furthermore, blessings await those who die – even martyrdom – now:

- Rest from their labors.
- Rewarded for their works.

† Based on their trust in God and Jesus, they are able to endure patiently with the above hope.

† Martyrdom may have appeared as defeat, but resisting persecution actually secured eternal blessings and victory.

Just Judgment

7. Why was Babylon judged? What can we learn about God’s nature from this? And another angel followed, saying, “**Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.**” (14:8)

† Explore in more detail in 18:6-7 ...

† **Comforting** that God is avenging those persecuted by “Babylon”.

† **Instructive** for those who do not understand why God is judging “Babylon”.

† **Demonstrates** God’s justice. Regardless of the size, power, influence of a city, judgment will fall, when it sins, if it does not repent. God does not play favorites.

Contrasting Sides

<u>Organization & Agents</u>	<u>Organization & Agents</u>
† The Devil, the dragon	† God on the throne
† Sea Beast, the Roman Empire	† Jesus, the worthy Lamb on Zion
† Earth Beast, False Prophet	† Two Witnesses
† Babylon, the Harlot	† ???
† Marked Beast Worshipers	† Sealed 144,000
<u>Message & Invitation</u>	<u>Message & Invitation</u>
† Pleasure Now	† Eternal Bliss Later
† Threat of Temporary Persecution	† Threat of Eternal Torment

Harvesting the Earth Revelation 14:14-20

The Two Harvests

10. What is being gleaned in these two harvests? Are they reaping the same harvest? If not, how are they different?

Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe." So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. (14:17-19)

† Clearly, the **latter** harvest is intended for **judgment** and **destruction**.

† Therefore, the **previous** harvest must have been for **redemption** and **salvation**.

† Similar to message of comfort of sealing God's people before destruction (7:1-8).

† Indicates that Christ, through His army and His gospel of mercy and warning, must first "**reap**" before judgment falls, answering "how long" and "why".

Who Is the Rider on the Cloud?

9. Who is represented by the rider on the cloud of the first harvest? Why is this important? What is its significance?

*Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat **One like the Son of Man**, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "**Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe.**" So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and **the earth was reaped.** (14:14-16)*

† Appears to be Jesus:

- "the Son of Man" – Refers to Jesus' humanity (Daniel 7:13).
- "on the cloud" – Vehicle used to carry Jesus to heaven, bring Him back, and bring Him in judgment (Acts 1:9-11; Matthew 24:30).

The Winepress of the Wrath of God

*And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "**Thrust in your sharp sickle** and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe." So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.*

And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs. (14:18-20)

11. Compare the use of the "winepress of the wrath of God" here to the original uses by Old Testament prophets (Isaiah 63:1-6; Lamentation 1:15; Joel 3:9-16). What is the meaning of this symbol?

† "Ripeness" is used to show end of patience, passed ready for judgment (Joel 3:12-13).

† "Sharpness" implies both swiftness and accuracy of judgment (Hebrews 4:12-13).

† "Trampling ...blood" refer to the judgment, destruction and extent (Lam. 1:15; Isa. 63:2-6).

† The "wine" is used to refer to the "drunken" effect induced by the devastation (Isa. 63:6).

† 1600 = 4 x 4 x 10 x 10 = Emphasize covering most of world, breadth of impact destruction

† "Outside the city" – Associated criminal (1 Kings 21:13).

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† Even in destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus would "*come on the clouds of heaven*", while remaining "*seated at the right hand of Power*" (Matthew 26:64).

† Represents Jesus *indirectly* converting through the gospel and His saints, even if not *physically* present Himself (Mat. 9:38; Luke 10:2; Acts 18:9-11; 1 Peter 3:18-20).

† Listening to angel may indicate waiting on God (Mark 4:26-29; Acts 1:7).

Revelation Trust God

Lesson 16 – Prelude to the
Bowls of Wrath

Prelude to the Seven Bowls of Wrath Revelation 15:1-8

“Sea of Glass Mingled with Fire”

And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. (15:2)

2. Where else has the symbol of the “sea” been previously used in Revelation, and how might they be connected? What distinction is expressed here?

† Suggests saints are exiting (or have exited) this realm and either:

- Society, government itself is aflame – i.e. severely in turmoil, unrest, distressed.
- Society, government has created a fiery environment for individuals – i.e., persecution, trial.
- Or, both.

† Looking forward, this “sea” does not exist in eternity in any form (21:1).

† **Summary:** Saints are presented victorious (“standing on the sea”), conquering the beast and its temptations through a fiery death, all while praising God (“having harps of God”; also see, Acts 16:25).

“The Last Plagues”

1. Does the following vision represent a retelling of the already told story, or is it a continuation? How do you know?

Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete. (15:1)

† How can it be “last” if it is not part of a *sequence*, where others came *first*?

† How can it “complete” God’s wrath, if it was not part of a previously incomplete sequence?

† Necessarily implies this is a *continuation* instead of a *recapitulation*, *retelling*.

Great, Marvelous, Just, True, Holy God

3. What lessons can we learn from the song sang by those “standing on the sea of glass”? How does this compare to previous questions and songs offered to God by His saints?

They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: “Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the saints! Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy. For all nations shall come and worship before You. For Your judgments have been manifested.” (15:3-4)

† Even those suffering martyrdom recognize God to be:

- “Great and marvelous are your works” (Psalm 92:5; 98:1; 145:17).
- “Just and true”
- “Holy”
- Worthy of reverence and glory
- Worthy of worship from “all nations” (Psalm 86:9; Jeremiah 10:7; Romans 14:11; Phil. 2:10-11).

† Obedient despite every miscarriage of justice; “they are without excuse” (Romans 1:18-22).

† Those most abused are not only ultimately delivered but also singing His praises.

† Original Song of Moses foreshadowed Song of the Lamb – victory, deliverance.

“Sea of Glass Mingled with Fire”

And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. (15:2)

2. Where else has the symbol of the “sea” been previously used in Revelation, and how might they be connected? What distinction is expressed here?

† In 13:1, the “sea beast” arose from the “sea”, i.e., society, national, political realm.

† If related, then would represent society, governments on fire, in upheaval, turmoil.

† The “sea of glass, like crystal” is only mentioned in 4:6 as “before the throne” ...

† If the whole “sea” also represents the “container” for our realm (4:6; Eze. 1:22-28), then for them to “stand on” or “by” it, is to *exit* it. How do we leave this realm?

† God uses “fire” to purify His saints (Zechariah 13:9; Malachi 3:2-4; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 1 Peter 1:7), “resisted to bloodshed” (Heb. 12:1-4).

The Song of Moses – Deliverance

Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and spoke, saying: “I will sing to the LORD. For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! The LORD is my strength and song. And He has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father’s God, and I will exalt Him. The LORD is a man of war; The LORD is His name. ... Your right hand, O LORD, has become glorious in power; Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the enemy in pieces. And in the greatness of Your excellence You have overthrown those who rose against You; You sent forth Your wrath; It consumed them like stubble. ... Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders? ... You in Your mercy have led forth The people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength To Your holy habitation. ... Fear and dread will fall on them; By the greatness of Your arm They will be as still as a stone, Till Your people pass over, O LORD. Till the people pass over Whom You have purchased. You will bring them in and plant them In the mountain of Your inheritance, In the place, O LORD, which You have made For Your own dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established. The LORD shall reign forever and ever.” (Exodus 15:1-18)

The Seven Bowls of Wrath

4. What were provided to the seven angels? How are these different than the seals and trumpets?

After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. And out of the temple came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. (15:5-7)

- † Loosening the seven “seals” reveal, unleashed God’s plan of judgment.
- † Sounding the seven “trumpets” warn of judgment through partial destruction.
- † Pouring the seven “bowls of wrath” execute judgment through full destruction.
- † The “bowls” affect the same elements as the “trumpets”, but to greater extent.
- † God’s judgment of Rome has escalated, so there is no turning back ...

The First Three Bowls Revelation 16:1-7

The Temple without Entrance

5. What happened to the temple, and what is the point of this occurrence?

The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and no one was able to enter the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed. (15:8)

- † Mt. Sinai was covered in smoke upon God’s descent (Exodus 19:18; Hab. 3:3).
- † Indicates his burning anger preceding fiery retribution (Psalm 18:6-15).
- † May emphasize that the time of intercessory mercy was over.
- † Compare to God telling people to stop praying: (1 John 5:15-16; Jeremiah 11:14; Proverbs 1:24-33; John 17:9).
- † Only judgment of Rome remained now. It could not be averted.
- † Individuals could still repent and be saved, but the empire was past saving. “It could not be healed” (Jeremiah 51:7-9; 2 Chronicles 26:36).

Pouring the First Three Bowls of Wrath

1. What happens in the outpouring of the first three bowls of wrath?

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.” So the first went and poured out his bowl ¹upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Then the second angel poured out his bowl ²on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died. Then the third angel poured out his bowl ³on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. (16:1-4)

- 1) Sore upon Worshipers of the Beast
- 2) Sea to Blood – Death to all Sea Creatures
- 3) Rivers & Springs to Blood

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 17 – The Seven
Bowls of Wrath

Targets of the First Three Plagues

2. Who is targeted by these plagues? Who is not affected? Lessons?

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth.” So the first went and poured out his bowl ¹upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Then the second angel poured out his bowl ²on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died. Then the third angel poured out his bowl ³on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. (16:1-4)

- 1) “Earth”: Obeyed the “Earth Beast” (13:11-18) – false religion, unregenerate.
 - 2) “Sea”: Origin of the “Sea Beast” (13:1) – churning society, government, nations.
 - 3) “Rivers, Springs”: Smaller groups, nations, peoples comprising society (17:1, 15).
- † Plagues are similar to previous judgments (7:1-3; 8:1-11; 14:9-20) and symbol’s original appearance (Exodus 7:15-25; 8:22-23; 9:8-11, 25-26; 10:22-23; 11:5-7).

Targets of the First Three Plagues

2. Who is targeted by these plagues? Who is not affected? Lessons?

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth." So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died. Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. (16:1-4)

- † **Reinforced Lesson:** God knows His people and makes a distinction, protecting them from the punishment due sinners (2 Tim. 2:19; 1 Kings 19:18; Isa. 40:26-27)
- † He also expects us to purify ourselves; otherwise, we will share in their judgment.
- † Providing both comfort and warning.

The Fourth and Fifth Bowls Revelation 16:8-11

"Whoever Sheds Man's Blood ..."

4. According to the "angel of the waters", why was God justified in His judgment of wrath?

And I heard the angel of the waters saying: "You are righteous, O Lord, The One who is and who was and who is to be, Because You have judged these things. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, And You have given them blood to drink. For it is their just due." And I heard another from the altar saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments." (16:5-7)

- † Those who unrighteously shed blood must have their blood shed (Genesis 9:6).
- † "Righteous ... because You have judged" – God is righting a wrong, avenging an injustice in "giving them blood to drink", observed by society's "watcher".
- † Additionally, this answers and satisfies the prayers, cries of the saints for God to see and act (6:9-11; 8:3-5; 14:17-20).
- † Does God **know**, **care**, and **act**? Is He **powerful** enough? Yes, yes, yes, and yes!

Pain of Invisible Fire in Darkness

5. What was affected by the fourth and fifth bowls? What might this symbolize?

Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, ... Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain. (16:8-10)

- 4) "Sun": – Scorch men with fire, great heat.
- † Represent the leading luminary, who afflicts those who follow, depend on him – consequences of foolish rule, leaders (Isa. 19:1-15; Jer. 49:7; Eze. 7:26; Oba. 3-9).
- † "Throne of the Beast" – Kingdom became full of darkness, leading to intense pain.
- † Consequences of moral depravity, incompetent government, or lost hope ...
- † Combined, represent the same imagery as **hell** – fire, darkness, and severe pain (Matthew 25:30; Mark 9:43-48). ... Life would become "hell on earth".
- † Man suffering a total withdrawal of God and all of His blessings?

What do these things mean?

4. What might these bowls of wrath symbolize?

- † Hailey and Harkrider – Natural disasters ... too literal?
- † "Rivers, springs, streams" are identified as political and ethnic entities, not literal waters (17:1, 15; Jeremiah 51:42-44).
- † Although natural disasters were certainly part of weakening, destruction of Rome, these signs indicate **more likely** indicate people problems – society, government, political, economic, racial, moral, wisdom, etc. – people mistreating each other, generally making each other's lives miserable, destroying each other, and ultimately even killing each other (6:4; 9:1-12).
- † Destruction of the "rivers and springs" might represent termination of individuals by various classes or groups (i.e., abortion, exposure, euthanasia, genocide) or further breakdown of smaller "institutions" within society (e.g., family, ethnicities).

Refused to Repent

6. What remarkable event did **not** occur following each of these plagues? What can we learn about God and men from this observation of repeated behavior?

And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. ... They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds. (16:9, 11)

- † Insistent on Sin - Men refused to acknowledge the One Who both punished them and could also save them.
- † Longsuffering, Merciful – God continues to judge and punish in a way that is leaving the door open to repentance, implying possibility of grace and redemption.
- † "God is not Man" – Because God is perfect in knowledge, power, and character:
 - Judges decisively when we would be reluctant to cut off opportunity for grace (1 Samuel 15:29).
 - Waits when we would hurry to destroy (Hosea 11:9).
- † God is **just** in His judgment. Respect His "severity" (Romans 11:22).

The Sixth Bowl Revelation 16:12-16

"I May Show My Power in You"

"... for at this time I will send all My plagues to your very heart, and on your servants and on your people, that you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth. Now if I had stretched out My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, then you would have been cut off from the earth. But indeed for this purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth. As yet you exalt yourself against My people in that you will not let them go." (Exodus 9:14-17)

- † By God permitting the Devil to summon his full strength:
- He judges and destroys the Devil more completely.
 - Makes a greater example out of the Devil.
 - Eliminates excuses with every delay.

Drying the River Euphrates

7. In the vision, what was accomplished by the sixth bowl of wrath? What could this represent?

Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. (16:12)

- † Euphrates River always served as a symbol of a border, defense to keep out invading empires (Jeremiah 46:2-10).
- † Indicates that kingdoms and empires, once held at bay, will be able to start attacking and invading.
- † Eastern border of Roman Empire was always pressed by Parthian Empire.

"Thief in the Night"

9. Why is Jesus' warning interjected at verse 15? How does this relate to the context? "Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." (16:15)

- † Jesus directly repeats, emphasizes warnings previously given.
- † His saints must keep themselves pure lest they share in the beast's destruction.
- † Here, emphasizes the **suddenness, quickness** of judgment.
- † **Lesson:** We must not play the middle, delaying to act in conviction; otherwise, Jesus' judgment will catch us by surprise, unprepared like a "thief in the night"; like other judgments past and future (Matthew 24:37-51; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4; 2 Peter 3:3-10).
- † Are we deliberately partaking in the "passing pleasures of sin", intending to fully repent just before judgment (3:1-4, 17-19; Galatians 6:7-8)? Or, are we "watching, keeping our garments clean"?

Gathering to Battle for the Great Day

8. Is the releasing of the three frogs part of the outpouring of the bowl, or are they a response to it? How do you know?

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. (16:13-14)

- † Appears to be a response, because bowls are from God. Frogs are from the Devil.
- † The "kings of the east" represent nations used to bring judgment against Rome.
- † As counter, the Devil and his agents summon other nations as allies to help them in a coming decisive battle, "the battle of that great day of God Almighty".
- † The "earth beast" (13:11-18) is now called the "false prophet".
- † Miracles performed by "frogs" are fake, trickery like "earth beast" before (2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Exodus 7-8; Matthew 24:24; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).
- † Note, God is allowing the Devil to summon his full strength – to make a point.

The Battle of Armageddon

And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon. (16:16)

10. What is the significance of Megiddo in the Old Testament? What might be the significance of Mount Megiddo (Armageddon) in this context?

- † Valley of Megiddo was a location of decisive battles in Old Testament:
- Barak and Deborah versus Canaanite kings (Judges 5:19).
 - Gideon versus Midianites (Judges 6:33).
 - Saul's defeat to Philistines (1 Samuel 31:8).
 - Ahaziah dies from Jehu's arrows (2 Kings 9:27).
 - Josiah loses to Pharaoh-Necho (2 Kings 23:29-30).
- † There is no real, physical Mount Megiddo – only a town (Joshua 17:11; Judges 1:27), waters (Judges 5:19), and a valley (2 Chronicles 35:22; Zechariah 12:11).
- † May indicate that God is **granting every advantage** to the enemy – the highest point in the ideal location still won't help the Devil. ... Spiritual battle, inverse of physical reality.
- † Only reference to "Armageddon" in the entire Bible!
- † Clears way for army mobilized by sixth trumpet (9:13-21) and final battle scenes (19:11-21).
- † No more literal than "frogs" and 200,000,000 army of lion-horses with snake-headed tails.

Trumpets vs. Bowls of Wrath

† 7 th Seal → Seven Trumpets	† 7 th Trumpet → Seven Bowls of Wrath
1) Earth Burned: Hail, Fire with Blood	1) Earth: Grievous Sore, Mark of Beast
2) Sea to Blood: Great Mountain Burning	2) Sea to Blood: Every Creature Died
3) Rivers, Fountains Poisoned: Wormwood Star	3) Rivers, Fountains to Blood
4) Sun, Moon, Stars Darkened	4) Sun Scorched Men
5) Locusts from Bottomless Pit – Tormented 5 months	5) Darkness on Beast’s Kingdom – Men Gnawed Tongues from Pain
6) Army from Euphrates: 200 M horsemen; ½ of men killed	6) Army from Euphrates: Gathered at Armageddon

End of the World – Again?

And there were *noises and thunderings and lightnings*; and there was a *great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. ... (16:18-21)*

12. Does this represent the end of the world? How do you know?

† No, similar to scene of sixth seal and finality of seventh trumpet.

† Plus, after the “*great hail from heaven*” falls, men still have an opportunity to repent ... (Hebrews 9:27).

The Seventh Bowl Revelation 16:17-21

It’s the Woman’s Fault, You Gave Me

13. Why is men’s response to this plague unjust and shameful?

... *Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great. (16:21)*

† Represents the extreme *hardened* nature of these people (contrast Exo. 9:27-35).

† They insist on blaming God instead of taking *responsibility* and *repenting* (Gen. 3).

† Warns against the *hardening, deceiving* nature of sin, destroying man’s ability to rightly, morally judge (Ephesians 4:17-19; Romans 1:21-32).

Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end ... (Hebrews 3:12-14)

† Do we take responsibility for our faults & sins, or do we blame others – or God?

Destroying the Air

11. Who or what is the target of the seventh bowl of wrath?

Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” (16:17)

† The Air – Directly targeting the “*prince of the power of the air” (Ephesians 2:2).*

† Could be another reference to the Devil’s influence over the kingdoms, governments of this age (Matthew 4:8-9). God has taken away the Devil’s rule over them?

† Alternatively, could be emphasizing the certainty of the unseeable. Air, the least tangible, is associated with the most certain, concrete – “*It is done!*”.

† Although we cannot see God’s judgments now (as immediate recipients of Revelation), we can be certain of their accomplishment (14:8).

† Another alternative, wind & air are associated with life (Genesis 2:7). Maybe God is reclaiming the breath, the air, the life He once gave to the Roman empire?

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 18 – The Scarlet Woman and Beast

“Have You Seen This, O Son of Man?”

Furthermore He said to me, “Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel commits here, to make Me go far away from My sanctuary? Now turn again, you will see greater abominations.” So He brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, there was a hole in the wall. Then He said to me, “Son of man, dig into the wall”; and when I dug into the wall, there was a door. And He said to me, “Go in, and see the wicked abominations which they are doing there.” So I went in and saw, and there – every sort of creeping thing, abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed all around on the walls. And there stood before them seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, and in their midst stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan. Each man had a censer in his hand, and a thick cloud of incense went up. Then He said to me, “Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, ‘The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.’” And He said to me, “Turn again, and you will see greater abominations that they are doing.” ... And He said to me, “Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it a trivial thing to the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence; then they have returned to provoke Me to anger. Indeed they put the branch to their nose. Therefore I also will act in fury. My eye will not spare nor will I have pity; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them.” (Ezekiel 8:6-18)

“Who Sits on Many Waters”

1. What is the scope of this harlot’s influence? How many people is she affecting? Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” (17:1-2)
 - † She is affecting all classes – kings and inhabitants.
 - † Her influence is broad – “the earth”.
 - † “The earth” emphasizes deception of unregenerate, those bound to false religion.
 - † The “many waters” will be explained later in verse 15 ...

The God Who Seeks Our Understanding

To the others He said in my hearing, “Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity. Utterly slay old and young men, maidens and little children and women; but do not come near anyone on whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary.” So they began with the elders who were before the temple. Then He said to them, “Defile the temple, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out!” And they went out and killed in the city. So it was, that while they were killing them, I was left alone; and I fell on my face and cried out, and said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in pouring out Your fury on Jerusalem?” Then He said to me, “The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great, and the land is full of bloodshed, and the city full of perversity; for they say, ‘The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see!’ And as for Me also, My eye will neither spare, nor will I have pity, but I will recompense their deeds on their own head.” (Ezekiel 9:5-10)

† Surprisingly, God wants us to understand His justice (Rom. 3:4, 25-26), even in pouring out His wrath. The “judgment” shown to us is to partially explain reason for its severity.

A Powerful Harlot

2. How is she influencing other people? What powers are attributed to her? Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” (17:1-2)
 - † **Seductress:** Convinces “strong men” to sin with her (Pro. 2:16-20; 5:1-14; 7:6-27)
 - † Represents all that is sensual, lustful, alluring, appealing to sin (1 Jn. 2:15-17; Gen. 3:1-5; Mt. 4:1-11; Eph. 2:3), specifically associated with Rome’s capital city.
 - † **Intoxicating** – Uses substances to inhibit judgment, increase vulnerability (Habakkuk 2:5, 15; Proverbs 23:27-35). Looks good, but in the end ...
 - † “Cup”, “drunkenness not with wine” dual meaning: divine destruction that befalls sinful, rebellious nations (14:8; 16:19; Psa. 75:1-10; Isa. 51:15-23).
 - † What she offers entraps the kings and nations to join in God’s wrath (Jer. 51:7).

Description of the Woman and the Beast Revelation 17:1-6

The Great Harlot’s Transport

3. Upon whom or what does the harlot sit? How does this entity relate to previously described characters? So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. (17:3)
 - † “Carried me away in the Spirit” (1:10; 4:1; 21:10; Eze. 8:3; Luke 16:22).
 - † “... into the wilderness” – appeal to “come out” (12:6, 14; Mat. 3:1-3; 4:1; 11:7).
 - † “Scarlet beast, blasphemy, seven heads, ten horns” is the “sea beast” of chapter 13: Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. (13:1)
 - † So, the “sea beast” supports, upholds, carries the “great harlot”. How?

"Babylon the Great"

4. What name is assigned to the harlot? Compare the description of this harlot to similar uses of this symbol in Old Testament prophecy (Nahum 3:1-7; Isaiah 23:15-18; 47:1-15; 1:21; Jeremiah 2:20).

The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. (17:4-5)

† Unlike godly women, her royal adornment is "merely outward" (1 Pet. 3:3-5; Mat. 27:28-29; Is. 1:18), competing with "radiant woman", failing miserably (12:1,6,14).

† "Mystery": her true character, intent, end previously concealed is now exposed.

† **Prophetic Precedent:** The Four Great Harlots of Old Testament prophecy ...

† But, this one is the worst of the worst ...

Similar Harlots

† Nineveh, Capital of Assyria – Harlot of Conquest & Cruelty.

† Babylon, Capital of Babylon – Harlot of Conquest, Cruelty, Wealth & Idolatry.

† Tyre – Harlot of Commerce & Wealth (Colossians 3:5):

The burden against Tyre. Wail, you ships of Tarshish! For it is laid waste, So that there is no house, no harbor; ... she is a marketplace for the nations. Be ashamed, O Sidon; For the sea has spoken, The strength of the sea, saying, "I do not labor, nor bring forth children; Neither do I rear young men, Nor bring up virgins." ... Tyre will be forgotten seventy years ... At the end of seventy years it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the harlot: Take a harp, go about the city, You forgotten harlot; Make sweet melody, sing many songs, That you may be remembered." And it shall be, at the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre. She will return to her hire, and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth. Her gain and her pay will be set apart for the LORD ... (Isaiah 23:1-18)

Similar Harlots

† Nineveh, Capital of Assyria – Harlot of Conquest & Cruelty:

Woe to the bloody city! It is all full of lies and robbery. Its victim never departs. The noise of a whip And the noise of rattling wheels, Of galloping horses, Of clattering chariots! Horsemen charge with bright sword and glittering spear. There is a multitude of slain, A great number of bodies, Countless corpses – They stumble over the corpses – because of the multitude of harlotries of the seductive harlot, The mistress of sorceries, Who sells nations through her harlotries, And families through her sorceries. "Behold, I am against you," says the LORD of hosts; "I will lift your skirts over your face, I will show the nations your nakedness, And the kingdoms your shame. I will cast abominable filth upon you, Make you vile, And make you a spectacle. It shall come to pass that all who look upon you Will flee from you, and say, 'Nineveh is laid waste! Who will bemoan her? Where shall I seek comforters for you?' (Nahum 3:1-7)

Similar Harlots

† Nineveh, Capital of Assyria – Harlot of Conquest & Cruelty.

† Babylon, Capital of Babylon – Harlot of Conquest, Cruelty, Wealth & Idolatry.

† Tyre – Harlot of Commerce & Wealth (Colossians 3:5).

† Jerusalem – Harlot of Injustice & Spiritual Adultery by Idolatry:

The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem ... "Alas, sinful nation, A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, They have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward. ... So the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, As a hut in a garden of cucumbers, As a besieged city. ... How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, But now murderers. ... Your princes are rebellious, And companions of thieves; Everyone loves bribes, And follows after rewards. They do not defend the fatherless, Nor does the cause of the widow come before them." (Isaiah 1:1-23)

Similar Harlots

† Nineveh, Capital of Assyria – Harlot of Conquest & Cruelty.

† Babylon, Capital of Babylon – Harlot of Conquest, Cruelty, Wealth & Idolatry:

"Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; Sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans! For you shall no more be called Tender and delicate. Take the millstones and grind meal. Remove your veil, Take off the skirt, Uncover the thigh. ... Your nakedness shall be uncovered. ... O daughter of the Chaldeans; For you shall no longer be called The Lady of Kingdoms. I was angry with My people ... given them into your hand. You showed them no mercy ... But these two things shall come to you In a moment, in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood ... Because of the multitude of your sorceries, For the great abundance of your enchantments. For you have trusted in your wickedness; ... Stand now with your enchantments. And the multitude of your sorceries. In which you have labored from your youth – Perhaps you will be able to profit, Perhaps you will prevail. (Isa. 47:1-15)

Similar Harlots

† Nineveh, Capital of Assyria – Harlot of Conquest & Cruelty.

† Babylon, Capital of Babylon – Harlot of Conquest, Cruelty, Wealth & Idolatry.

† Tyre – Harlot of Commerce & Wealth (Colossians 3:5).

† Jerusalem – Harlot of Injustice & Spiritual Adultery by Idolatry:

"Have you not brought this on yourself, In that you have forsaken the LORD your God When He led you in the way? And now why take the road to Egypt, To drink the waters of Sihor? Or why take the road to Assyria, To drink the waters of the River? Your own wickedness will correct you ... Know therefore and see that it is an evil and bitter thing That you have forsaken the LORD your God ... For of old I have broken your yoke ... And you said, 'I will not transgress,' When on every high hill and under every green tree You lay down, playing the harlot. ... They and their kings and their princes, and their priests and their prophets, Saying to a tree, 'You are my father,' And to a stone, 'You gave birth to me.' ... For according to the number of your cities Are your gods, O Judah. (Jeremiah 2:17-28; also, Hosea 9:1; 2:2-12).

Similar Harlots

- † Nineveh, Capital of Assyria – Harlot of Conquest & Cruelty.
- † Babylon, Capital of Babylon – Harlot of Conquest, Cruelty, Wealth & Idolatry.
- † Tyre – Harlot of Commerce & Wealth (**Colossians 3:5**).
- † Jerusalem – Harlot of Injustice & Spiritual Adultery by Idolatry.
- † Rome – A composite harlot, like the composite beast of chapter 13:
 - Blasphemy – Idolatry of Jerusalem and ancient Babylon.
 - Sorceries – Idolatry, immorality like Nineveh, ancient Babylon
 - Seductive – Nineveh
 - Fornication with Nations – Commerce & trade like Tyre.
 - Persecution & Martyrdom – Injustice, cruelty, and conquest of Jerusalem, Nineveh and Babylon.
 - Decadent, Immoral Materialism – Tyre and ancient Babylon.
 - Mother of Harlots – Contrast with Babylon’s claim to be “*Lady of the Nations*”.

Back From The Brink of Disaster?

6. What is suggested by the description of the beast, that “*was and is not and yet is*”?
- But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw ¹was, and ²is not, and ³will ascend out of the bottomless pit and ⁴go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that ¹was, and ²is not, and ³yet is.” (17:7-8)*
- † Two possibilities to discuss in more detail later, but better options are briefly:
 - Roman empire recovered from a near disaster (13:3) but disaster will ultimately befall it.
 - Persecuting disposition will “come and go” – periods of intense persecution cycled with respite.
 - † Note, the origin, “*out of the bottomless pit*”, is associated with the devilish influence wielded over this empire (9:1-2, 11;7; 13:2; 20:1, 3).

John’s Amazement

5. What prompts John to marvel at the harlot?
- I saw the woman, **drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus**. And when I saw **her**, I marveled with great amazement. (17:6)*
- † Her wine was not real alcohol, but blood from murdering the saints of Jesus!
 - † Represents a city reeling in delirious pleasure at the death of Christians!
 - † John’s amazement seems to focus on identifying woman, given angel’s explanation.
 - † Put yourself in John’s place. How would you feel to watch the one responsible for the death of everyone holy, righteous, faithful and that you loved, laughing hysterically and staggering in overwhelming delight at their torture and cruel death?
 - † It is amazing that a spectacular, splendid city could be so cruel, hateful, and wicked!
 - † It is amazing that such a city has not yet been destroyed – but soon, that will be reckoned, which is the point of chapter 17 and 18. Her sentence is being delivered!

The Seven Heads of the Scarlet Beast

7. How does the angel interpret the heads of the dragon? How does this help us understand who the beast really is?
- “Here is the mind which has **wisdom**: The seven heads are **seven mountains** on which the woman sits. There are also **seven kings**. Five have **fallen**, one **is**, and the other has **not yet come**. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. And the **beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.**” (17:9-11)*
- † Literally, city of Rome was built of seven hills, but figurative, symbolic book ...
 - † Distinguish two types of “*kings*”: “*heads*” (17:10) vs “*horns*” (17:12-13) ...
 - † “*Heads*” are in control. Suggests that “*heads*” represent the Roman emperors.
 - † Possible viewpoints include:
 - A. Literally, Chronologically: 1st Augustus ... 5th Nero, ... , 8th Domitian:

Explanation of the Woman and the Beast Revelation 17:7-18

The Seven Heads of the Scarlet Beast

7. How does the angel interpret the heads of the dragon? How does this help us understand who the beast really is?
- “Here is the mind which has **wisdom**: The seven heads are **seven mountains** on which the woman sits. There are also **seven kings**. Five have **fallen**, one **is**, and the other has **not yet come**. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. And the **beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.**” (17:9-11)*
- A. Literally, Chronologically: 1st Augustus ... 5th Nero, ... , 8th Domitian:
 - Opposite of history – many more emperors persecution came after Domitian.
 - Puts writing in time of Vespasian, contrary to all evidence for both dates.

The Seven Heads of the Scarlet Beast

7. How does the angel interpret the heads of the dragon? How does this help us understand who the beast really is?

“Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.” (17:9-11)

B. Symbolically:

- 7 – Exercise full, maximum governing power, authority provided by God.
- 5 – Broken 10, some – not all of emperors would submit, worship, partake (“fall”) to persecuting influence.
- 2 → 3 – Emphasizes number and intensity of persecuting emperors.
- “beast, eighth, of the seven” – Most intense, representative king comes near end.

The Ten Horns of the Scarlet Beast

8. How are the horns of the beast interpreted by the angel? How do the horns support the dragon’s agenda?

“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.” (17:12-14)

- † “Ten horns” → “ten kings” → Complete number of leaders, exercising maximum human power: Petty kings or provincial rulers driving empire’s war (**Dan. 8:2-8**).
- † Submit to the beast hoping to receive greater authority and power.
- † Receive power only for “one hour” (**18:10, 17, 19**); not in control like “heads”.
- † Used as tools, driving persecution against the Lamb (**Acts 9:4-5**), but finally lose.
- † We answered gospel “call”? Behaving like those “chosen”? Remaining “faithful”?

The Seven Heads of the Scarlet Beast

7. How does the angel interpret the heads of the dragon? How does this help us understand who the beast really is?

“Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.” (17:9-11)

- † “was, is not, not yet come” – persecuting emperors still to come, similar to predecessors, but ultimately will perish themselves. ... It will get worse before it gets better.
- † “beast” disposition represents ravenous, persecuting disposition, furthest from “humanity” (**Dan. 7:1-4, 7-8, 17-25**), so represents repetitive fading and resurging of devilish, persecuting spirit “ascend out of the bottomless pit” (**17:8**).

“The Harlot Who Sits on Many Waters”

9. What is the significance of the “waters ... where the harlot sits”?

Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.” (17:15)

- † Represent many different kinds of people that would be governed and influenced by the harlot (**13:7**; “who dwell by many waters ... your end has come”, **Jer. 51:13**).
- † Rome’s inability to unite the various conquered nations, languages, and ethnicities into a single, cohesive empire fulfilled prophecy: “iron mixed with ceramic clay ... but they will not adhere to one another” (**Daniel 2:41-43**).
- † This cannot apply to Jerusalem, which eliminates Preterist application to destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
- † Cannot apply to Papal Rome because of limitation imposed by “things which must shortly take place” (**1:1**).

The Seven Heads of the Scarlet Beast

C. Complete number of provinces, kingdoms, or major cities that comprise the empire.

- These kingdoms, provinces support the lifestyle and influence of the harlot.
- Recall, kings & kingdoms were interchanged because of a great king that built the kingdom. ... Here the beast represents a powerful king, epitomizing the empire (**Daniel 7:17-23**). ... Blurs distinction with “horns”.

D. Complete number of rebellious empires under the Dragon’s direction:

- Symbolic, but could include: Ancient Babylon, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece ... (kings → empires, **Daniel 7:17-23**).
- Rome would be current empire (“one is”). But, most had passed (“five have fallen”).
- Last, “not yet come”, described in **20:7-9**, contradicting **19:20**.
- The “eighth” may emphasize a common, composite nature to all of these empires. They have common source and destiny (perdition).

“Spirit of ill will & treachery”

10. What surprising, ironic attitude do the horns manifest toward the harlot? What do they do to her – and ultimately, why? What weakness does this exhibit within the dragon’s army?

*“And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.” (17:16-17; see also, **Nah. 3:5-6; Mic. 3:1-5**)*

- † Although initially submissive to Rome, the petty kings will sabotage Rome. Why?
- † Selfish, evil, wicked people only unite for selfish purposes – as long as it suits them.
- † Once their common goal is realized, they will turn on each other (**Eze. 16:37-41**).
- † God often uses this to His advantage, to realize His purposes: Abimelech & Shechem (**Judges 9:1-24**), Edom, Moab & Ammon (**2 Chr. 20:23**).
- † Similarly uses confusion: Midian (**Judges 7:22**), Philistines (**1 Sam. 14:20**).

Who Is the Beast? The Harlot?

11. Who or what does the harlot and the beast represent? Please identify them.

“And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.” (17:18)

“The Scarlet Beast”

- † Same as the “*sea beast*” of 13:1.
- † Same composite description of **Daniel 7**.
- † Same war as 4th beast of **Daniel 7**.
- † Same war as 4th kingdom of **Daniel 2**.
- † First 3 kingdoms of Daniel 2, 7 are named: Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece
- † Rome is 4th empire by history.
- † Church was established during Roman empire, which persecuted the church.

The Roman Empire

“The Great Harlot”

- † Rules, influences many nations, ethnicities.
- † Rules over all the kings.
- † Enticed others to fight God and kill saints.
- † Wealthy, seductive, alluring and immoral.
- † Symbolized by ancient Babylon capital.
- † Mother of harlots & abominations.
- † Wealth, immoral influence supported & spread by empire’s conquest.
- † Although hated & sabotaged by constituents.

Capital City of Rome

A Great Fall to Be Avoided Revelation 18:1-8

Close Relation between Beast & Harlot

The Beast (Roman Empire)	Harlot (Rome, Not Jerusalem)
Power was given him over all peoples, tongues, and nations (13:7)	Sitting upon peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues (17:15).
Those who worship the beast and his image will drink of the wine of the wrath of God (14:9-10).	Kings of earth committed fornication with her; she made all nations drink the wine of the wrath of her fornication (17:2; 14:8).
The beast is “of the seven” (17:11).	Her position was the same as seated on the seven heads of the beast (17:9).
The beast made war with the saints and killed God’s two witnesses (11:7; 13:7).	She was drunk with the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus (17:6).
The ten horns are ten kings that receive power with the beast (17:12, 16).	She is the great city which reigned over the kings of the earth (17:18).

Adapted from Harkrider, 203

Babylon Is Fallen – Again?

And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” (14:8)

After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.” (18:1-3)

1. How is the harlot’s fall as recorded in 18:1-3 different than the message proclaimed 14:8?
 - † 14:8 represents warning proclaimed by God through Christians, the weapons of Lamb’s army.
 - † 18:1-3 is prophesying of actual event and foretelling resulting reaction by those impacted.
 - † Note: Revelation 17-18 draw from several of the symbols used in Ezekiel 26-28; Jeremiah 50-51; and Isaiah 47 to announce the destructions of ancient Tyre and Babylon.
 - † Contrast: angel’s glory vs. harlot’s adornment; undefiled, holy city vs. Babylon (21:27)

Revelation Trust God

Lesson 19 – The Fall of the Great Harlot

“Cage For Every Unclean & Hated Bird”

† Alludes to *desolation* of aftermath (unclean, hated birds → vultures, eagles → eat dead):
“For My sword shall be bathed in heaven; Indeed it shall come down on Edom. And on the people of My curse, for judgment. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood ... a great slaughter in the land of Edom. ... For it is the day of the LORD’S vengeance. The year of recompense for the cause of Zion. ... No one shall pass through it forever and ever. But the pelican and the porcupine shall possess it. Also the owl and the raven shall dwell in it. And He shall stretch out over it The line of confusion and the stones of emptiness. They shall call its nobles to the kingdom, But none shall be there, and all its princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in its palaces, Nettles and brambles in its fortresses; It shall be a habitation of jackals. A courtyard for ostriches. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the jackals. And the wild goat shall bleat to its companion; Also the night creature shall rest there, And find for herself a place of rest. There the arrow snake shall make her nest and lay eggs And hatch, and gather them under her shadow; There also shall the hawks be gathered, Every one with her mate.” (Isaiah 34:5-15; also, 13:19-22)

Interjected Warning

"For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." **And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities."** (18:3-5)

2. How are the stated lessons similar? Why is this theme being repeated and emphasized? Where else in Scripture is this same theme emphasized?
- † Remember, nations, kings, and merchants have already been seduced, compromised, and partaken of her sins and are doomed with her ...
 - † Given judgment's *delay* and her great, powerful *influence*, Jesus' people are naturally warned not to be overcome with her allurements and compromise, sin.
 - † Most pointed here, but alluded to previously: (2:14; 2:20-22; 12:11, 17; 14:7-13).

Come Out of the Doomed City

- † Do not compromise – separate yourself *spiritually* (2 Corinthians 6:12-7:1; Ezekiel 37:21-28; Isaiah 52:1-12; Ephesians 5:11).
- † Separate yourself *physically* to avoid sharing their punishment (Matthew 24:14-34; Jeremiah 39:11-40:6; 50:8-10; 51:6-10, 45-50; Matthew 7:6; Luke 17:26-37).
- † "Lingering" too long may result in loss of both (Genesis 19:1-36).
- † Did reluctance by 2nd and 3rd century Christians to physically come out of Rome result in unnecessary spiritual loss, physical loss, and delayed judgment?
- † ☹️(づ)_(づ)

Come Out of the Doomed City

"Up, up! **Flee from the land of the north,**" says the LORD; "for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven," says the LORD. "Up, Zion! **Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.**" For thus says the LORD of hosts: "He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. For surely **I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants.** Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me. **Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,**" says the LORD. (Zechariah 2:6-10)

- † Do not compromise – separate yourself *spiritually* ...

"Repay Her Double"

- "Render to her just as she rendered to you, and repay her **double** according to her works; in the cup which she has mixed, mix **double** for her. In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.'" (18:6-7)
3. What is the significance of the harlot being served "double ...in the cup which she mixed"? Does this indicate an unjust punishment exceeding that of the crimes committed? Explain.
- † Allusion to balancing the scales of justice – measured from the perspective of the scales as a whole – requires repeating or "doubling" the original trouble, "torment and sorrow" that she created (Ps. 137:8; Is.40:2; 61:7; Je. 16:18; 17:18; Ze. 9:12).
 - † Notice, she is repaid "in the same measure" – not double of her measure.
 - † Whatever physical suffering is repaid, will not compare to spiritual she inflicted ...

Come Out of the Doomed City

You are not restricted by us, but you are **restricted by your own affections.** ... **Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.** For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate," says the Lord. **Do not touch what is unclean,** And I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty. "Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us **cleanse ourselves** from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. (2 Corinthians 6:12-7:1)

"Repay Her According to Her Work"

"Put yourselves in array against **Babylon** all around, All you who bend the bow; **Shoot at her,** spare no arrows, **For she has sinned against the LORD.** Shout against her all around; **She has given her hand, Her foundations have fallen, Her walls are thrown down;** For it is the vengeance of the LORD. **Take vengeance on her. As she has done, so do to her.**" (Jeremiah 50:14-15) "How the hammer of the whole earth has been cut apart and broken! How **Babylon has become a desolation among the nations!** I have laid a snare for you; You have indeed been trapped, O Babylon, And you were not aware; You have been found and also caught, **Because you have contended against the LORD.** The LORD has opened His armory, And has brought out the weapons of His indignation; For this is the work of the Lord GOD of hosts In the land of the Chaldeans. ... The voice of those who flee and escape from the land of Babylon Declares in Zion the **vengeance of the LORD our God, The vengeance of His temple.** Call together the archers against Babylon. All you who bend the bow, encamp against it all around; Let none of them escape. **Repay her according to her work; According to all she has done, do to her; For she has been proud against the LORD, Against the Holy One of Israel.**" (Jeremiah 50:23-29)

Sin of Luxury?

"In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow ..." (18:7)

4. Why was she penalized for "living luxuriously"? Is it wrong to enjoy luxuries?
- † No, sins of wealth are associated with *manner* of **obtaining, keeping** – not inherent with possession itself or its enjoyment (1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19; "willing to share"; Ecclesiastes 2:24-26; 3:11-13; 5:18-20).
 - † Her "luxurious living" was an expression of her self-glorification, arrogance.
 - † Additionally, God's warnings often address people where they are – hitting them relative to current concerns, even if ignoble (Jonah 4:11; Matthew 5:29-30).

"I Sit as a Queen"

*"Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; For you shall no longer be called **The Lady of Kingdoms**. ... you said, 'I shall be a lady forever,' So that you did not take these things to heart, Nor remember the latter end of them. Therefore hear this now, you who are given to pleasures, Who dwell securely, Who say in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me;' I shall not sit as a widow, Nor shall I know the loss of children'; But these two things shall come to you In a moment, in one day: The loss of children, and widowhood. They shall come upon you in their fullness **Because of the multitude of your sorceries, For the great abundance of your enchantments. For you have trusted in your wickedness**; You have said, 'No one sees me'; Your wisdom and your knowledge have warped you; And you have said in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one else besides me.'" (Isaiah 47:5-10; also, 14:9-20)*

The king spoke, saying, "Is not this **great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?**" (Daniel 4:30)

Sin of Luxury?

"In the measure that she glorified herself and lived luxuriously, in the same measure give her torment and sorrow ..." (18:7)

4. Why was she penalized for "living luxuriously"? Is it wrong to enjoy luxuries?
- † Even if her priorities are misplaced, all that is valuable, important to her is about to be stripped away, and she will suffer greatly. Ongoing point ...
 - † Ultimately represents the goal, design, justification of her fornication, sin, compromise, and sin – to "live luxuriously", so it stands for her sin.
 - † Compassion, sympathy may be extended to sinners acting in distress, hardship (Proverbs 6:30-31).
 - † Her abundance, wanton selfishness makes her sins more inexcusable, emphasizing her guilt, worthiness of condemnation (Luke 16:25).

"I Sit as a Queen"

"Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because your heart is lifted up, And you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, In the midst of the seas,' Yet you are a man, and not a god, Though you set your heart as the heart of a god ... By your great wisdom in trade you have increased your riches, And your heart is lifted up because of your riches)," Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you have set your heart as the heart of a god, Behold, therefore, I will bring strangers against you, ... they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, And defile your splendor. They shall throw you down into the Pit, And you shall die the death of the slain In the midst of the seas. Will you still say before him who slays you, 'I am a god'? But you shall be a man, and not a god, In the hand of him who slays you. You shall die ...; For I have spoken," says the Lord GOD.'" (Ezekiel 28:2-10)

"You will save the humble people; But Your eyes are on the haughty, that You may bring them down." (2 Samuel 22:28; also, Pro. 11:2; 16:18; 29:23)

"In One Day"

5. What would happen to Babylon "in one day"? Did this literally happen? If so, when? If not, what does it represent?

Therefore her plagues will come in one day – death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her. (18:8)

- † Book of symbols (1:1) ...
- † This verses introduces a point repeated and elaborated in 18:21-24.
- † Examine more closely then...
- † But, few points to notice here first:
- † Emphasizes *certainty* of destruction and *inability to resist* God's judgment.
- † Although many warnings would be provided through previous plagues, there would still be a *suddenness, unexpected* nature of final destruction, partially because of their arrogant blindness (Isaiah 47:5-10; Ezekiel 28:2-10). ...

A Great Fall Mourned Revelation 18:9-20

Those Who Did Not “Come Out”

- † Having completed her “sentencing” (declaring her guilty, reason for punishment), next section focuses on actual execution of “*judgment*”.
- † Additionally, it describes reaction and shared loss of 3 groups of people who did not heed warning and “*come out*” of the doomed city.
- † Emphasizes **warning** by focusing on consequences of ignoring it.
- † Emphasizes **broad impact** of her destruction.
- † Emphasizes **justice** of God by punishing these 3 groups, who enabled, benefitted, and contributed to Rome’s wickedness – and were compromised by it.
- † Later, the reaction of these 3 groups will be contrasted with reaction of saints and heaven’s inhabitants ...

Ship Owners and Sailors Mourn

8. Why did the ship owners and sailors mourn her fall?
- “... Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, ‘What is like this great city?’ They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea **became rich by her wealth!** For in one hour she is made desolate.’” (18:17-19)
- † Like the kings and merchants, the ship owners and their sailors mourn the loss of wealth.
 - † The vision of all 3 of these parties draws heavily from the prophetic foretelling of Tyre’s fall, depicted as the fall of a great carrier ship, in **Ezekiel 27**. ...
 - † As here, consider, what is the point of the detailed listing of components?

Kings of the Earth Mourn

6. Why did the “*kings of the earth*” mourn over Babylon’s fall?
- “The **kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her**, when they see the smoke of her burning, standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.’” (18:9-10)
- † Rome provided both sinful pleasure and decadent luxury for the “*kings of the earth*”, who shared in her immorality and war against the Lamb (17:2).
 - † Eliminates expectations, hopes, dreams of fulfilled promises offered during their “*seduction*”. The Devil rarely makes good on any of his promises, never on all.
 - † The suddenness also eliminated their opportunity for preparation, to reallocate their investments, and avoid loss.
 - † This is a selfish morning for the lost pleasures of sin.

Perfection Destroyed in the Sea

- “Now, son of man, take up a **lamentation for Tyre**, and say to Tyre, ‘You who are situated at the entrance of the sea, **merchant of the peoples** on many coastlands, thus says the Lord GOD: “O Tyre, you have said, ‘**I am perfect in beauty**.’ Your borders are in the midst of the seas. **Your builders have perfected your beauty**. They made all your planks of fir trees from Senir; They took a cedar from Lebanon to make you a mast. Of oaks from Bashan they made your oars; The company of Ashurites have inlaid your planks With ivory from the coasts of Cyprus. **Fine embroidered linen from Egypt** was what you spread for your sail; **Blue and purple** from the coasts of Elishah was what covered you. Inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your oarsmen; Your wise men, O Tyre, were in you; They became your pilots. Elders of Gebal and its wise men Were in you to caulk your seams; **All the ships of the sea** And their oarsmen were in you **To market your merchandise**. Those from Persia, Lydia, and Libya Were in your army as men of war; They hung shield and helmet in you; They gave splendor to you. Men of Arvad with your army were on your walls all around, And the men of Gammad were in your towers; They hung their shields on your walls all around; **They made your beauty perfect**.’”” (Ezekiel 27:2-11)

Merchants of the Earth Mourn

7. Why did the “*merchants of the earth*” mourn the fall of Babylon?
- “And the **merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore**: merchandise of gold and silver, precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, every kind of object of ivory, every kind of object of most precious wood, bronze, iron, and marble; and cinnamon and incense, fragrant oil and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men. The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, who became rich by her, will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls!’” (18:11-16)
- † Like the “*kings of the earth*”, these merchants outwardly mourn the great city (17:4), but inwardly, they mourn their personal loss. (Many treasures → many countries, importers)

Perfection Destroyed in the Sea

- “**Tarshish** was your merchant because of your many luxury goods. They gave you silver, iron, tin, and lead for your goods. Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your traders. They bartered human lives and vessels of bronze for your merchandise. Those from the house of Togarmah traded for your wares with horses, steeds, and mules. The men of Dedan were your traders; many isles were the market of your hand. They brought you ivory tusks and ebony as payment. Syria was your merchant because of the abundance of goods you made. They gave you for your wares emeralds, purple, embroidery, fine linen, corals, and rubies. Judah and the land of Israel were your traders. They traded for your merchandise wheat of Minnith, millet, honey, oil, and balm. Damascus was your merchant because of the abundance of goods you made, because of your many luxury items, with the wine of Helbon and with white wool. Dan and Javan paid for your wares, traversing back and forth. Wrought iron, cussia, and cane were among your merchandise. Dedan was your merchant in saddlecloths for riding. Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your regular merchants. They traded with you in lambs, rams, and goats. The merchants of Sheba and Raamah were your merchants. They traded for your wares the choicest spices, all kinds of precious stones, and gold.”” (Ezekiel 27:12-22)

Perfection Destroyed in the Sea

"The ships of Tarshish were carriers of your merchandise. You were filled and very glorious in the midst of the seas. Your oarsmen brought you into many waters, But the east wind broke you in the midst of the seas. Your riches, wares, and merchandise, Your mariners and pilots, Your caulkers and merchandisers, All your men of war who are in you, And the entire company which is in your midst, Will fall into the midst of the seas on the day of your ruin. ... They will make their voice heard because of you; They will cry bitterly and cast dust on their heads; They will roll about in ashes; They will shave themselves completely bald because of you, Gird themselves with sackcloth. And weep for you With bitterness of heart and bitter wailing. In their wailing for you They will take up a lamentation, And lament for you: 'What city is like Tyre, Destroyed in the midst of the sea? When your wares went out by sea, You satisfied many people; You enriched the kings of the earth With your many luxury goods and your merchandise. But you are broken by the seas in the depths of the waters; Your merchandise and the entire company will fall in your midst. All the inhabitants of the isles will be astonished at you; Their kings will be greatly afraid, And their countenance will be troubled. The merchants among the peoples will hiss at you; You will become a horror, and be no more forever.'" (Ezekiel 27:25-36)

A Great Fall Suddenly and Entirely Revelation 18:21-24

A Truly Selfish Mourning

9. What did these three parties do to defend her or prevent her fall? Lessons.
"The kings of the earth ... standing at a distance for fear of her torment ... And the merchants of the earth ... will stand at a distance for fear of her torment, weeping and wailing ... Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance and cried out ..." (18:9-18)
 † All 3 parties benefitted, took pleasure in Rome. However, none of them did anything to help or stop destruction (Luke 15:13-16). (3 verb tenses emphasize totality.)
 † Indicates, this was a truly selfish, and entirely disloyal relationship.
 † None of them were powerful enough to stop it – "strong is the Lord God who judges her". All the alliances, wisdom, resources of the world could not stop her judgment.
 † This destruction, lack of true loyalty helps us take the long view (2 Pt. 3:10-14; Lk. 12:13-21; 15:13-16), not put our trust in men (Heb. 13:5-6; Ps. 118:7-9; 146:3-4).
 † Where are our investments (Matthew 6:19-34)? Will we be shocked like these?

A Great Millstone Thrown into the Sea

11. What significance was attached to the millstone being thrown into the sea?
Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore." (18:21)
 † Third "strong angel" (5:2; 10:1), contrasts "great city Babylon, that mighty city" (18:10).
 † The giant splash graphically depicts the "violence" associated with Rome's destruction – tremendous impact, broadly seen.
 † The disappearing stone depicts Rome's complete absence after destruction (Jer. 51:61-64), emphasizing tremendous loss and irreversible nature of Rome's destruction, which again emphasizes warning to "come out" and God's justice in reckoning her tremendous wickedness.

Justice Restored

10. How are God's people contrasted with these three parties?
"Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her! ... And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth." (18:20, 24)
 † Because they "came out" and were "faithful unto death" to the Lord, they do not suffer the total loss of those who found their "god" in Rome.
 † Instead, they can take joy in the reckoning and restoration of justice. This represents the righteous joy associated with triumph of good over evil (11:10; Luke 15:23-32).
 † As the capital of the world empire, the city of Rome was responsible for the murder of saints committed throughout the empire, tying the harlot closely to the beast, unjustly condemning and killing them (Deu. 19:16-21).
 † Remember: She sat on the beast, controlling & influencing it, like the "heads".

"Not in You Anymore"

12. How is Babylon described after its fall?
"The sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore. The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived." (18:22-23)
 † Indicates removal of things that make for joy, happiness, construction, and progress.
 † Emphasizes destruction and ruin of this city.
 † Result of the decadent lust and immorality pedaled throughout the world.
 † "sorcery" (Gr., pharmakeia): use of drugs; metaphorically, use of drugs in deceiving, witchcraft, idolatry → "cup of wine of fornication ... made drunk ... deceived ... drunk with blood of the saints ... mix double" (17:2, 4-6; 18:3-6, 9)

Rome, the “Eternal City”?

- † **Challenge:** The entire city of Rome was never burned to the ground.
- † Furthermore, trade, commerce, marriages, businesses, and construction exist in Rome even today.
13. Can these symbols be reconciled with history? If so, how? If not, to what do they apply?
- † Rome did suffer tremendous damage to the city, population, and physical loss (410, 455, 546 AD). ... But, **Revelation** is a book of **symbols, not to be taken literally**.
- † The plagues ultimately target the **people, influencers** – not the buildings of Rome.
- † Therefore, critical to understand that the harlot, the “*great city*” represents the people of Rome, its spirit, glory, allure, image, reputation, and influence – the pagan, blasphemous, persecuting collective of John’s day.
- † This was utterly destroyed, even if not every building was burned to the ground.

Who Was Praising the Lord?

1. Who was praising the Lord? How extensive was the harlot’s destruction?
- After these things I heard a loud voice of ¹a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.” Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” And ²the twenty-four elders and ³the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!” Then ⁴a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!” And I heard, as it were, ⁵the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!” (19:1-6)*
- † All hosts of heaven and either angel, living creature, or possibly Jesus (**John 20:17**).

Revelation Trust God

Lesson 20 – The Marriage Feast

Who Was Praising the Lord?

- † In contrast with merchants, kings, and sailors, heaven **rejoices** over Rome’s fall!
- After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.” Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!” Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!” And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!” (19:1-6)*
- † Note, the finality of her destruction (**14:9-11**). She cannot overturn or return.

Rejoicing over the Harlot’s Destruction Revelation 19:1-6

God Has Judged the Great Harlot

2. How is God described in this context, and how does the judgment against the great harlot reflect this conclusion?
- After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! ¹Salvation and ²glory and ³honor and ⁴power belong to the Lord our God! For ⁵true and ⁶righteous are His judgments, because He has ⁷judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has ⁸avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.” Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!” ... And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God ⁹Omnipotent ¹⁰reigns!” (19:1-6)*
- † **All Powerful** – The city that conquered the world was conquered by God.

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After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! ¹Salvation and ²glory and ³honor and ⁴power belong to the Lord our God! For ⁵true and ⁶righteous are His judgments, because He has ⁷judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has ⁸avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her." Again they said, "Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!" ... And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God ⁹Omnipotent ¹⁰reigns!" (19:1-6)

† **Righteous** – The corrupting harlot who unjustly murdered was justly executed.

"His Wife Has Made Herself Ready"

4. How is the Lamb's wife described? What might be represented by this description? *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (19:7-8)*

† Represents ongoing betrothal, preparation period awaiting marriage feast.

† "To her it was granted" – Bride was given opportunity to array herself in pure linen. May allude to either love of her father or initial unworthiness.

† Ultimately, she prepares herself with righteous adornment, "righteous acts" (Titus 2:11-15; 3:1, 8, 14).

Preparation for the Marriage Feast Revelation 19:7-10

The Church – The Lamb's Bride

5. Who is represented by the Lamb's wife? Where else is this symbol used in Scripture? What might the "marriage supper" represent in this symbol?

† **Contract** – Father and Groom negotiates for bride, paying bride price (John 3:16, 29; Eph. 5:25; Acts 20:28).

† **Betrothal** – Period of separation, while bride prepares and sanctifies herself (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-27; Mat. 22:2-11) and groom makes preparations (John 14:2-3).

† **Procession** – Groom returns at unknown time with a shout to bring bride to marriage feast (Matthew 25:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

† **Feast** – Joy associated with Jesus' return and God's judgment (Matthew 25:1-13; Revelation 20:21; 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 10).

† **Cohabitation** – Living with the Lord in eternity in heaven (21-22).

Jewish Wedding Customs

"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." (19:7-9)

3. Research the primary phases of Jewish weddings. What is the general significance of the "marriage supper" or marriage feast?

† **Contract** – Groom or his father negotiates for bride, paying bride price (*ketubah* – marriage contract; *mohar* – bride price) Genesis 24:1-5, 52-53; 29:20-27; 34:11-17.

† **Betrothal** – Period of preparation time where bride and groom belong to each other, but live separately, and requires divorce to break. Deu. 22:23-26; Mat. 1:18-20.

† **Procession** – Groom comes at unknown time for his bride. Example: Mat. 25:1-13.

† **Feast** – Celebration with friends and family. Example: Matthew 22:2-11.

† **Cohabitation** – Groom and wife live together.

Contrasting Sides

Organization & Agents

† The Dragon – The Devil

† Sea Beast – Roman Empire

† Earth Beast, False Prophet

† Babylon, Harlot – City of Rome

† Marked Beast Worshipers

Message & Invitation

† Temporary Pleasure Now

† Threat of Temporary Persecution

Organization & Agents

† God on the Throne

† Jesus, Worthy Lamb on Zion

† Two Witnesses – Apostles

† ???

† Sealed 144,000 Saints

Message & Invitation

† Eternal Bliss Later

† Threat of Eternal Torment

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- † God on the Throne
- † Jesus, Worthy Lamb on Zion
- † Two Witnesses – Apostles
- † The Lamb's Wife – The Church
- † Sealed 144,000 Saints

Message & Invitation

- † Eternal Bliss Later
- † Threat of Eternal Torment

John Worships the Angel

6. Why was it inappropriate for John to worship the angel? What is emphasized by John falling at the feet of the angel to worship him?

And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus.

***Worship God!** For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (19:10)*

- † Angels were powerful beings, overwhelming in their own right (**Daniel 10:5-11**).
- † But, only God is to be worshipped (**Matthew 4:10**). From that perspective ...
- † The angel represents an equal, a fellow servant, a brother, a messenger of Jesus.
- † Emphasizes *exaltation* of God, Jesus by redirecting worship (**5:13; 4:11; Jn.1:1-2**) to whom all "*prophecy*" was pointing (**1:1**), emphasizing *power* of message.
- † Emphasizes the *overwhelming joy* associated with the angel's message.
- † Emphasizes the *challenge* in not being distracted even if in a moment – remaining "*chaste*" for extended betrothal time. Even John could lose focus (**12:11, 17!**)

The Betrothal – Preparation Time

5. Who is represented by the Lamb's wife? Where else is this symbol used in Scripture? What might the "*marriage supper*" represent in this symbol?

- † God has rejected previous potential brides, declaring them to be harlots (Assyria, Babylon, Tyre, Israel, Judah, Jerusalem, and now Rome).
- † The Lamb's wife represent those:
 - Purchased with the Lamb's blood (**Ephesians 5:22-27**).
 - Adorn themselves with "*proper*" righteous acts (**19:7-8; 1 Timothy 2:9-10**).

Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." (19:9)

- † Are we answering the call, or are we "*unworthy*" (**3:20; Mt.22:1-8; Lk.14:15-24**)?
- † Are we answering the call, but not appropriately dressed for the occasion (**19:7-8; Matthew 22:9-14**)?

Jesus and His Army Poised for Battle Revelation 19:11-16

The Betrothal – Preparation Time

5. Who is represented by the Lamb's wife? Where else is this symbol used in Scripture? What might the "*marriage supper*" represent in this symbol?

- † Will we be prepared if the "*bridegroom was delayed*" (**Matthew 25:1-13**)?
- † Will He find us waiting as a "*chaste virgin*" (**2 Corinthians 11:2-3**)?
- † The bride's price has been paid, but what of the groom's gift to the bride?

The Warrior King

7. What quality of Jesus is emphasized in verse 11? What is the significance of his fiery eyes and unknown name in verse 12? What can we learn from His robe and name given in verse 13?

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. (19:11-13)

- † Like the "*sayings of God*", Jesus is "*true*" to His word (**1:5; 3:7, 14**). He will defend His bride. We can depend on Him!
- † His war represents His righteousness – Upholds the righteous, judges the wicked.
- † His eyes represent His penetrating sight applied toward fiery judgment (**1:14; 2:18**).
- † Dragon had 7 diadems, the beast 10 diadems. But, Jesus has "*many*" – innumerable.

The Warrior King

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- † Generally, one's name represents and stands for identity (2:17).
- † Although God expects us to know Him (Heb. 8:10-11; 1 John 2:3-5), we can never fully anticipate Him. Only He fully knows Himself (Mat. 11:27).
- † He is identified as the very expression of God (John 1:1; 14:9; Heb. 1:3; Col. 2:9).
- † "Robe dipped in blood" may represent bride price (5:6), or connection to treading wine-press of God's wrath (14:20; Isaiah 63:1-6; 34:1-6) in following verses ...

Treading Winepress of God's Wrath

Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength? – "I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?

"I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes. For the day of vengeance is in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come. I looked, but there was no one to help, And I wondered That there was no one to uphold; Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; And My own fury, it sustained Me. I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, Made them drunk in My fury, And brought down their strength to the earth." (Isaiah 63:1-6)

- † Prophecy foretells Edom's destruction by Babylon and Greece – not end of world.
- † Realization of forewarned destructive harvesting (14:17-20; Lam. 1:15; Joel 3:9-16).
- † This time, He is not entirely alone. (He is alone in strength and righteousness, but there are "peoples with" Him, "armies in heaven ... followed Him".)

The King's Army

8. How is Jesus' army described? What lessons can be learned from this?

And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. (19:14)

- † Progression of vision sequence depicting God's persecuted people as seen in 6:9-11; 7:1-8 and 14:1-16, climaxed in 20:4 and 21:2-22:5.
- † "in heaven" suggest their abode at time of this final battle (see, 20:4).
- † Garments are similar to bride's ("fine linen"). Description is similar, although words are different ("clean and bright" versus "white and clean").
- † The "white" horses and clothes suggest assured victory (Jer. 12:5) – riding to victory with Jesus on the same "horses" as Him ... also, plurality "armies".
- † Jesus is our leader and captain. We follow Him and thereby conquer with Him (14:4; Hebrews 2:9-11). We cannot succeed by ourselves.

The Battle of Armageddon Revelation 19:17-21

King of Kings, Lord of Lords

9. How is Jesus described in verses 15 and 16, and how is this related to the looming battle?

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. (19:15-16)

- † Capable, intent & active in exacting God's wrath and judgment (Jn.12:48; Is.11:4).
- † Same word promising salvation from judgment brings judgment if at last ignored.
- † God and Jesus are merciful, but stubborn disobedience brings wrath (Rom. 11:22).
- † No matter how much authority is given by the dragon to the beast, Jesus' authority is greater in the kingdoms of men (Matthew 28:18-20; Psalm 2; 110), and He will destroy those that seek to destroy Him, His people.
- † Battle looms near for the title of "king of kings, lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:13-16).

An Alternative Supper

10. Is the "feast" described in this section the same as the "marriage supper of the Lamb" mentioned verse 9? Explain.

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great." (19:17-18)

- † No, this "feast" stands in stark contrast to the "marriage feast". It is the only alternative. No middle ground (Matthew 12:30).
- † For a sacrifice to be left to the birds was to allow it to ruin (Genesis 15:9-12).
- † To *not* be buried was a shameful disgrace (Jeremiah 7:33; 16:3-4; 22:18-19).
- † Invokes imagery previously used to describe end of nations threatening Israel. ...

A Feast for Birds of Heaven

"You shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples who are with you; **I will give you to birds of prey of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured.** You shall fall on the **open field**; for I have spoken," says the Lord GOD. ... And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, **"Speak to every sort of bird and to every beast of the field: "Assemble yourselves and come; Gather together from all sides to My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you. A great sacrificial meal on the mountains of Israel, That you may eat flesh and drink blood. You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, Drink the blood of the princes of the earth, Of rams and lambs, Of goats and bulls, All of them fatlings of Bashan. You shall eat fat till you are full, And drink blood till you are drunk, At My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you. You shall be filled at My table With horses and riders, With mighty men And with all the men of war;"** says the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 39:4-20; Zephaniah 1:4-8)

† Represents the dramatic destruction of these nations – not end of the whole world.

Contrasting Sides

Organization & Agents

- † The Dragon – The Devil
- † Sea Beast – Roman Empire
- † Earth Beast, False Prophet
- † Babylon, Harlot – City of Rome
- † Marked Beast Worshipers

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- † Eternal Bliss Later
- † Threat of Eternal Torment

Battle Lines Fully Drawn

11. Who is arrayed against the Lamb and His army? What previous passage tells of the Lamb's opponents gathering their armies? In that passage, what location is named for this great battle?

And I saw ¹the **beast**, ²the **kings of the earth**, and ³their **armies**, gathered together to **make war against Him** who sat on the horse and against His army. Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence ... (19:19-20)

† "kings", who allied with the harlot, were previously condemned (10:11; 17:1-18:9).

† 9:13-21 (?) – Sixth trumpet, army of 200,000,000 released to kill 1/3 of mankind.

† 16:12-16 – Sixth bowl, 3 unclean spirits like frogs come out of mouths of dragon, beast, and false prophet "go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of the that great day of God Almighty" at Armageddon.

† Here the Devil gathers his full strength and opposes the Lamb, the Word of God.

The Epic Battle to End All Battles?

13. How much detail of the actual battle is communicated? Significance?

- † Unsurprising that One who could *speak* the universe into existence and was crucified without elaboration would annihilate His enemies without details.
- † Emphasizes the **result** – sure and total victory.
- † Deemphasizes **battle**. Not even close; nothing to tell; no glorious last stands.
- † What does Armageddon represent?
- † Final conclusion between Jesus with His army and the Devil's puppet agents in Rome – the empire with its emperors, kings, and its supportive pagan, emperor worship.
- † Fought by spiritual armies (e.g., saints with gospel message, 2:16, 26-28; 14:1-16; 19:14) and providential, physical forces (e.g., "stirred up" competing nations, 9:13-21; 16:12-16; 19:17-18, 21; Isaiah 13:17-22).

The Result of Armageddon

12. What is the result of the battle? What is meant by this "lake of fire"? What does it represent? Which of these participants can return and which cannot?

... Then the **beast was captured**, and with him the **false prophet** who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. **These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.** And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh. (19:19-21)

† "The beast" (Roman empire, 13:1-10) and "the false prophet" (Roman paganism & emperor worship) are both captured and destroyed – never to return.

† "Captured ... cast alive" – Destroyed by unnatural causes – judged, executed.

† Remainder of army is killed but not yet "cast alive into the lake of fire burning".

† "The false prophet" is the "earth beast" from 13:11-14 because work is the same.

The Lamb's Heavenly Army

- † The Lamb's army consists of those who are "called and chosen and faithful" (17:14).
- † They are dressed not in armor but in "fine linen, white and clean", similar to the clothing of the "righteous acts of the saints" (19:8, 14).
- † This army consists of those whose "citizenship is in heaven" (Philippians 3:20), and whose "names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20).
- † The army is led by the Warrior-King from Heaven (19:11-14).
- † The only weapon mentioned is the sword that proceeds from the mouth of Christ, who additionally treads upon the enemies of God (19:15).
- † His heavenly armies ride to victory with Him, but they do not themselves strike, execute, judge – not physically (John 18:36; 2 Cor. 10:3-5). That is Jesus' work.

Armageddon and the Fall of Rome

- † Armageddon most likely does not represent a single battle, much less literal, carnal.
- † Fundamentally, the battle was a spiritual conflict, involving spiritual forces.
- † How were Sea Beast, Earth Beast, and their armies destroyed at Armageddon?
- † Godless Rome was **incrementally, increasingly** dismantled over centuries through moral rotteness, internal conflict, natural disasters, invading armies, political incompetence, economic disasters, and spiritual conversion.
- † Some events were more pivotal, dramatic than others. Some lost to history.
- † Examples: sacking of Rome, capture of Emperor, conversion of Constantine
- † Prolonged destruction matches incremental judgment recorded in **Revelation**, while providing ample opportunity to repent and redeem.
- † Eventually, not only was the reputation and allure of Rome broken, but the empire and its religion eventually was dissolved too. Nothing remains of those people and their persecution, war, and “machines”. ... Armageddon is final conclusion.
- † Like the omitted details of the battle, only the sure, final result matters – Jesus won!

The Binding of the Dragon

1. What happened to the Devil after his loss at Armageddon? Explain the nature of his imprisonment. In what way was he restrained?

*Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the **dragon**, that **serpent of old**, who is the **Devil and Satan**, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. (20:1-3)*

- † Must be interpreted figuratively given nature of the epistle (1:1) and the Devil (Ephesians 6:11-18; John 18:36; 2 Corinthians 10:3-5).
- † During binding period the Devil’s authority, influence, or power is diminished.
- † Like a dog on a chain, he still wanders within bounds (1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:4-8).

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 21 – The Millennium and
Eternal Judgment

The Binding of the Dragon

- † **How** is Satan limited for this time?
- † During binding period the Devil’s authority & power is diminished. **Generally**:
 - Control through demon-possession lost by casting out demons (Mark 3:22-27; Luke 10:17-20; Zechariah 13:1-2).
 - Influence through slavery to sin by Jesus’ conquering sin (Colossians 2:10-15; Romans 6:5-15).
 - Influence through the fear of death lost by Jesus’ conquering death (Hebrews 2:14-15).
 - Limited in temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13; James 4:7; Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 Peter 5:8-9).
- A. **Specifically**, represents reduced deceptive influence on global scale (“kings of the earth and the whole world”, 16:14; 17:2, 18; 18:3, 9; 19:9).
- B. God’s limiting command, judgment based on saint’s victory through Christ (12:11; 11:17-18; 19:6; 20:4-6; Job 1:6-12, 22-2:6; 42:7-17; Daniel 7:9-12, 21-27). ...
- † Other events occurring during this time and the time’s duration also help us to understand how the Devil might be limited. ...

The Millennium

Revelation 20:1-6

The Binding of the Dragon

1. How was the Devil restrained after his loss at Armageddon?
- Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the **dragon**, that **serpent of old**, who is the **Devil and Satan**, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. (20:1-3)*
- † During binding period the Devil’s authority, influence, or power is diminished.
 - † Specifically, represents reduced deceptive influence on **global** scale (“kings of the earth and the whole world”, 16:14; 17:2, 18; 18:3, 9; 19:9).
 - † Like a dog on a chain, he still wanders within bounds (1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:4-8).
 - † We’ll identify other events occurring during millennium before identifying it ...

The Saints' Reigning with Christ

And I saw **thrones**, and they sat on them, and **judgment** was committed to them. Then I saw the **souls of those who had been beheaded** for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had **not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.** ... "but they shall be **priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.**" (20:4, 6)

2. What other Scriptures refer to persecuted saints reigning with Christ?

"have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall **reign on the earth.**" (5:10)

† 6:9-11 – Souls under the altar who had been slain.

† 13:15-17 – Those who would not worship the beast were persecuted, killed.

† Dan. 7:14-27 – 4th beast is destroyed, Jesus receives the kingdom, saints possess it.

† Although dead ("beheaded"), they still judge, reign, and serve as priest.

† Reign is **from heaven** (with Christ), but **on earth** and occurring **during millennium.**

The Valley of Dry Bones

The hand of the LORD came upon me and **brought me out in the Spirit of the LORD**, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of **bones**. Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. And He said to me, "Son of man, **can these bones live?**" ... "Surely I will cause **breath to enter into you, and you shall live.** I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall **live.** Then you shall know that I am the LORD. ... Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may **live.** ... Son of man, these **bones are the whole house of Israel.** They indeed say, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!' Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, O My people, I will **open your graves** and cause you to **come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.** Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall **live,** and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken it and performed it," says the LORD.'" (Ezekiel 37:1-14)

† The Jews' **physical** return from **national** captivity was symbolized as a **resurrection.**

Fulfillment of Daniel 7?

3. Please compare the account up to this point with **Daniel 7:8-28.** What has not been fulfilled at this point in **Revelation?**

† Fourth Beast – the Roman Empire

† Terrible, exceedingly strong, iron teeth.

† Trampling the residue with its feet.

† Ten Horns – Pompous, blasphemous

† Jesus' ascension, coronation. He is given everlasting kingdom and dominion.

† Beast & his horns made war against the saints, persecuting them.

† Beast was slain – body destroyed in fire.

† *The kingdom and dominion given to the saints of the Most High to possess.*

† Notice, Daniel does **not** foretell anything after kingdom is turned over to the saints!

† **Daniel 7**, the most far reaching prophecy of OT, has been wholly fulfilled!

The First Resurrection

... And they **lived** and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did **not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.** Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the **second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.** (20:4-6)

4. Should we interpret this resurrection literally? How could this be described as a "resurrection"? In what way would it be the "first resurrection"?

† Terrible mistake to take literally. This is a book of symbols, signs (1:1).

† OT precedent for using a resurrection to refer to resurgence of power, influence, or one's cause (Isaiah 26:19; Hosea 13:14; Ezekiel 37:1-14).

† Same symbol already used of "two witnesses" to represent the resurgence of strength, validity, and confirmation in apostolic testimony despite their martyrdom (11:7-12).

† The unmentioned final resurrection alludes to bodily, preceding judgment (20:12).

† The faithful are exempt from the "second death", eternal condemnation in hell (20:14-15).

† Alternatively, "rest of the dead" may refer to resurrection of wicked people's cause, who died in Armageddon (19:21; 20:7-9), but seems overly complicated, not emphasized.

The First Resurrection

... And they **lived** and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did **not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.** Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the **second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.** (20:4-6)

4. Should we interpret this resurrection literally? How could this be described as a "resurrection"? In what way would it be the "first resurrection"?

† Terrible mistake to take literally. This is a book of symbols, signs (1:1).

† OT precedent for symbolically using a resurrection to represent a resurgence of power, influence, cause, or mission (Isaiah 26:19; Hosea 13:14). ...

How Do They Reign?

And I saw **thrones**, and they sat on them, and **judgment** was committed to them. Then I saw the **souls of those who had been beheaded** for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God ... And they **lived and reigned with Christ** for a thousand years. (20:4)

† Primarily, this reign refers to the martyred saints who are **now in heavenly realms**, but ...

... "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." (5:9-10)

5. How do these "beheaded" saints "reign on earth" from heaven, "with Christ"?

† Generally, the righteous **indirectly** judge, condemn the wicked through obedience, stripping their excuse (John 15:18-25; Hebrews 11:6-7; Romans 2:27; Matthew 12:41-42).

† Specifically, although personally in heavenly realms, the martyred saints' examples of extreme faithfulness, victory "reigns", influences, raises expectations for those still on earth.

† Example not only strips excuse of rebellious, but also inspires humble (Hebrews 11:32-12:3).

How Do They Reign?

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God ... And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. (20:4)

- † Primarily, this reign refers to the martyred saints who are now in heavenly realms, but ...
... "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." (5:9-10)
- 5. How do these "beheaded" saints reign "on earth" from heaven, "with Christ"?
- † Figuratively every time someone far from God considers their example, takes encouragement, and strives to be more like them, move closer to God, the dead again fulfill role of "priest".
- † How many people were converted – in some measure – by the influence of their example?
- † Almost 2000 years later, still talking about them, admiring, trying to live up to their example!
- † This "martyr spirit" (12:11; Mat. 5:13-16), epitomized by the "beheaded", is a key spiritual characteristic of saints that has "reigned", which we must uphold!

What, When is the Millennium?

- 6. What determines the beginning, ending, and duration of the millennium? What does it represent?
- † "Thousand years" is by far longest period of time mentioned in the Bible, much less prophetic texts.
- † By comparison, Daniel's visions of "seventy weeks" represent time from period of **Return from Captivity to Destruction of Jerusalem** – about 600 years (Daniel 9:24-27). No prophetic time period comes close to being so long.
- † Symbolically, what might the "1000 years" represent, $10 \times 10 \times 10$ (10^3)?
- † **10** – Full capacity, power of man
- † **3** – Extreme emphasis (4:8; 8:13; Isaiah 6:3; Jeremiah 22:29)
- † **7** – Complete work, bestowment of God, inherently limited by Him
- † $10 \times 10 \times 10$ (10^3): Complete and utter end of mankind's full potential, capacity – extreme emphasis.

What, When is the Millennium?

- 6. What determines the beginning, ending, and duration of the millennium? What does it represent?
- † Represents long period of time with the following identified attributes:
 - **Began** after the Devil's defeat at Armageddon, when:
 - "Sea beast" and "false prophet" were "cast alive into the lake of fire" (19:19-20; Daniel 7:7-11).
 - Roman Empire's attempt to overthrow Christ and His kingdom utterly failed (19:15-19).
 - Instead, Roman Empire was destroyed.
 - During which, the Devil is restrained, unable to "deceive the nations" (20:2-3).

What, When is the Millennium?

- 6. What determines the beginning, ending, and duration of the millennium? What does it represent?
- † $10 \times 10 \times 10$ (10^3): Complete and utter end of mankind's full potential, capacity – extreme emphasis.
- † Notice the complete absence of **7**. God is not directly setting the end time.
- † The end is determined by the capacity, power, strength of **man**!
- † Reappropriating description of the end of Jewish people to **all** people, the millennium ends "when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished" (Daniel 12:7)
- † Does not end when no Christians remain, not when "martyr spirit" is exhausted, because end occurs when, "the camp of the saints and the beloved city" are "surrounded" upon the "breadth of the earth" (20:9).
- † Reinforcing conclusion can be derived by examining God's revealed nature ...

What, When is the Millennium?

- 6. What determines the beginning, ending, and duration of the millennium? What does it represent?
- † Represents long period of time with the following identified attributes:
 - Despite their "beheading", the martyrs are "resurrected" with their message that Jesus is "King of Kings, Lord of Lords" (19:15-19).
 - Their message and extreme example "reigns" on the earth, resulting in conversion and enduring faithfulness (12:11; 20:4-6), figuratively, spiritually serving as "judges" and "priests".
 - Generally, Christ's kingdom is "delivered to the saints" (Daniel 7:13-14, 18, 22, 25-27) for them to reign, oversee, invest (Luke 19:11-28).
 - ... over a thousand years something happens, something changes ... what???
 - Ends with Devil's release, which is followed by a "little while", Devil resumes global deception, and then **maybe** (?) the end of the world (20:3, 7-15).

When Does God End Kingdoms?

- † When sin, wickedness reach a certain level:
But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete. (Genesis 15:16)
- Moreover all the leaders of the priests and the people **transgressed more and more**, according to all the abominations of the nations, and defiled the house of the LORD which He had consecrated in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent **warnings** to them by His messengers, **rising up early** and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they **mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy**. (2 Chr. 36:14-16)*
- The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is **longsuffering** toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)*

When Does God End Kingdoms?

- † What happens when the time comes, when longer time can no longer help?
 - † Generically, principally, for nations, kingdoms, peoples, what is that level?
- Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed. (6:11)*
- † God's goal for all nations, societies, **creation** is to produce saints (Rom. 8:19-23).
 - † God has historically preserved some nations past such times to serve as tools to judge, destroy other nations (Isaiah 10:5-15; Habakkuk 1:5-11; Jer. 13:14).
 - † But, what happens when there are no other nations left, when this dreadful state characterizes all nations, the entire world?
 - † What happens when the whole world "wages war" on the Lamb and His army?

Lessons? Applications

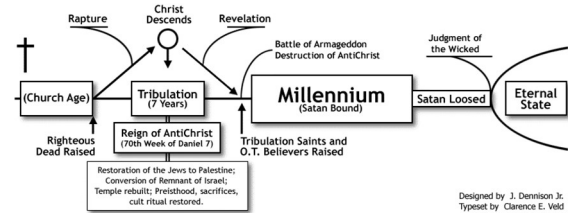
- † God has turned over the kingdom to the saints! How are **you** reigning?
 - † But, the burden also falls on the lost, the world! How long before the martyr's example no longer touches the heart of the sinner?
 - † Only the gospel has regenerative power to bring true, eternal life to individuals, peoples, societies, nations, the world (Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Ephesians 3:3-5).
 - † Are we about our Father's kingdom, His business (Matthew 6:33; Luke 2:49)?
 - † What must we do? Use God's armor, cast our cares on Him, grow in Him, and resist the Devil (Eph. 6:10-20; 1 Peter 5:6-10; 2 Peter 3:14-18; James 4:5-8; Psa. 119:30-46).
 - † Don't assume burdens not your own (Ecclesiastes 7:16-18; Daniel 12:9, 13).
 - † Jesus has already won the war (19:11-21; 20:9-15). We're redeeming the lost.
- "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20)*

When Does God End Kingdoms?

- † What happens when Christians "love not their lives to death" (12:11) around the world, but no one cares? No one notices? No one is swayed or affected? No one is converted?
- † What happens when the "number is completed" (6:11) of those than can be redeemed from **the world**? When the world can no longer produce saints?
- † What happens when all the spiritual strength and value of mankind is exhausted?

Best Explanation of the Millennium?

6. Which of the millennial views best fit the context? Why?
- A. Premillennial (Dispensational and Historical) – Jesus returns **before** literal 1000 year reign. May be dispensational (i.e., Jews are restored as special nation again).



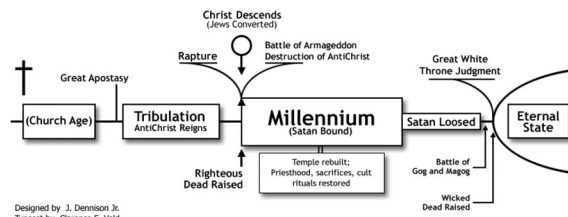
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When Does God End Kingdoms?

Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it. Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness," says the Lord GOD. "If I cause wild beasts to pass through the land, and they empty it, and make it so desolate that no man may pass through because of the beasts, even though these three men were in it, as I live," says the Lord GOD, "they would deliver neither sons nor daughters; only they would be delivered, and the land would be desolate. Or if I bring a sword on that land, ... Or if I send a pestilence into that land and pour out My fury on it in blood ... they would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness." For thus says the Lord GOD: "*How much more it shall be when I send My four severe judgments on Jerusalem – the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence – to cut off man and beast from it?" (Ezekiel 14:13-21)*

Best Explanation of the Millennium?

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- A. Premillennial (Dispensational and Historical) – Jesus returns **before** literal 1000 year reign. May be dispensational (i.e., Jews are restored as special nation again).



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Best Explanation of the Millennium?

6. Which of the millennial views best fit the context? Why?

- A. Premillennial (Dispensational and Historical)** – Jesus returns *before* literal 1000 year reign. May be dispensational (i.e., Jews are restored as special nation again).
- Primarily adopts literal interpretation ignores that book introduces itself as symbolic (1:1).
 - Arbitrarily switches between literal and figurative interpretations, abandoning consistency.
 - Principally futurist application ignores that the book's events "must *shortly* take place" (1:1).
 - Future application of "tribulation" and "kingdom" ignores immediate association (1:9).
 - Overlooks Jews are no longer God's special people (Rom. 9:6; 11:1-32; Zec. 11:6-14; Acts 10:34).
 - Ignores that the church is the kingdom of God and saints are in it now (Col. 1:13).
 - Passage does not mention essential elements: (1) Second coming of Christ (2) Bodily resurrection (3) Reign of Christ on earth (4) Literal throne of David (5) Jerusalem of Palestine (6) Conversion of Jews (7) Church on earth.
 - Not to mention it makes almost all major prophets, minor prophets, Jesus, and the apostles to be false prophets (Matthew 4:12-17; 10:1-7).
 - It also depicts God as less than Sovereign since Jews could thwart His promise.

Best Explanation of the Millennium?

6. Which of the millennial views best fit the context? Why?

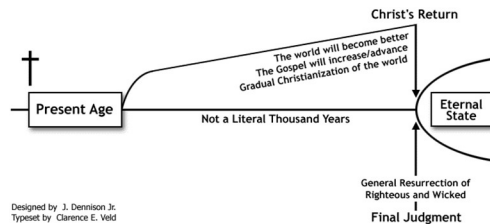
- C. Amillennial** – 1000 year reign is *symbolic*, long, indefinite time.
- C. Best fits symbolic nature of the book and matches immediate fulfillment of OT & NT prophets.



Best Explanation of the Millennium?

6. Which of the millennial views best fit the context? Why?

- B. Postmillennial** – Jesus returns *after* literal 1000 year reign – *utopia* to *heaven*.



The Devil's Last Rebellion Revelation 20:7-10

Best Explanation of the Millennium?

6. Which of the millennial views best fit the context? Why?

- A. Premillennial (Dispensational and Historical)** – Jesus returns *before* literal 1000 year reign. May be dispensational (i.e., Jews are restored as special nation again).
- B. Postmillennial** – Jesus returns *after* literal 1000 year reign – *utopia* to *heaven*.
- Shares the same fundamental failures of the Premillennial position because of its literal interpretation and postponed fulfillments of the prophets, including Jesus and the apostles.
 - Additionally, ignores many NT passages saying that things will generally get worse over time, not better, and relatively few saved (2 Timothy 3:1-13; 4:1-4; Luke 13:23-24; Matthew 7:13-14).
 - Furthermore, ignores the immediate context which indicates that Satan will have control of the vast majority of the world. Christians will be in the stark minority, not dominating majority (20:8-9).

Satan & the World ...

8. Who will the Devil enlist to help him in his final rebellion? What is the significance of this symbol?

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. (20:7-8)

- † "Nations in the four corners of the earth" – Indicates nations from all over the earth, the remotest regions – not a single kingdom or "beast", as before.
- † "Number is as the sand of the sea" – Additionally indicates that it is virtually everyone who is not a Christian aligns themselves with the Devil in this war, although likely unconsciously, not fully understanding what they are doing ("deceived"; 12:9; 13:14; Gen. 3:13; 2 Cor. 11:3, 13; Pr. 14:8; 2 Tm. 3:1, 12-14).
- † Who are "the nations, Gog and Magog"? What is the OT precedence for these?

Gog and Magog – Ezekiel 38-39

- † “Gog”, probably play on “Magog”, is only mentioned here in **20:8** and **Eze. 38-39**.
- † In **Ezekiel**, after judgment against Israel’s **external** enemies (surrounding nations, **25-32, 35**) and **internal** (corrupt, selfish shepherds, and moral depravity; **33-34**) ...
- † God recognizes that a confusing message is expressed by His corrupt people going into captivity, potentially causing people to assume God is weak or unfaithful (**36:17-24**). The nations – God’s people – **must know!**
- † This potential misunderstanding is eliminated by 3 events, works of God:
 1. Unliked Edom, God will restore physical Israel to their homeland (**34, 36-37**).
 2. God will establish the Messianic shepherd and His kingdom (**34, 37**).
 3. God will summon & defeat “Gog of Magog”, who will attack His people (**38-39**).
- † “Then you will know” Israel went into captivity only because of their sin, God is with His people, & He is greater than all enemies: **30:24, 27, 30-31; 35:9-15; 36:4-7, 11, 17-23, 32, 35-38; 37:6, 12-14, 23, 26-28; 38:16-18, 21-23; 39:6-8, 21-29**.

Gog and Magog – Ezekiel 38-39

- Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “On that day when My people Israel dwell safely, will you not know it? Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army. You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes. ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Are you he of whom I have spoken in former days by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years in those days that I would bring you against them?”’” (Ezekiel 38:14-17)*
- † Although Gog’s motive to conqueror will be to enrich self, God will steer and use them as example to “hallow” Himself, just as He did to Egypt and every person that exalted themselves over Him (**Exo. 9:13-16; Num. 20:13**).
 - † He will avenge His people, make clear He alone is king, exalted, and sovereign.

Gog and Magog – Ezekiel 38-39

- ... “Son of man, set your face against Gog, of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him, and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops – many people are with you.”’” (Ezekiel 38:1-7)*
- † “Gog of Magog”, despite leading a huge armored coalition from remote regions will fail in their attack because God is “against them” – emphasizing God’s strength.
 - † “Hooks in jaws” also used of turning around Egypt (**Eze. 29:4**) and Manasseh (**2 Chr. 33:11**).

Gog and Magog – Ezekiel 38-39

- “And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,” says the Lord GOD, “that My fury will show in My face. For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: ‘Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel, so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.’ I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains,” says the Lord GOD. “Every man’s sword will be against his brother. And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the LORD.” (Ezekiel 38:18-23)*
- † Judgment against “Gog, Magog” sounds like a summary of **Revelation 6-19** ...

Gog and Magog – Ezekiel 38-39

- “After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely. ... On that day it shall come to pass that thoughts will arise in your mind, and you will make an evil plan: You will say, ‘I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people ... to take plunder and to take spoil, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations ... Have you gathered your army to take spoil, to carry away silver and gold, to take away livestock and goods, to take great plunder?’” (Ezekiel 38:8-13)*
- † Much like Assyria, Gog’s intention will be to conqueror for self (**Isaiah 10:5-15**).
 - † The target of his attack will include remnant of God’s restored people living in “unwalled villages” (protected by God, physical to spiritual remnant; **Zec. 2:1-12**).

Gog and Magog – Ezekiel 38-39

- ... “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal; ... You shall fall upon the mountains of Israel, ... I will give you to birds of prey of every sort and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. ... And I will send fire on Magog and on those who live in security in the coastlands. Then they shall know that I am the LORD. So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not let them profane My holy name anymore. ... Indeed all the people of the land will be burying, and they will gain renown for it on the day that I am glorified.” ... And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Speak to every sort of bird and to every beast of the field: “Assemble yourselves and come; Gather together from all sides to My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you, ... So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day forward. ... I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, ... I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,’ says the Lord GOD.” (Eze. 39:1-29)*
- † Bodies of enemies left to rot in the fields, eaten by birds. Sounds like **Revelation 19**

Gog and Magog – Ezekiel 38-39

- † Result will be great earth-shaking destruction and feast for birds (Eze. 38:18-39:29).
- † Who was “*Gog of the land of Magog*” in Ezekiel 38-39?
- Chief prince of Magog, Meshech, and Tubal (38:2-3; 39:1) – sons of Japheth (Gen. 10:2).
 - Allies include Gomer and Togarmah (38:6) – son and grandson of Japheth (Gen. 10:3).
 - Additional allies include Persia (38:5) – possible descendant of Madai, son of Japheth (Gen. 10:2).
 - Other allies are Ethiopia and Libya (38:5) and Sheba and Dedan - descendants of Ham (Gen.10:6-7).
 - Tarshish (38:13) is also a descendant of Japheth (Genesis 10:4).
- † Why are these names used, “*Gog, Magog*”, in Eze. 38-39? How do they connect?
- Ancient genealogy of Gentiles, those opposed to God’s people, mostly on the outskirts of society, far removed from focus of the “Bible story”.
 - No descendant of Shem is mentioned!
 - Represents rebellious, unregenerate Gentiles, nations, who are undeveloped, uncivilized, tribal.

Ends in Fire

10. What is the result of this battle?
- They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And **fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.** (20:9)*
- † There is no delay, no stand-off, no battle, no Armageddon 2.0 – just fiery judgment.
- † “*Fire from heaven*” has **literally** been used to bring sudden destruction on the wicked, representing full, divine judgment (2 Kings 1:1-17):
- Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. (Genesis 19:24-25; also, Jude 7)*
- † Similarly, raining down “*fire from heaven*” is also used to represent the **literal** end of the world in other passages that are **not symbolic**. ...

Gog and Magog – Ezekiel 38-39

- † When did the prophesied attack of “*Gog and Magog*” in Ezekiel 38-39 occur?
- † Gog would attack in the “*latter years*” and “*latter days*” (38:8, 16) ...
- † ... Reference to Messianic era (Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:1; Daniel 2:28; 10:14).
- † Gog would seek to plunder defenseless “*unwalled*” people (38:10-13) ...
- † ... Reference to Messianic kingdom, the church (Zechariah 2:2-12).
- † Foretells God’s triumph over massive Gentile coalition in Messianic era against the Messianic kingdom (*spiritual* Israel, Rom. 9:6; Gal. 6:16), which would show God’s power, exalting Him above the Gentile kingdoms, reassuring His own people.
- † Ezekiel seems to figuratively point to then future **Roman** persecution from yet undeveloped Gentile tribes – the conflict described throughout Revelation 6-19!
- † So, how is this fulfilled symbol reused in Revelation 20:7-9? ...
- † Revelation adapts the symbol to point to the final earthly coalition against God.

Ends in Fire

10. What is the result of this battle?
- They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And **fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.** (20:9)*
- † There is no delay, no stand-off, no battle, no Armageddon 2.0 – just fiery judgment.
- ... since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power; when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed. (2 Thessalonians 1:6-10)*

... versus Christianity

9. Who will the Devil and Gog’s army attack this last time? Should this be interpreted literally? If not, who and what are represented by this symbol?
- They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. (20:9)*
- † Represents the individual Christians, “*camp (outpost, fort) of the saints*”, and the collective church, pictured as the “*beloved city*”, just as in 11:1-2.
- † Not a literal attack (1:1), but one last spiritual confrontation, possibly using a massive world empire and false religion again, allowed to “*deceive the nations*”.
- † **Lesson:** Critical to teach the lessons of Revelation to ourselves, our children, and for many generations because 12:11 will be required again for many Christians throughout remaining time and especially in end times.

Ends in Fire

- But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:7-13)*

The Devil's Fate

11. Does this represent a temporary or eternal judgment? How do you know? Please provide supporting Scriptures to reinforce your conclusion.

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. (20:10)

† Eternal – not imprisoned, but cast into lake of fire – no return – “forever and ever”.
“And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ... Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels’ ... And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matthew 25:30-46) ... both equally everlasting!

† Why would anyone want to share such a place – such a sentence – with the Devil?

The Canon

13. What is the extent of this judgment? Who is being judged? And, what is being used to judge them?

And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. (20:12-13)

† Judgment includes everyone – no distinction (Ecc. 9:2-3; Heb. 9:27; Jn. 5:28-29).

† More closely aligns to our concept of sentencing than determining (Luke 16:19-31).

† Three sources will be consulted in delivering our verdict and sentence:

- “The Book of Life” – Roll of righteous (3:5; 21:27; Ex.32:32-33; Mal. 3:16-17; Lk.10:20; Phi.4:3)
- “Their Works” – A person’s actions as well as their words judge them (Mat. 12:36-37; Jude 15).
- “The Books” – Represent revelation, Scripture – the Canon (John 12:48; Rom. 2:6-14; Heb. 1:1).

† Good intentions, motives are nowhere consulted in this judgment (Mat. 7:21-23)?

The Second Resurrection and Eternal Judgment Revelation 20:11-15

Death's Death

14. What else is destroyed at this time? What is the significance of their destruction?
Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. (20:14)

† Represents the end of death – no more death for anyone – only eternity awaits.

† “Hades” is the realm of the unseen (Luke 16:22, 23, 26) – no more waiting place between death and eternity.

So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 15:54-57)

“The Great White Throne”

Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. (20:11)

12. Why do “heaven and earth” want to flee from the One who sits on the “great white throne”? Why is there “no place ... found ... for them”?

† No bravado, no denying the inevitable. ... Time of testing is over (Psalm 11:1-6).

† Everyone will bow before God and Jesus (Philippians 2:9-11; Romans 14:11).

† Everyone will give an account for their actions (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10-12).

† There will be no escape from this judgment, despite the desire of many.

† That is terribly fearful thing especially for wicked (1 Pet. 4:17-18; Heb. 12:17-29).

† “Him who sat” on the “great white throne” likely represents Jesus (James 4:11-12):

“For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.” (John 5:22-23)

† Fleeing may represent dissolution of universe at His presence (Heb. 12:26-27; 2 Pet. 3).

Eternal Condemnation

Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. (20:14-15)

15. Can any of these condemned entities return? Are there any more remaining chances for forgiveness and second efforts at this point? How do you know?

† No – after death, only judgment (Hebrews 9:27).

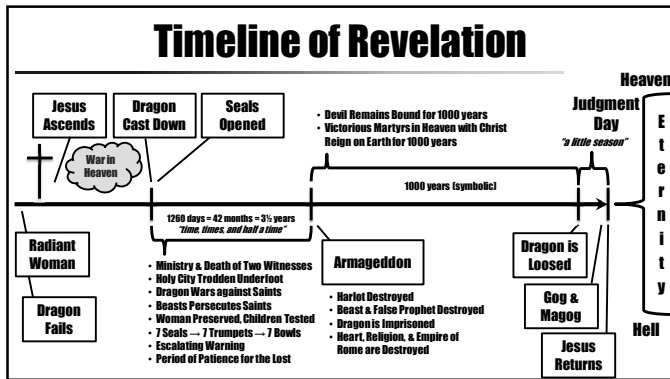
† This is the same place that holds the Devil, the Capital of Rome, the Roman Empire, and the Religion of Rome (19:20-21; 20:10). Can they come back?

† Heaven and hell coexist for eternity:

- Punishment last as long as reward (Matthew 25:41, 46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 14:9-11).
- Righteous serve God “day and night”. Wicked have no relief “day and night” (7:15; 14:11).
- Hell is place of “outer darkness”. Heaven has “no night” (Mat. 10:28; 22:13; 25:30; Rev. 21:25).
- Since day is in heaven and night in hell, one continues as long as the other (Harkrider, 237).

† Don’t forget the impartiality, mercy & love of God (Rm.2:11; 2Pt.3:9; 1Tm.2:3-4).

† Discuss meaning of the “second death” with 21:8. ...



"A New Heaven and a New Earth"

Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was **no more sea**. (21:1)

1. Why is a "new heaven and new earth" required? What is the significance of there being "no more sea"?

† Old heaven and earth represent corruption – spiritual and physical – cannot host the "incorruptible" (Leviticus 18:25-28; 1 Corinthians 15:49-55; 2 Peter 3:7-13).

For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. ... Then they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the LORD out of all nations ... to My holy mountain Jerusalem ... And I will also take some of them for priests and Levites," says the LORD. For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain." (Isaiah 65:17-18; 66:20-22)

† Refers to the sweeping changes introduced by Messianic kingdom – reapplied to end time.

† Sea? Dissolution of society, governments, earthly realm, no barrier to God (4:6; 13:1; 15:2).

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 22 – New Heaven, Earth, and Jerusalem

"Look for New Heavens and New Earth"

But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:7-13)

The New Heaven and the New Earth

Revelation 21:1-8

New Jerusalem and Its Tabernacle

2. What is special about the new dwelling place? Who else will be there?

Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God." (21:2-3)

† God's people have always been looking for "a city" (Hebrews 11:10-16).

† Cohabitation, the plan and promise from the beginning (Genesis 3:8; Exodus 6:7). I will set My tabernacle among you, and My soul shall not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people. (Leviticus 26:11-12)

† Plan after return from captivity (Jer. 24:6-7; 30:18-31:1; 32:28; Eze. 36:19-28).

† Plan for Messianic kingdom (Eze. 37:23-28; Hos. 1:10; 2:23; Rom. 9:26; 2 Cor. 6:16).

† Our citizenship and country is already in heaven (Philippians 3:20; Galatians 4:26).

† But, only fully realized in the eternity of heaven (Hebrews 12:22-24; 13:14).

† God's close presence is the greatest reward of heaven – to be with God!

The End of Anguish

3. How is this new dwelling place described?

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be ¹no more death, ²nor sorrow, ³nor crying. There shall be ⁴no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts." (21:4-6)

- † Like a Father, God wipes away our tears – nothing remains to make us cry.
- † Everything old is destroyed, all that is needed or wanted is made new, fresh.
- † "It is done!" – the prophetic past tense indicating certainty, no turning back.
- † "The Beginning and the End" – Represents His role as Creator and Judge (1:5-18).
- † "The fountain of the water of life" finally, fully realized (John 4:10-14).

The Second Death

"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (21:8)

- † Mentioned previously in 20:14.
- 6. In what way would the "lake which burns with fire and brimstone" be considered a "second death"?
 - † Like physical death, it represents a separation from the life giving source: *For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (James 2:26)*
 - † Hell represents a total separation from God – no more blessings on "the just and the unjust" (Matthew 5:45).
 - † Also, like death, represents a transition from which there is no return (Ecc. 9:3-6).

The Promise for Those Who Overcome

4. What promise does the Lord extend to those who "overcome"?

He who overcomes shall ¹inherit all things, and ²I will be his God and ³he shall be My son. (21:7)

- † In letters to seven churches, those who "overcame" received promises of blessing (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21) – here realized, elaborated, shown in more detail
- † Reiteration of promise, "I will be his God and he shall be My son", but now made personal and familial – individual will be "My son".
- † Represents adoption as acceptable sons finally, fully realized (Rom. 8:15, 23; Gal. 4:5-7; Eph. 1:3-6).
- † Additionally, "inherit all things" – receive the inheritance as a son – "all things".
- † What is left to want or desire beyond "all things"? What things could be better (John 14:1-3; Romans 8:18-24; 2 Corinthians 4:18-5:4; Colossians 3:1-4)?

The True Jerusalem Revelation 21:9-27

The Lake of Fire and Brimstone

5. What promise is extended to those who fail? How are they identified?

"But the ¹cowardly, ²unbelieving, ³abominable, ⁴murderers, ⁵sexually immoral, ⁶sorcerers, ⁷idolaters, and ⁸all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (21:8)

- † These people will also share in hell fire along with the Devil, Death, the beasts, false religion, and the harlot.
- † Murderers may be expected, but other types of sinners may be surprising ...
 - Cowardly, Fearful – More scared of immediate wrath of men (Heb. 10:38-39; Mat. 10:21-33).
 - Sexually Immoral – Reject God's regulations (Hebrews 13:4).
 - Sorcerers (*pharmakia*) – Those who use drugs to distort or induce visions.
 - All Liars – Not just the worst liars, but *all* liars – include self-deceived (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).
- † Other passages supplement this list: Rom. 1:26-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-21.
- † But, they are all incomplete, not exhaustive – "and such like" (Gal. 5:21).

The True Jerusalem Revelation 21:9-27

"The Great City, Holy Jerusalem"

7. What did the angel promise to show John? What did John actually see? How can the two be reconciled? What is implied by the city "descending out of heaven from God"?

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God (21:9-10)

- † Promised to show "the bride, the Lamb's wife" but instead showed "the great city, the holy Jerusalem". ... How are they equivalent?
- † As with Rome (17:1-18), Babylon, Tyre, Nineveh, earthly Jerusalem, the collective people of heavenly Jerusalem are personified as a woman, bride (19:7-14; Gal.4:26)
- † Emphasizes sad potential of previous peoples and preciousness of the Lamb's bride.
- † Descent from heaven symbolizes God's provision, not from men (Gal. 1:11-24).

The City Four-Square

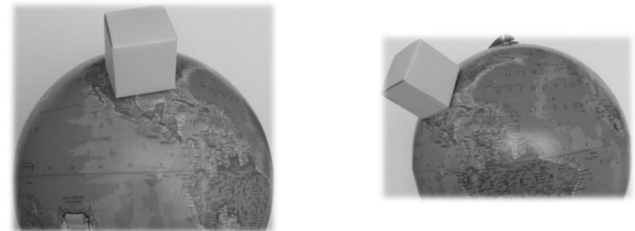


Abundant, but Limited Access

8. What symbols are used to indicate that this city is perfect for all of God's people? ... *having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (21:11-14)*

- † God fills it with "glory, light" ("jasper", 4:3; Exo. 40:34; 1 Kings 8:11; Eph. 2:22).
- † "Great and high wall" represents unbreachable security, protection, and safety.
- † "Twelve gates" indicate access for all of God's people, guarded by "twelve angels".
- † "Three gates" from all four directions (east, north, south, west) emphasize abundant access for all peoples, nations ("tribes"), but watched by "angels" (Gen. 3:24; 1Pt. 1:12; Hb.1:14).
- † "Twelve foundations" indicate stability for the city to host all of God's people (Lk. 6:47-49).
- † "Names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" points to their critical witness (Eph. 2:19-22), again highlights limited access, fellowship (Mat. 19:28; 1Jn 1:1-4; 4:1, 6), uniting OT & NT.

The City Four-Square



The City Four-Square

And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. (21:15-18)

- † Similar to Messianic temple visions of 11:1-2; Eze. 40-48, but by angel with golden reed.
- † "Twelve thousand furlongs" (1400-1500 miles) implies ample room for all of God's people.
- † The "square" base and "equal ...length, breadth, and height" implies symmetry, beauty, and perfection – reminiscent of inner sanctuary cube for ark of the covenant of Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:18-20). ... The whole city is one giant sanctuary, the ultimate most Holy place!
- † Over 2/3 the area of the continental United States of America, over 2/3 volume of moon!!!

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- † Over 2/3 the area of the continental United States of America, over 2/3 volume of moon!!!
- † The thickness of the wall, 12 x 12 cubits, emphasizes reinforced strength to either protect all people inside or keep out all people ("though they join forces", Proverbs 11:21; 16:5).
- † Beyond Solomon's temple overlaid in gold (1 Kings 6:21-22), the whole city is pure, clear, shining gold – superlative beauty, preciousness, and value, unknown to man.

Beauty Untold

The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoptase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. (21:19-21)

- † Generally, foundations indicate all vivid colors and most precious value.
- † Specifically, likely refers to all people of spiritual Israel, all people (Exo. 28:15-21).
- † Or, if interpreted as spiritual virtues, then city's foundation reflects all spiritual virtues of God
- † "Twelve gates ... each ...of one pearl" – indicate extravagant beauty for all of God's people.
- † Even the most common things are beautiful – even the "street of the city was pure gold".
- † "Like transparent glass" either indicates stunning beauty and value unlike anything known.
- † All of these symbols emphasize ultimate desirability with brilliant glory, ample room, and abundant access to all, provided you enter God's way!

The Glory and Honor of Nations

And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. ... And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. (21:24, 26)

- 11. In what way is "the glory and the honor of nations" brought into the city? What is the "glory and honor of all nations" (see Haggai 2:6-9; Micah 4:2; Zechariah 2:10-12; 14:14; Isaiah 60)?
 - † In spiritual terms, what is the most glorious, honorable treasure to be offered by a nation and its king except its holy, spiritual remnant (Haggai 2:6-9; Micah 4:1-2; Zechariah 2:10-12; Isaiah 60)? Saved people are their true wealth in God's eyes!
- "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him." (Mal.3:17)*
The LORD their God will save them in that day, As the flock of His people. For they shall be like the jewels of a crown, Lifted like a banner over His land ... (Zec. 9:16)

No Temple, Sun, or Moon?

9. Why is no temple structure or sun required to illuminate the city?
But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. (21:22-23)

- † No representation of God or monument to Him is required, because He is there!
- † In contrast to:
 - Tabernacle used during early Jewish history.
 - Temple used from time of Solomon.
 - Church providing a spiritual temple (1 Cor. 3:16; Eph. 2:21-22), reflecting God on earth.
 - In heaven, we will dwell directly with Him in His home, not Him indirectly here on earth.
- † No light source is required to provide visibility, direction, understanding, wisdom, hope or glory, because God and Jesus provide an infinite source.
- † Emphasizes direct access, communication with God (Psalm 119:104-105, 130).

"The Wealth of All Nations"

"For thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. And I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations; and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD of hosts. 'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts, 'and in this place I shall give peace,' declares the LORD of hosts." (Haggai 2:6-9 NASB)

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD'S house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (Micah 4:1-2)

Land of Eternal Day

10. What is the significance of there being "no night there"?
- Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). (21:25)*
- † Implies that the light provided by God will never diminish or darken:
- This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5)*
- Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. (James 1:17)*
- † He will never lose power nor His character weaken.
 - † Also, there will be no end to the direction, wisdom, guidance, understanding, hope, and fellowship provided by Him.
 - † Glories there will never fade nor go away. Not temporary "filling" as before.
 - † No need to ever shut the gates indicates eternal absence of threat.

"Kings, Wealth of the Gentiles"

The Gentiles shall come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar; And your daughters shall be nursed at your side. ... Because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, The wealth of the Gentiles shall come to you. ... Therefore your gates shall be open continually; They shall not be shut day or night. That men may bring to you the wealth of the Gentiles, And their kings in procession. For the nation and kingdom which will not serve you shall perish. And those nations shall be utterly ruined. ... But you shall call your walls Salvation, And your gates Praise. The sun shall no longer be your light by day, Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, And your God your glory. Your sun shall no longer go down, Nor shall your moon withdraw itself; For the LORD will be your everlasting light, And the days of your mourning shall be ended. Also your people shall all be righteous; They shall inherit the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified. (Isaiah 60:3-21; also, Zechariah 14:7-21)

- † Reuses the symbol, the gathering into the Messianic kingdom of all nations' remnant, providing spiritual relationship with God, now fully realized in His direct immediate presence in heaven.

A Pure, Holy City

12. What is not brought into the city? Lessons?

But there shall by no means enter it anything that ¹defiles, or ²causes an abomination or ³a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. (21:27)

† Indicates requirement for holiness (Zechariah 5, 14):

as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15-16)

† Also indicates requirement to be acknowledged by Jesus (Matthew 7:21-23).

† Reminded explicitly, emphatically that there is no way into the city but by God's will, fellowship, acceptance – simultaneously abundant, ample, but limited, controlled, conditional access – before He "shuts the door" (Luke 13:25).

† Emphasizes security, safety, but importantly warns against insincere, half-hearted, double-minded commitment. We must continually move toward holiness, purity!

Paradise Regained Revelation 22:1-5

Church or Heaven?

† Preterists often apply this vision of the heavenly city to the present church. Fit?

† Follows millennium (20:2-7), longest time period specified in the Bible.

† Revealing of city follows eternal judgment (20:9-13).

† Follows dissolution of earth and heaven (20:11; 21:1).

† Follows judgment unto water of life or lake of fire (20:15-21:8).

† Rewards are comparable to those blessings provided elsewhere *after death*:

- Wear robes of white (6:11; 7:14).
- Serve God day and night in His temple in heaven (7:14-17; 11:19; 21:22).
- Experience no hunger, thirst, nor heat (7:16).
- Lamb feeds them and wipes away all tears (7:17).
- Eat of the tree of life in the paradise of God (2:7).
- Given a crown of life and not hurt by second death (2:10-11).
- See God's face which is impossible upon earth (22:4; 1 John 4:12).
- Reign forever – not just 1000 years (22:5).

† Chronology, description, superlatives and finality fit heaven better than church.

The River of Life

1. What flowed through the city? Where else is this symbol used in the New Testament? What does its usage here suggest?

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. (22:1)

† A river watered the paradise of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:10).

† Jesus offered the "water of life" to the Samaritan woman (John 4:10-14).

† Foreshadowed in Ezekiel's Messianic vision of river flowing out from under the temple threshold to the sea, healing the sea, and providing perennial fruit trees (Ezekiel 47:1-12; also, Joel 3:18; Zechariah 13:1; 14:8).

† Contrast to poisoned, bitter waters of "wormwood", judgment (8:10-11; 16:4-7).

† First direct reference to joint throne of "God and of the Lamb" (3:21; 5:6, 13; 6:16; 7:10, 17; 12:5). Allude to fulfillment of 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Philip. 2:6-7?

Revelation

Trust God

Lesson 23 – Conclusion of All Things

The Tree of Life

2. What grew in the city, and what did it provide? Where else is this symbol used in Scripture? How is it used here?

In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (22:2)

† "The tree of life" originally was located in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9).

† Man was denied access to it after his fall (Genesis 3:22-24).

† Substantial allusions in Messianic symbol of bountiful trees with fruit for food and leaves for healing (Ezekiel 47:7, 11-12), reused and fully realized in heaven (2:7).

† Incidentally, this symbol of life-giving is also applied to wisdom, soul-winning, realized hope, and a "wholesome tongue" (Proverbs 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4).

† If mature Christians are symbolized as fruit-bearing trees (9:4), the ultimate tree of life would suggest access to God Himself, enough for all people, all needs, all time!

Better than Eden

3. How does this final scene resolve the conflicts and questions that arose in **Gen. 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**. They shall see **His face**, and **His name shall be on their foreheads**. There shall be **no night there**: They need **no lamp nor light of the sun**, for **the Lord God gives them light**. And they shall **reign forever and ever**. (22:3-5)*
- † Spiritual curse of sin was removed in Jesus (**Gal. 3:13; Zec. 14:11, NASB**).
 - † But, finally, both the curse and death from **Genesis 3** have also ceased.
 - † A tree of life and a paradise better than Eden is regained because man dwells with God, sees Him face to face without any fear. Man is finally, fully reconciled to God (**3:12; 7:3; Exo. 33:17-23; Jn. 1:18; 14:7-9; 1 John 3:1-2; 4:12; 2 Cor. 5:17-21**).
 - † Notice reoccurring emphasis on no night nor need of sun because God is the light.
 - † Man finally realizes the ultimate activity in service to God (**Ecc. 3:10-11; 12:13**).
 - † Here, man achieves his ultimate purpose, victory, home – “*reign forever and ever*”.

“Faithful and True”

5. Throughout this book multiple things and people are designated as “*faithful and true*”. What is the significance generally attached by this label, and how is it used here?
- A. “*And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says **the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness**, the Beginning of the creation of God’” (3:14)*
- B. “*Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And **He who sat on him was called Faithful and True**, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.* (19:11)
- C. “*Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, **I make all things new**.’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for **these words are true and faithful**.’” And He said to me, “**It is done!** I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.” (21:5-6)*
- D. “*Then he said to me, ‘**These words are faithful and true**.’” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. (22:6); “*Mouth of 2, 3 witnesses*” (11:3; **De.19:15-19; Mt.18:16; 2Co.13:1; 1Tm.5:19**)*
- † Absolutely dependable, certain message, as reliable as Jesus Himself.

An Untied Loose End?

- † Try to imagine how the fiery visions of hell, judgment, and punishment contrasted with the brilliance, glory, fulfillment of heaven would have encouraged saints facing martyrdom and persecution (**13:9-10; 14:12-13**). . . . How will it strengthen you?
4. What remains unresolved or unsettled at this point? What is left to accomplish or decide?
- ... *And they shall reign forever and ever.* (22:5)
- † This represents the conclusion of all things, the happy ending – “*they lived happily ever after*”.
 - † At this point in the timeline of **Revelation**, all things are concluded and satisfied.
 - † All that remains is *us*. Will **we** “*overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death*” (12:11)?
 - † This “loose end” has been addressed all throughout the book. Were you listening?
 - † All that remains is the final appeal and invitation of revelation – and your response.

“Must Shortly Take Place”

6. What is said that indicates this book applied to events close to the people of the 1st century? How can this be reconciled with parts of chapters **20-22** which seem to refer to the end of the world and eternity in heaven, events transpiring at least 2000 years later?
- Then he said to me, ‘These words are faithful and true.’ And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which **must shortly take place**. Behold, **I am coming quickly!** Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.” (22:6-7)*
- † How can 2000 years later be in any way considered “*shortly*” or “*quickly*”?
 - † The chapters of **Revelation** depict 3 times, periods, or windows of judgment:
 - Imminent judgment of churches to whom epistle was written (1-3).
 - Prolonged, incremental judgment of Roman capital, empire, and religion (4-19).
 - Sudden end of the world, judging the Devil and all people, both living and dead (20-22).
 - † **Bulk** of application would begin immediately and complete within a few generations.
 - † Remainder of application is buffered by **largest time period** in the Bible – a **millennium**.

Urgency and Immediacy of Application Revelation 22:6-21

“Keep the Words of this Book”

*“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who **keeps the words of the prophecy of this book**.” (22:7)*

7. How would one “*keep the words of the prophecy of this book*”? What does it require of men?
- † Do not forget them and become discouraged (**6:9-11; 11:1-10; 12:10-17; 13:14-17**).
 - † Remember them and draw comfort and hope from them (**7:9-17; 14:12-13; 21:22**).
 - † Obey the commands to abstain from immorality and defilement (**18:4-5**). Do not be drawn into fellowship and compromise with recipients of judgment and desolation (**13:15-17; 14:7-12; 17:2-7**).
 - † Follow the pattern of faithfulness, confession and endurance demonstrated by godly saints who have gone before us, “*whose faith follow*” (**12:11; 20:4-6; Heb. 13:7**).

John Worships the Angel – Again

Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book, Worship God." (22:8-9)

8. What can we learn from John's second attempt to worship the angel? What does this imply about the message, nature of angels, and nature of God?
- † Indicates overwhelming power of this message and importance of keeping, obeying, guarding "this book", emphasizing Jesus' previous admonition.
 - † Failure of this hero – twice – points to the genuine authorship and divine revelation.
 - † Possible this is the same event recounted, expanded to include and emphasize messages concerning keeping and sealing this book ...
 - † Is it hard to imagine John's error, when we worship men too easily (1 Cor. 1-4)?
 - † John adds his eye-witness to the Father's and Son's witness (John 19:35; 21:24).

"I Am Coming Quickly"

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work." (22:12)

11. Almost 2000 years have passed since Jesus left and promised to return, "coming quickly"? Even if He returned today, how could that be considered "quickly"? Or, is something else under consideration?
- † Refers to His imminent judgment on churches & Rome, not final return (2 The. 2:1-8).
 - † Jesus' return is often connected with judgment of nations and peoples in time – for example, destruction of Jerusalem foretold by Jesus:
- Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Matthew 24:30)*
- Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matthew 26:64)

"Do Not Seal – Time is at Hand"

9. Why was John told to "not seal the words of the prophecy of this book"? In contrast, what Old Testament prophet was instructed to seal up his prophecy? What reason was given to him? What was the object of fulfillment for his prophecy? How does this help us interpret the book?

And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand." (22:10)

- † Indicates urgency and imminent time of application, fulfillment. Compare to Daniel's time: "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase. ... Go your way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." (Daniel 12:4-10; also, 8:26)
- † Applied to destruction of temple by Antiochus Epiphanes (8:26) and Jerusalem, 600 years later, "many days yet to come" (Daniel 10:14; 12:1-3, 7, 11).
- † If 600 years was too far away to leave unsealed, how can 2000+ years be too near to seal?

Unescapable, Imminent Judgement

12. What contrast is again emphasized by Jesus? Why is this being repeated?

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie." (22:12-15)

- † Judgment was imminent, so must prepare – not ignore.
- † Judgment will be based on our works – not intentions, family, wealth, status, etc.
- † Jesus' judgment is unavoidable – nobody before or after Him offering alternatives.
- † "Dogs" symbolize living like animals without moral restraint (Deu. 23:17-18) and rejecting God's teaching (Psalms 22:16, 20; Philippians 3:2; 2 Peter 2:22).
- † Obedience would bring blessing, immortality – otherwise, condemnation.
- † Preparing for judgment by repentance, rededication is all that mattered then & now.

"Be Unjust Still, Filthy Still"

"He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still." (22:11)

10. Why would God want the "unjust" and "filthy" to continue in their sins? How can this be reconciled with 2 Peter 3:9 and a God who wants everyone to repent and be saved?
- † God truly wants everyone to be saved (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4; James 1:13).
 - † As a consequence, He is extremely patient giving every opportunity (2 Peter 3:9).
 - † However, there comes a point where patience will not help ("there is no remedy", 2 Chr. 36:26). At that point, only judgment remains, and it need not be delayed (10:6): "So do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not hear them in the time that they cry out to Me because of their trouble." (Jeremiah 11:14)
 - † The only repentance possible for these people would be an insincere, incomplete response, which God would acknowledge, but it would only serve to delay the inevitable and prolong evil's reign (1 Kings 21:18-29; 22:1, 8, 14-39).

Jesus, the Spirit, and the Bride Invite

"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. (22:16-17)

13. Why are the number, nature, and identity of the people inviting us especially encouraging?
- † Jesus is the Judge (22:12; John 5:22), and He does not want anyone to be lost (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4).
 - † "Root, Offspring of David" reminds of the fulfilled Messianic prophecies (3:7; 2 Sam. 7).
 - † "Bright and Morning Star" indicates a new day and a clear direction (2:28; Num. 24:17).
 - † The angels also are invested in our salvation, wanting us to be saved (Heb. 1:14).
 - † The Spirit is Revelator, Comforter (Jn. 14:16-18, 26; 16:7), who also wants us to be saved.
 - † The Bride, consisting of all who have been saved before us, want us to be saved.
 - † All who are good and honorable are pulling for us, wanting us to answer the invitation.
 - † Recognize your need, are "thirsty" (Jn. 4:10-15)? Not for those content with present world.

“Do Not Add To ... Or Take Away”

14. What warning is attached to this book? Does it only apply to the book of **Revelation**? Why or why not?

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. (22:18-19)

† Specifically, yes. Generally, no. Many other books have similar, but even broader warnings: Deu. 4:2; 5:32; 12:32; 17:9-13; Pro. 4:26-27; Jos. 1:7; 23:6; Psa. 89:34; 1 Cor. 4:6; 2 Cor. 11:3-4; Gal. 1:6-9; Heb. 7:12-14; 2 Pet. 3:16-18 ... Why not change? What is the danger?

There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death. (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25; 12:15; 16:2; 28:26)

O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. (Jeremiah 10:23)

• Do not be a Jehoiakim (Jeremiah 36:23) or Pharisee (Mat. 15:3-9; 23:2-5; James 2:10)!

Lessons? Overall and Specific?

16. What is the overall lesson of this book? What are the most important lessons you have learned from the study of this book? How will this affect your outlook on life, decisions you make, and commitment to Christ?

- † Most complete description of the hope that inspires us to press on – eternal heaven with God (**Heb.6:19**).
- † Shows God is just, righteous & active, although His timetable may be slower than our desire (**2 Pet. 3:9**).
- † Emphasizes that so many “important” things are irrelevant, trivializing and eliminating our daily worries:
 - Wealth (**Matthew 16:26**)
 - Health
 - Earthly relationships (**Matthew 10:21-42**)
 - Earthly fame, honor, and notoriety
 - Conveniences, luxuries, pleasures, sports, entertainment, distractions, vacations and gadgets ...
 - All that matters is our relationship with God and helping others to share the same!
- † Trivializes pursuits for dominance in relationships, holding grudges. So many arguments stop mattering.
- † Raises our bar for mental toughness, determination, suffering – eliminating pity parties.
- † Scandalizes our resistance to moral restraints (modesty, sexual purity, alcohol, drugs; **Ez.36:32;43:10-11**)
- † Emphasizes the value of God’s family who truly choose Him, truth, and thereby each other.

“I Am Coming Quickly” – Again

He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. (22:20-21)

15. Why does Jesus remind one last time, “Surely I am coming quickly”? Lessons?

- † For many reasons, we too easily forget even the most deeply impressed convictions (**Exodus 32:1-8; Matthew 13:20-22; 2 Timothy 2:3-5**).
- † Vigilance, steadfastness, remembering the imminent judgment and blessings would help protect from compromise, temptation.
- † Although “quickly” is synonymous with “at hand” in the context (**22:6-7, 11-12**), it is profitable to recall that it will **also** be quick in the sense of sudden and unexpected (**Matthew 24:42-25:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4; 2 Peter 3:10**).
- † Whenever, however He returns, may He find us faithful (**Lk. 18:8; Mt. 24:42-47!**)

Charging the Mountain

*Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And **they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.** (12:10-11)*

Remember the martyrs! Maybe more importantly, remember what they remembered: eternal salvation and home in heaven with Jesus, God, and the Spirit!

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. (22:21)

Lessons? Overall and Specific?

16. What is the overall lesson of this book? What are the most important lessons you have learned from the study of this book? How will this affect your outlook on life, decisions you make, and commitment to Christ?

- † How does it apply to us, if it originally applied to Christians of the first few centuries?
 - How do the stories of Noah, Abraham, the Israelites, David, Solomon, Jesus, Peter, and John apply (**Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:1-12?**)
 - Recognize underlying, general principles apply them in similar circumstances (**Ecclesiastes 1:4-11**).
 - Remember, hope, and focus on the victory and joy that awaits us if we are faithful.
- † What are the great threats of our day? How would they compare with the world empire of Rome, its pagan emperor worship, and its sensual, corrupt capital?
 - Atheism, secularism, humanism, stereotypical millennial generation – worship of man and mankind.
 - Militant, radicalized Islam – persecuting Christians and Christianity
 - Communist Nations – opposed to Christianity
 - Homosexual and Transgender Campaigns – opposed to Christian morality and even Christianity
 - Hollywood, News Media, Pornography – mocks Christianity and seduces the world into sin
 - Abortion Campaign – depraved, organized, murdering hundreds of thousands of innocent babies
 - ... Multitude of evil forces, but not yet mutually reinforcing and worldwide.
- † Eliminates the fear of death (**Heb. 2:15; Rev. 12:11**). Offers surpassing fear (hell) and hope (heaven).

Revelation
Trust God

Extras

Revelation

Trust God

Appendix – Related Prophecies of Daniel

Bonus: The Seven Blessings

17. Seven blessings are dispersed throughout the letter. Find them and record them here.

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near. (1:3)

Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: **Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."** "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." (14:13)

"Behold, I am coming as a thief. **Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments,** lest he walk naked and they see his shame." (16:15)

Then he said to me, "Write: **Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!**" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." (19:9)

The Ram and the Goat

Daniel 8

Bonus: The Seven Blessings

17. Seven blessings are dispersed throughout the letter. Find them and record them here.

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. (20:6)

"Behold, I am coming quickly! **Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.**" (22:7)

"**Blessed are those who do His commandments,** that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city." (22:14)

† Blessings help us understand some of the most important lessons and application of the book ...

The Great Ram

16. Describe the first beast. How does Daniel's depiction of his geography in his vision help identify the first beast? Who is represented by the first beast?

In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me – to me, Daniel – after the one that appeared to me the first time. I saw in the vision, and it so happened while I was looking, that I was in Shushan, the citadel, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in the vision that I was by the River Ulai. Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, ¹standing beside the river, was a ²ram which had ³two horns, and the two horns ⁴were high; but ⁵one was higher than the other, and ⁶the higher one came up last. I saw the ram ⁷pushing westward, northward, and southward, so that ⁸no animal could withstand him; ⁹nor was there any that could deliver from his hand, but he did ¹⁰according to his will and became great. (Daniel 8:1-4)

† Ram was located by a capital of Persia, Shushan (Susa)

† Represents Medo-Persian empire (8:20), "kings of Media and Persia".

The Two Horns

17. How are its two horns described, and what might this suggest?

*Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and there, standing beside the river, was a ram which had two horns, and the two horns were **high**; but one was **higher than the other**, and the **higher one came up last**. (Daniel 8:3)*

† Persians would become strongest, most dominant people of the joint empire.

† But, Medes were stronger in the beginning:

- Darius, who conquered Babylon, was a Mede (**Daniel 5:29; 9:1**).
- Cyrus, who released the Jews, and all following kings were Persian (**Ezra 1:1**).

The Four Horns

*Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was **broken**, and in place of it **four notable ones** came up toward the four winds of heaven. (Daniel 8:8)*

20. What is indicated by the breaking of the large horn into four other smaller horns?

*"And the male goat is the **kingdom of Greece**. The large horn that is between its eyes is the **first king**. As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, **four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power**." (Daniel 8:21-22)*

*Dissension and rivalry soon afflicted the Macedonians, however. The satrapies handed out by Perdiccas at the Partition of Babylon became power bases each general used to bid for power. After the assassination of Perdiccas in 321 BC, Macedonian unity collapsed, and 40 years of war between "The Successors" (Diadochi) ensued before the **Hellenist world settled into four stable power blocks**: ¹Ptolemaic Egypt, ²Seleucid Mesopotamia and Central Asia, ³Attalid Anatolia, and ⁴Antigonid Macedon. In the process, both Alexander IV and Phillip III were murdered. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_the_Great#Division_of_the_empire (2017-05-20)*

† "**Four kingdoms**" could be symbolic, representing division of the map (**Jeremiah 49:36**).

The Notable Horn

18. How is the second beast described? What is notable about its horns, and what might this suggest?

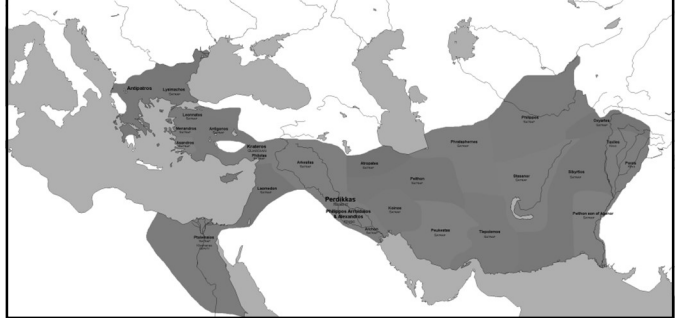
*And as I was considering, suddenly a **male goat came from the west**, across the surface of the whole earth, **without touching the ground**; and the goat had a **notable horn between his eyes**. (Daniel 8:5)*

† The first king of this second empire, Greece, would be extremely powerful – Alexander the Great.

† His mission to conquer the world was his primary goal, "front and center", "between his eyes".

† Alexander's father, Phillip II of Macedon, was also a great king, but the kingdom only spread "across the surface of the whole earth without touching the ground" under Alexander's rule.

Result of the Babylon Partition



The Ram's Rage

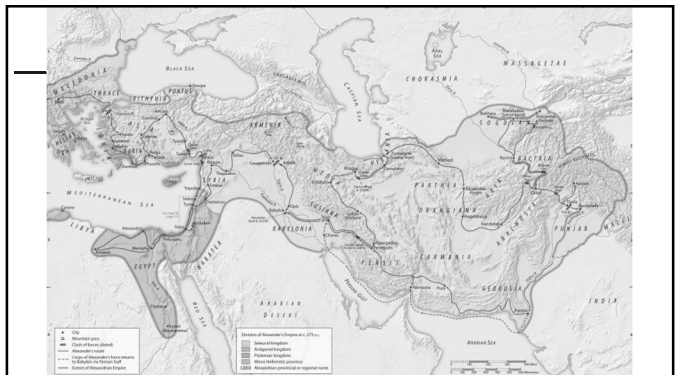
19. What did the second beast do to the first, and what is represented by this?

*Then he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing beside the river, and **ran at him with furious power**. And I saw him **confronting the ram**; he was **moved with rage against him, attacked the ram, and broke his two horns**. There was no power in the ram to withstand him, but he **cast him down to the ground and trampled him**; and there was **no one that could deliver the ram from his hand**. (8:6-7)*

† In its western expansion, Persia did not manage to fully break Greece, although they subjugated some portion.

† They managed mainly to anger them and build resentment.

† The male-goat trampling the ram represents the enraged breaking of the Medo-Persian empire by Alexander the Great of Greece.



The War of the Little Horn

21. What was accomplished by the horn that grew to the southeast? What did he do the "Glorious Land" and for how long? What would ultimately happen to him?
*And out of one of them came a little horn which **grew exceedingly great** toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land. And it **grew up to the host of heaven**; and it **cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground**, and trampled them. **He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host**; and by him **the daily sacrifices were taken away**, and the place of His sanctuary was **cast down**. **Because of transgression**, an army was given over to the horn to **oppose the daily sacrifices**; and he **cast truth down to the ground**. He did all this and prospered. Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, "How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled under foot?" And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed." (Daniel 8:9-14)*

Distant Future Application

23. What was Daniel to do with the vision? Why?
*"And the vision of the evenings and mornings Which was told is true; Therefore **seal up the vision, For it refers to many days in the future.**" (Daniel 8:26)*
 † 539 B.C. – Not be understood because not apply or be fulfilled until distant future.
 † Antiochus Epiphanes (Antiochus IV) – Seleucid king from 175-163 B.C.
 • Conquered Jerusalem
 • Erected an image to Zeus in the temple
 • Offered a pig upon the altar of burnt offering
 • Directed the Greek soldiers to perform ritual fornication in and around the temple
 • Forbade circumcision, Sabbath observance, and possession of the Scriptures, burning them.
 • Whipped and killed Jews who would not burn incense to Zeus.
 • Built a stadium, gymnasium for Jewish boys to compete in athletics while naked.
 • Temple was desecrated from 171-165 B.C. (i.e., the 2300 days).
 † Provoked the Maccabean Revolt (167-164 B.C.).
 † Died of a disease in 164 B.C.

"The Appointed Time"

22. Gabriel pins the application of the vision to what time? How is this to be understood?
*And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision." So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that **the vision refers to the time of the end.**" Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. And he said, "Look, I am making known to you **what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation**; for at the appointed time **the end shall be.** (8:16-19)*
 † "Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose daily sacrifices ..." may indicate this persecution was partially a punishment (8:12).
 † Regardless, the point seems to be the end of wrath against the Jews.
 † It provides hope by setting a boundary, termination of the suffering.

The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy Daniel 9

"The Appointed Time"

22. Gabriel pins the application of the vision to what time? How is this to be understood?
*And in the **latter time of their kingdom**, When the **transgressors have reached their fullness**, A king shall arise, Having fierce features, Who understands sinister schemes. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; **He shall destroy fearfully**. And shall prosper and thrive; **He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people**. Through his cunning He shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule; And he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. **He shall even rise against the Prince of princes**; But he shall be broken without human means. (Daniel 8:23-25)*
 † Or, more consistently – it refers to the end of the Grecian empire and the Seleucids.
 † As seen before, God judges and destroys when "there is no remedy". This is that end time for the Grecian empire.

National Punishment & Restoration

24. The provision of the seventy-weeks prophecy to Daniel is a response to what request from him? How does this influence a proper understanding of its applicable target?
*In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans – in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, **understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.** Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. ... "We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. Yes, **all Israel has transgressed Your law**, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore **the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.** ... O Lord, hear! **O Lord, forgive!** O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name." Now while I was speaking, **praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel**, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, (Daniel 9:1-20)*
 † Confessing national sin of people and asking God to act as promised by Jeremiah and Moses.

“Seventy Weeks Are Determined”

25. Enumerate the things to be accomplished during the seventy-weeks. Could the prophecy be completed without these things being fulfilled? What might these mean?

“Seventy weeks are determined For ¹your people and for your holy city, ²To finish the transgression, ³To make an end of sins, ⁴To make reconciliation for iniquity, ⁵To bring in everlasting righteousness, ⁶To seal up vision and prophecy, And ⁷to anoint the Most Holy.” (Daniel 9:24)

† Most clearly includes Messianic sacrifice and establishment of His kingdom.

† Some phrases suggest other events as well:

- “finish the transgression”
- “seal up vision and prophecy”
- “anoint the Most Holy”

† These could point to destruction of Jerusalem, maybe Rome too.

† All of these would need to be fulfilled for the prophecy to be true.

An End to Sacrifice and Offering

28. What is to transpire over the period of the last week? What event occurs in the middle of the last week?

“And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.” (Daniel 9:26-27)

† Jesus confirmed His covenant during the period of the last week.

† Through His sacrifice, He was able *“³To make an end of sins, ⁴To make reconciliation for iniquity, ⁵To bring in everlasting righteousness”*.

Issuing the Decree to Rebuild

26. When does the seventy-weeks period begin? What event marks its beginning?

“Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.” (Daniel 9:25)

† Cyrus’ command to free the Jews and rebuild Jerusalem marks the beginning of the seventy weeks (2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4).

Rome’s Jewish Wars

28. What would occur during the period between the mid-week event and the end of the last week?

“And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.” (Daniel 9:26-27)

† Similar expressions used in Daniel 11:31 and 12:11.

† Jesus applies them to the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20), “the abomination of desolation spoken of through Daniel the prophet”.

“Behold, your hose is left to you desolate” (Matthew 23:38).

“But, when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. ... For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.” (Luke 21:20-22).

Events of Weeks 7 and 69

27. What two events mark the end of weeks 7 and 69 (7 + 62)?

“Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks: The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.” (Daniel 9:25-26)

† Seven weeks would be required to rebuild Jerusalem, including its wall.

† Jesus would be crucified after week 69 (“seven and sixty-two”).

† The last week pertains to what happened when Jesus died, resurrected, and ascended and shortly after that.

Rome’s Jewish Wars

28. What would occur during the period between the mid-week event and the end of the last week?

“And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.” (Daniel 9:26-27)

† A.D. 68 – Vespasian halted siege preparations to take the throne.

† A.D. 69 – Titus camped in sight of Jerusalem and even broke off the siege for 4 days.

† A.D. 70 – Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, including altars and all records.

“Not one stone shall be left on top of another, that shall not be thrown down” (Matthew 24:2).

The End of the Jews Daniel 10-12

Sealed until the End

*At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over **the sons of your people**: And there shall be a **time of trouble**. Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time **your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book**. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever. But you, Daniel, **shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end**; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase." Then I, Daniel, looked; and there stood two others, one on this riverbank and the other on that riverbank. And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river: "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?" Then I heard the man clothed in linen, **who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished**. Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, "My lord, what shall be the end of these things?" And he said, "Go your way, Daniel, for **the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end**." (Daniel 12:1-9)*