

# STUDIES IN THE REVELATION OF JOHN

Prepared by:  
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# Understanding

## The Revelation of John

JOHN WADDEY

No grander book confronts the Bible student than the Revelation of John. Students of this most challenging book are fully aware of the problems of interpretation it holds. Without a system of interpretation by which to approach the book, one will surely flounder in his attempt. Many interpreters reach faulty conclusions as to the predictions of the book because they tackle the symbolic visions apart from a sound method by which to decipher the whole book. Herewith are some useful principles of interpretation that will greatly assist the serious student.

In seeking to understand this perplexing book, we must always remember that obscure passages must be interpreted in the light of the clear teachings of the Scripture, not vice versa.

Only a thorough acquaintance with the prophetic portion of the Old Testament is one prepared to interpret and teach this volume.

Although John's message is saturated with allusions to the Old Testament, we must not force Old Testament meanings upon John's words. Let John apply his own meanings. The important question is not where John got his material, but what the Holy Spirit is saying through John. Learn the general use of a certain symbol and then look for John's application.

To properly understand the book, the student must seek to know the author, the conditions under which he wrote and his relation to those who received the message. Also, the conditions the recipients were facing is essential background material.

"We must try to feel as Christians felt when they saw their brethren torn by wild beasts of the amphitheater, or stand as living torches each in his pitchy tunic, on one ghastly night in Rome" (F. Farrar).

We must be reminded not to give to symbolic numbers a literal interpretation. Also the opposite is true, we must not give to a number a symbolic meaning that was intended to be understood literally.

"Similar prophecies of the same event must be carefully compared in order to elucidate more clearly the sense of the prediction" (T. H. Horne).

It is usual with the prophets to express the same thing in a great variety of ways. These different expressions of the same lesson amplify and clarify the lesson being set forth.

"A chronological order of time is not always to be looked for in prophetic writings; for they frequently resume topics which they have formerly treated, after other subjects have intervened and discussed them yet more" (Horne).

As symbolic actions and prophetic visions greatly resemble parables, and were employed for the same purpose, i.e., more powerfully to instruct and gain the attention of the people, they must be interpreted in the same way as parables. Find the central truth which is being portrayed and let the details fit it in the most natural way.

We need to be reminded not to pry curiously beyond what is expressly written, nor should we interpret as being fulfilled, prophecies which are yet future. Similarly if a prophecy is once certainly and completely fulfilled, we have no right to look for some additional fulfillment.

"Concerning commentaries, the views of the writers on Revelation are so utterly conflicting that the student soon finds himself driven to take from each whatever of useful suggestions he may find and then proceed independently in his search for the meaning and lesson of the book" (J. A. Smith).

In Revelation, we have an interpretation of history, not as man sees it, but as God sees it.

What the student must consider in each attempted interpretation is not whether every minute detail can be explained and every question answered, but whether the system has grasped the main points of the book and successfully explained them in a logical, internally harmoniously way that is consistent with the rest of the Scripture.

Remember that God alone has the final word in interpreting prophecy. He gave the vision, he knows the true answer (2 Peter 1:20).

We should approach the book with that humility of spirit which is willing at times to frankly say, "I do not know" (D. W. Richardson).

Remember that the benefits are so many and the lessons so vital, that whether we ever master the interpretation of all its symbols, we will still be enriched beyond measure by our study.

Without doubt the Revelation is the most difficult book of inspiration to understand. Its perplexing message has given birth to varied responses by Bible students:

Many are so awed by its mysterious symbols that they avoid studying it.

Others display a fascinated obsession with its visions and consume all their study hours upon it.

Serious scholars have produced a wider range and variety of interpretations for this book than any other of the Bible.

It has often been the playground of religious eccentrics who abuse it to work out their own personal time table for future events and to find alleged proof of their human doctrines that could not be sustained by clear simple references.

The most amazing thing regarding the expositors of Revelation is the utter dogmatism with which they set forth their theory of interpretation and likewise dismiss or attack the views of other wise men. Some interpreters have been most confident in their ignorance of the book and its meaning.

Let us study John's masterpiece with all diligence, being assured that the Giver of every perfect gift will bestow upon us the needed wisdom. The suggestions of this paper will help us to handle aright this portion of God's word.

"I MUST TEACH THE BOOK AS I UNDERSTAND  
IT TO BE."

## STUDIES IN REVELATION INTRODUCTION

**AUTHOR:** John, the apostle. Cf. Revelation 1:1. Many dates are suggested, but most agree with A.D. 90-96.

**WRITTEN FOR:** Early Christians who were undergoing tremendous persecution. We should realize that the book was intended not only for those who first read it, but for all believers throughout this entire age.

- SEES THEIR TEARS  
7:17 21:4  
THEIR PRAYERS RULE  
THE WORLD 8:3,4  
THEIR DEATH IS PRECIOUS  
14:13 20:4  
THEIR FINAL VICTORY IS  
ASSURED 15:2  
THEIR BLOOD WILL BE  
AVENGED 6:9 8:3  
THEIR CHRIST LIVES AND  
REIGNS  
CHRIST GOVERNS THE  
WORLD 5:7,8
1. The affliction to which the church was subject in the days of the apostle John is typical of the persecution which true believers must endure throughout all time. Cf. 2 Timothy 3:12.
  2. Many of the predictions in which the book abounds concern principles which are so broad in their scope that they cannot be confined to one definite year or century.
  3. All who read and study this book in any age are called "blessed." (Revelation 1:3). John addresses himself not only to one group of men living in one decade, but "to every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book." (Revelation 22:18).

**PURPOSE:** To comfort the church in its struggle against the forces of evil. It abounds with consolations for the afflicted believers. (Revelation 7:17; 21:4; 8:3,4; 14:13; 20:4; 15:2; 6:9)

**THEME:** The victory of Christ and of His church over Satan and his helpers. Cf. Revelation 17:14. (READ)

### BRIEF OUTLINE:

Chapters 1-3	Christ among the 7 golden lampstands
Chapters 4-7	The Book with Seven Seals
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Chapters 12-14	The Woman and Man-child persecuted
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SEVEN SECTIONS  
ARE ARRANGED IN  
ASCENDING,  
CLIMATIC ORDER.

THE BOOK IS ONE. HUMAN CONDUCT AND DIVINE MORAL GOVERNMENT ARE PROGRESSIVELY REVEALED.

**MAJOR DIVISIONS:** The 7 sections may be grouped into 2 major divisions. The first consists of three sections. The second consists of four sections. These 2 major divisions reveal a progress in depth, or intensity, of spiritual conflict. The first section reveals the church persecuted by the world. The church is avenged, protected, and victorious. The second division reveals the deeper spiritual background of this struggle. It is a conflict between the Christ and the Dragon, in which the Christ, hence the church, is victorious.

CONSISTS OF SEVEN SECTIONS. THEY ARE PARALLEL

EACH SPANS THE ENTIRE NEW DISPENSATION - FROM THE FIRST TO THE SECOND  
COMING OF CHRIST.

VIEWS FROM ONE ASPECT; THEN FROM ANOTHER -

## REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

1. Christianity was an illegal religion - *Proselytizing was not permitted by the Roman government*
2. Christianity aspired to universality - *State the main thing (Rome) church the main thing (Christian)*
3. Christianity was an exclusive religion - *Refused to compromise their faith (The world doesn't like this)*
4. Christians were accused of all manner of evil - *met secretly; very fond of each other; orgies; cannibals, etc.*
5. The Christians refused to go to war - *there was a way of peace*
6. Christians were recruited chiefly from the poor and outcast - *looked down upon*
7. Christians inherited the contempt which Rome held for the Jews
8. Christians were looked upon as wild fanatics because of their enthusiasm - *a spiritual people in the midst of a temporal nation*
9. Christianity came in conflict with the temporal interest of many of the Romans
10. Christians refused to worship the Emperor. *held responsible for any calamity that befell Rome  
floods, earthquakes, drought, military defeat)*

CONTENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS: The Revelation is one of the most neglected and controversial books of the Bible. Man has attempted to do the very thing God said don't do - "seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand" (Revelation 22:10). It was written to be read and understood.

Revelation is a book of consummation. It has been assigned the last place in our Bible. It forms a complete cycle. Genesis is the book of commencement, and Revelation is the book of consummation.

1. Commencement of heaven and earth - Genesis 1:1  
Consummation of heaven and earth - Revelation 21:1
2. Entrance of sin and curse - Genesis 3:1-19  
End of sin and curse - Revelation 21:27; 22:3
3. The dawn of Satan and his activities - Genesis 3:1-7  
The doom of Satan and his activities - Revelation 20:10
4. The Tree of Life relinquished - Genesis 2:9; 3:24  
The Tree of Life regained - Revelation 22:2
5. Death makes its entrance - Genesis 2:17; 5:5  
Death makes its exit - Revelation 21:4
6. Sorrow begins - Genesis 3:16  
Sorrow is banished - Revelation 21:4

The title is the first mark of distinction - "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." 'Revelation' means "an appearing, a manifestation, a coming, an unveiling." It is commonly used in the epistles (Romans 8:19; 1 Corinthians 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:13).

No book in the Bible has an introduction and conclusion quite like this book. It begins and ends with a promised blessing (Revelation 1:3; 22:7).

Revelation contains "7 Blessed" texts: The Blessed--

1. Challenge - 1:3
2. Comfort - 14:13
3. Cautiousness - 14:13
4. Calling - 19:9
5. Conquest - 20:6
6. Commandment - 22:7
7. Consecration - 22:14

Revelation 1:3 list three requisites. He that "reads, hears, and keeps."

The book consists of moving pictures. The details that pertain to the picture should be interpreted in harmony with its central thought. *SHOULD ASK TWO QUESTIONS -- 1. WHAT IS THE ENTIRE PICTURE? 2. WHAT IS ITS PREDOMINANT IDEA?*

DON'T GIVE EACH  
WORD A SPIRITUAL  
MEANING

DON'T OVER WORK  
THE VISIONS

The seals, trumpets, bowls of wrath, and similar symbols refer not to specific events, particular happenings, details of history, but to principles of human conduct and divine moral government.

The book is rooted in contemporaneous events and circumstances. Its symbols should be interpreted in light of conditions which prevailed when the book was written.

The book is rooted in the scriptures. It should be interpreted in harmony with teachings of the Bible. *OVER 400 REFERENCES TO OLD TESTAMENT*

The book is rooted in the thoughts and images of the Old Testament.

1. The description of the Son of Man (Daniel 7:9; Ezekiel 1:7)
2. The Four Living Creatures (Ezekiel 1:10; 10:14)
3. The Horses and their Riders (Psalm 45:3; Zechariah 1:8; 6:3)
4. Gog and Magog (Jeremiah 25)
5. The New Heaven and the New Earth (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22)

*PARALLEL PASSAGES IN RV + NT*

1<sup>3</sup> MT 24<sup>6</sup> LK 21<sup>9</sup>  
1<sup>5</sup> Co 1<sup>18</sup>  
1<sup>7</sup> MT 24<sup>30</sup>  
1<sup>16</sup> MT 17<sup>2</sup>  
2<sup>10</sup> JS 1<sup>12</sup>  
2<sup>20-24</sup> Ac 15<sup>28</sup>

Revelation is a book of constantly changing symbols and pictures. There are candlesticks, horses, stars, thrones, beasts, trumpets, vials, bowls, dragons, angels, sickles, seals, numbers, etc.

Our understanding of the visions of the book depend entirely upon the method of approach. Many methods or theories have been suggested and followed by learned men of the Bible. It is our purpose to examine the most outstanding ones in our study and survey.

## STUDIES IN REVELATION METHODS OF INTERPRETATION

### METHOD: "FUTURIST"

This method views Revelation almost wholly eschatological ("end time"). It deals with the events of the end of the world. It is a book of unfulfilled prophecy. We have events that to take place within the brief space of seven years (Daniel 9:24-27). The denominational world uses this approach to Revelation. In general, they have built an entire doctrine around Revelation 20:1-6.

Chapter 4-19 will take place in the space of 7 yrs called the "tribulation"  
(fulfillment of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of DAN 9:24-27)

HIGHLY LITERAL  
MOST ARE PREMILLENIALIST

### OBJECTIONS TO THIS METHOD:

It is inconsistent with the statement made by John that the events recorded were in the main to soon come to pass. Notice--

1. The Greek word "dei" (must) implies moral necessity. Thus, it was morally necessary for the things to be fulfilled shortly in order for God's oppressed people to see His arm revealed and His comfort given in a time of seeming disaster.
2. The Greek words "en taxei" (quickly; shortly) imply immediate fulfillment. Futurist's position is that the translation should be "certainly." Compare 2 Timothy 4:9.
3. The best way to interpret scripture is in the light of other scripture. Using this method we can determine how "short" shortly is. Paul tells Timothy to come "shortly" in 2 Timothy 4:9. Later, he says to "come before winter," or immediately. We conclude in Revelation these visions were to be fulfilled in the main in the immediate future.

The strongest objection to the Futurist method is that it leaves the book altogether out of relation to the needs of the churches to which it was addressed, and which first received it. To know Revelation is the answer to the cry of the Christians of the Domitianic persecution is to know that it was never meant to be a chronology for the Lord's return, or a forecast of the Roman Catholic apostasy.

### METHOD - "HISTORICAL"

CONTINUOUS HISTORICAL METHOD

This method of interpretation looks upon Revelation as a forecast in symbols of the history of the church. This system makes the book prophesy in detail the apostasy of the Roman Catholic church. For example--

The First Seal - fulfilled in the state of the Roman Empire from the death of Domitian (A.D. 96) to the accession of Commodus (A.D. 180).

SCHOLARS:  
MARTIN LUTHER  
HERBERT BARNES  
John Wycliffe

↓  
VIEW HELD OUT OF  
CONTEMPT FOR REE  
AN FOR SCRIPTURAL  
REASONS.

The Second Seal - from the death of Commodus (A.D. 193) onward.

The Third Seal - from Caracalla onward (A.D. 211).

The Fourth Seal - Decius to Galienus (A.D. 243-268)

The Fifth Seal - Persecutions under Diocletian (A.D. 284-304)

The Sixth Seal - Invasion of the Barbarians (A.D. 365)

The Seventh Seal - fulfilled by the trumpets as outlined:

1st trumpet - invasion of the Goths (A.D. 395-410)

2nd trumpet - invasion by Genseric (A.D. 428-468)

3rd trumpet - invasion by Attila the Hun (A.D. 433-453)

4th trumpet - final conquest of Western Empire by Odoacer, King of Heruli (A.D. 476-490)

5th trumpet - the Mohammedans

6th trumpet - the Turks

### OBJECTS TO HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION:

It puts the book completely out of touch with the situation of the Christians to whom it was originally given. The idea that the faith would so apostasize that in a few years you would not be able to recognize it would be of little comfort to the Christians of the 1st century.

It attaches an undue importance to the apostasy of the Roman Catholic church.

The horizon is too narrow. The book would have no meaning in those countries where Rome does not hold power.

It stoops to details as absurd as those of the futurist method.

IT CALCULATES THAT 1/2 hour in heaven is equal to 70 yrs in Roman history, but DOESN'T GIVE ANY REASONS WHY.

It leads to the calculations of times and periods which have constantly been falsified by the events, and which have done much harm in the world.

one day always means 1000 yrs

### METHOD - "PRETERIST"

This method is practically the opposite of the futurist method. The word "preterist" means one who looks upon the fulfillment of the book as having taken place in the past. This group of interpretation is divided into two sections ("right" - respect Revelation as inspired; "left" - have no respect for inspiration at all).

### OBJECTIONS TO THIS METHOD:

It finds no message in the book for present day Christians.

The left-wing group would have no respect at all for the book as being inspired.

Philosophy of History Method - separates Revelation almost completely from its historical setting  
allegorizes Revelation into just a picture of religious history through the ages  
(wild Beast of Chap 13 represents any secular power at anytime that opposes the church  
(2nd Beast w/ horns like lamb is corrupt religion in league with secular power to oppose God's true people)

OR:  
... DID A LITERAL  
TRANSLATION OF THE  
BOOK  
... SEES THE COMPLETE  
OVERTHROW OF EVIL

→ "all future"

→ "all past"

## METHOD - "HISTORICAL, PROPHETIC-PRINCIPLE"

This method of interpretation keeps in mind the writer wrote his message primarily for the encouragement and edification of the Christians of his own time. A person must make a close study of the church of that day, the writer of the book, the condition from which he wrote, his relation to those to whom he wrote, etc., then, make application to one's own day. *MUST KEEP IN MIND THE BOOK IS WRITTEN LARGELY IN SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE*

We must ask two questions as we study: "What is the picture?" and "What does it mean?"

We must keep in mind Revelation uses Old Testament terminology with New Testament meaning. Out of 404 verses, there are over 300 allusions to the Old Testament.

We must seek to grasp the visions, or series of visions, as a whole without pressing the details of the symbolism.

Revelation is addressed chiefly to the imagination. (Romans/intellect; Psalms/emotions)

When we have found an event, or person, to which the prophecy is fairly applicable, we can consider it fulfilled in such an event or person, but not thereby exhausted; for it is intended more for the purpose of showing us the forces of good and evil that make history, than for the prediction of particular events.

## REVELATION IS A BOOK OF PROPHECY REVELATION 1:3; 22:10,18

"If it is once recognized that the Apocalypse is a book of true prophecy, that its symbols stand for something real, and that its perspective is not to be limited to a brief period like 3 1/2 years, the way is opened, not, indeed, for a reading into it of a series of precise historical occurrences, but still for doing justice to the truth which lies at the basis of the historical interpretation, viz., that there are here pre-figured the great crises in the age-long conflict of Christ and His church with pagan and anti-Christian adversaries." (I.S.B.E., p. 2586, Vol. IV).

Those whose meanings are not revealed in the text are to be ascertained by observing a like vision in scripture, the meaning of which is known. This employs the hermeneutical law of interpreting scripture by scripture. (Revelation 7:1-4 with Ezekiel 9:1-9; Revelation 10:5-11 with Ezekiel 2:8-3:3,14).

When the meaning of the signs in the book are made known, that meaning shall be adopted. When the visions are not made known, appeal will be made to scripture for similar visions for the interpretation.

*Revelation was written to yield a message by creating an impression on the minds of those battered, confused and demoralized Christians in Asia Minor.*

*The Message - "Victory Through Christ For The Faithful!"*

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2nd trumpet - invasion by Genseric (A.D. 428-468)

3rd trumpet - invasion by Attila the Hun (A.D. 433-453)

4th trumpet - final conquest of Western Empire by Odoacer, King of Heruli (A.D. 476-490)

5th trumpet - the Mohammedans

6th trumpet - the Turks

### OBJECTS TO HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION:

It puts the book completely out of touch with the situation of the Christians to whom it was originally given. The idea that the faith would so apostasize that in a few years you would not be able to recognize it would be of little comfort to the Christians of the 1st century.

It attaches an undue importance to the apostasy of the Roman Catholic church.

The horizon is too narrow. The book would have no meaning in those countries where Rome does not hold power.

It stoops to details as absurd as those of the futurist method.

It leads to the calculations of times and periods which have constantly been falsified by the events, and which have done much harm in the world.

### **METHOD - "PRETERIST"**

This method is practically the opposite of the futurist method. The word "preterist" means one who looks upon the fulfillment of the book as having taken place in the past. This group of interpretation is divided into two sections ("right" - respect Revelation as inspired; "left" - have no respect for inspiration at all).

### OBJECTIONS TO THIS METHOD:

It finds no message in the book for present day Christians.

The left-wing group would have no respect at all for the book as being inspired.

### **METHOD - "HISTORICAL, PROPHETIC-PRINCIPLE"**

This method of interpretation keeps in mind the writer wrote his message primarily for the encouragement and edification of the Christians of his own time. A person must make a close study of the church of that day, the writer of the book, the condition from which he wrote, his relation to those to whom he wrote, etc., then, make application to one's own day.

We must ask two questions as we study: "What is the picture?" and "What does it mean?"

We must keep in mind Revelation uses Old Testament terminology with New Testament meaning. Out of 404 verses, there are over 300 allusions to the Old Testament.

We must seek to grasp the visions, or series of visions, as a whole without pressing the details of the symbolism.

Revelation is addressed chiefly to the imagination. (Romans/intellect; Psalms/emotions)

When we have found an event, or person, to which the prophecy is fairly applicable, we can consider it fulfilled in such an event or person, but not thereby exhausted; for it is intended more for the purpose of showing us the forces of good and evil that make history, than for the prediction of particular events.

### **REVELATION IS A BOOK OF PROPHECY** **REVELATION 1:3; 22:10,18**

"If it is once recognized that the Apocalypse is a book of true prophecy, that its symbols stand for something real, and that its perspective is not to be limited to a brief period like 3 1/2 years, the way is opened, not, indeed, for a reading into it of a series of precise historical occurrences, but still for doing justice to the truth which lies at the basis of the historical interpretation, viz., that there are here pre-figured the great crises in the age-long conflict of Christ and His church with pagan and anti-Christian adversaries." (I.S.B.E., p. 2586, Vol. IV).

Those whose meanings are not revealed in the text are to be ascertained by observing a like vision in scripture, the meaning of which is known. This employs the hermeneutical law of interpreting scripture by scripture. (Revelation 7:1-4 with Ezekiel 9:1-9; Revelation 10:5-11 with Ezekiel 2:8-3:3,14).

When the meaning of the signs in the book are made known, that meaning shall be adopted. When the visions are not made known, appeal will be made to scripture for similar visions for the interpretation.

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### CHAPTER ONE

"To the seven churches which are in Asia" - the number seven to ancient peoples represented a perfect number and completeness. Hence, many feel these seven churches represent all the churches in that generation and all generations. In these seven churches contain everything you could find in a congregation anywhere and the Lord's message covers everything anyone of them could need to press onward.

#### THE PERSON OF THE BOOK, AND IN THE BOOK - 1:5,8, 13-18.

Christ is portrayed uniquely in several chapters of the Bible. The Suffering Messiah (Isaiah 53); His Splendor (Matthew 17); His Submission (Philippians 2); His Sovereignty (Colossians 1); His Superiority (Hebrews 1). None surpasses His description as found in Revelation 1.

#### HIS DIGNITY:

"The Faithful Witness" (5) - the Pre-eminent and peerless Christ (3:14). Such as spoken by Isaiah (55:4). The Lord came to bear witness of the Truth (John 18:37). He did so without fear, compromise or favor.

"The First Begotten of the Dead" (5) - Cf. Colossians 1:18. He is supreme in rank and has dignity over all. He is never to die again, awaiting the day when all shall bow (Philippians 2:8-11).

"Prince of the Kings of the Earth" (5) - Cf. Psalm 89:27; Matthew 4:8,9. No king has ever ruled as He rules (Psalm 24:1; Revelation 11:15; Daniel 4:37; Matthew 2:2; 1 Timothy 1:17; Psalm 24:7; Revelation 15:3; 19:16). This King is our King - none other!

"The Savior of All" (5)

"Made us kings" (5) - none more royal

"Made us Priests" (5) - Cf. Isaiah 61:6; Hebrews 4:16

#### HIS DEITY (8,11)

"I am Alpha and Omega" - twice stated. He is the Eternal (John 1:3). Our hearts must be stayed on the unchangeableness of God.

"The Almighty" - 'El Shaddai' - the Sufficient One (Genesis 17:1,2)

## HIS DESCRIPTION

Compares with that of the Ancient of Days in Daniel 7:9. God Himself - "white" - purity. Great age (Isaiah 1:18).

"His eyes were as a flame of fire" (14) - a penetrating discernment that searches the innermost depths. While His eyes wept at Lazarus' tomb (John 11:35), He now as a Judge Comforter lays bare everything (Hebrews 4:13). This speaks of His omniscience.

"His feet like unto fine brass" (15) - as if burned in a furnace; to crush in judgment

"His voice as the sound of many waters" (15) - A voice of power and authority (Jeremiah 25:30). A voice of majesty (Psalm 29:4). Even to the raising of the dead! (John 5:28).

"And He had in His right hand 7 stars" (16) - messengers of seven churches (20). Those who speak for God among the people.

"Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword" - (16) - it is the word of God (Hebrews 4:12). Compare with John 12:48.

"His countenance was as the sun, shining" (16) - compare Matthew 17:2. Churches are lamps - reflect the glory of Christ (Acts 9:1-5).

## STUDIES IN REVELATION REVELATION 2,3

The book of Revelation has suffered an unfortunate fate. On the whole either it has been abandoned by the readers of the Bible as being almost completely unintelligible, or it has become the happy hunting ground of religious eccentrics, who seek to construct from it a kind of celestial timetable of events to come. Some people have said the book either finds a man mad, or leaves him so. There is much that is obscure and difficult in the Revelation, but there is one section of it at least which is vivid and relevant, and which gains much new light when it is set against the background out of which it was written. That is the section which contains the letters to the seven churches.

In each of the seven letters our Lord issues a promise "to him that overcomes" (Revelation 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21). The history of the Lord's church is one of conflict. The foes are many and varied, from traitors and temptations within, to taunts, tribulations and tyranny from without. Any Christian soon learns that Christianity is no bed of roses and a life of ease. Yet, the Christian is not without aid, nor his weapons. There is One who has perfectly overcome!

### **THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS**

Revelation 2:1-7

Characterized by LOVELESSNESS.

The Assembly - most known of any of the seven churches. A free city and pro-Roman. Center of Artemis worship, Diana of the Ephesians. Her temple was the 8th wonder of the world. Superstition and pagan beliefs abounded. Center of crime and immorality.

The Author - He that hold 7 stars among 7 lampstands (complete control). He knows their true condition.

The Approval - Labor, patience, tried, hate evil - Nicolaitans (argued that the law is ended, the body is evil, and grace will save regardless of what one does). They wanted compromise with the world. Not prepared to pay the price of Christianity because it cost too much.

The Admonition - Remember, Repent, Repeat, Remove.

The Appeal - Else I will come and remove your candlestick.

The Atonement - "Will I give to eat of the tree of Life" (2:7). In the Garden of Eden the tree existed (Genesis 2:9; 3:22). To eat of this was to live forever, but man by sin forfeited this right. Now it is to those faithful ones (John 11:26; 1 Corinthians 15:53). Paradise is lost and now paradise is restored (2 Timothy 1:10). It is also conditional based on struggle.

## **THE CHURCH AT SMYRNA**

Revelation 2:8-11

Characterized by LONGSUFFERING.

The Assembly - Rival of Ephesus, in beauty, trade, loveliness. Originally founded as a Greek colony as early as 1000 B.C. Destroyed in 600 B.C., but was rebuilt in 200 B.C. and has continued to this day having a population of 200,000. Center of art, knowledge and culture. The home of music and the theater, temples of Zeus, Apollo, Nemesis, Aphrodite. Heathen worship and pagan religion dwelt at its highest and most significance. The Jews were here in profusion and were wealthy and highly jealous and proud of Smyrna. Polycarp was martyred here and his grave is shown to tourists to this day.

The Author - The First and the Last - the Dead and Alive ("The became dead One and the became alive One again" -aorist). Cf. Hebrews 2:18; 4:15,16. Christ lives!

The Affliction - They suffered affliction and poverty. They suffered imprisonment. (Ten days - ancient expression denoting a short time to come to an end soon). They were blasphemed, but they were rich in good works.

The Appeal - Be faithful unto death - Crown of life.

The Atonement - "Shall not be hurt of the second death" (2:11). The second death is identified in Revelation 20:14; 21:8. The judgment of hell, that everlasting banishment from the presence of the Lord which awaits the wicked. Physical death is a reality to all (Hebrews 9:27), but not the second (John 5:24; Revelation 20:6; Ephesians 2:1; John 5:28,29).

## **THE CHURCH AT PERGAMOS**

Revelation 2:12-17

Characterized by LAXITY.

The Assembly - It was among the chief centers of the ancient world. Contained the temple of Athene. The wealthy from all lands flocked here for relief from their pains and diseases. Administrative center of Asia. Emphasis on Emperor worship here.

The Author - He which has the sharp two-edged sword. Nothing but truth can defeat error. And then only when the sword is unloosed in all of its purity and power.

The Approval - "Holds fast my Name - faithfulness.

The Admonition - A few things against you. The doctrine of Balaam (a cautious policy of compromise with the world, its morals and practices). Eat things sacrificed to idols and commit fornication.

The Appeal - Repent or else.

The Atonement - "To eat of the hidden manna" (2:17). Consider Exodus 16:4,15. Miracle bread from heaven, a type of our Lord Jesus (John 6:30,31-35, 48-56). The True Bread (John 6:63). The Lord satisfies our spiritual hunger - the "hidden manna," hidden to those who "see not" and "understand not." Meat to eat that the world knows not!

"And a white stone" - a name is to be engraved on it, known by the believers (Psalm 91:14). I will set him on high because he has known My name.

### **THE CHURCH AT THYATIRA**

Revelation 2:18-29

Characterized by LIBERTINISM.

The Assembly - The longest letter of the seven churches was written to the least important of the seven cities of Revelation. City noted for its trade guilds. Its members often engaged in orgies of food and immorality.

The Author - The Son of God.

The Approval - I know your works and love - faith, patience, progress.

The Admonition - Jezebel teaches and seduces (hers was a flagrant violation of God's law - the tragedy was found in its being tolerated).

The Appeal - Hold fast until I come.

The Atonement - "Power over the nations" (2:26,27). Consider Psalm 2:8,9. Rule with the Lord. Consider Jude 14,15. Sit and judge with the 12 tribes of Israel (Romans 8:17; 1 Corinthians 6:2,3)

"And I will give him the bright and morning star" (2:28). Consider Revelation 22:16; Numbers 24:17; Luke 1:78,79; 1 Peter 1:19.

### **THE CHURCH AT SARDIS**

Revelation 3:1-6

Characterized by LIFELESSNESS.

The Assembly - Sardis was a great commercial center and extremely wealthy. Also the center of the woolen industry. Home of Cybele worship. The Sardians were a name of contempt because of their slack and effeminate living. They were loose living, pleasure and luxury loving and decadent.

The Author -

The Admonition -

The Appeal -

The Atonement - "Clothed in white raiment" (3:5). Known for purity and righteousness. Isaiah 64:4 shows our righteousness is a filthy rag, yet, we walk in white with Him (Revelation 3:4; Luke 9:29).

"I will not blot his name out of the book of Life" (3:5). Consider Exodus 32:32. Also Revelation 20:15. The highest ground of rejoicing (Luke 10:20; Psalm 69:28).

"I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels." Consider Matthew 10:32. The famous names of the world will be forgotten.

### **THE CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA**

Revelation 3:7-13

Characterized by LOYALTY.

The Assembly - Quiet and peaceful. Had terrible earthquakes. Like Smyrna, she is the only city of the seven left. Neither city was bidden to repent.

The Author - His titles and claims. He who is Holy, True, has the key of David, the Open Door, I will keep you.

The Accounting - Judgment is coming.

The Appeal - I come quickly; hold fast.

The Atonement - "A pillar in the temple of my God" (3:12). Established, safe, strong in God's presence.

"I will write name of My God - name of the city" (3:12). Consider Numbers 6:27.

"I will write My new name" (3:12). Consider Revelation 19:16. Kings of Kings and Lord of Lords."

## **THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA**

Revelation 3:14-22

Characterized by LUKEWARMNESS.

The Assembly - At the convergence of three main highways, highly successful center. Many millionaires, theaters, public baths, huge stadiums and shopping centers. A great banking and trade center. Center of clothing manufacturers. Medical center. Large Jewish population.

The Author - The Amen - the Beginning of the creation of God. Affirmation and confirmation of the Truth.

The Admonition - I know your works - utter disgust - wretched, poor, miserable, blind, naked - only God could be so devastating.

The Appeal - Buy of Me. The Source of all true blessings.

The Atonement - "Sit with Me in My throne" (3:21). Consider John 17:5. His glory and power. Cf. Revelation 1:6; 5:10; Romans 5:17. What a glorious reward!

## **CONCLUSION**

"He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be His God, and he shall be My son."  
Revelation 21:7.

## LOOKING BACK REVELATION 1-3

1. Define the word "revelation" as used in the book of Revelation. *AN "APPEARING"; MANIFESTATION; UNVEILING.*
2. What three blessings are found in chapter 1?  
*v.3 - He who reads; hears; keeps*
3. To whom is the letter addressed?  
*14,11 - Seven churches of ASIA*
4. Name at least 2 characteristics of the book of Revelation.  
*most neglected; controversial      moving pictures      Rooted in the mind + Revelation of God  
symbolism used*
5. What is the first vision of the book?  
*The Person of the book - one like THE SON OF MAN*
6. What is the "theme" of the book?  
*THE VICTORY OF CHRIST AND OF HIS CHURCH over Satan + evil (RV 17:14)*
7. Give a description of the Person of the book as found in chapter 1.  
*eyes      hands      clothes  
feet      MOUTH      hair  
voice      countenance*
8. Revelation is rooted in the THOUGHTS and IMAGES of the Old Testament.
9. Why were the early Christians being persecuted? *illegal; aspired to universality; exclusive; accused of evil; Recruited from poor + outcast; inherited contempt of Jews; accused of fanaticism  
Refused Emperor worship; conflict of temporal interest of Romans; Refused to go to war*
10. Of the seven churches written, how many had nothing condemned?  
*Two*
11. Who were they? *Smyrna & Philadelphia*
12. In each letter the Lord issues a promise to what people? *Those who overcome.*
13. The longest letter to the churches was written to the church in Thyatira.
14. Which church was said to have lost their first love? *Ephesus*
15. Which church was said to be lukewarm? *Laodicea*
16. Fill in the missing descriptive word:

Ephesus	<u>Lovelessness</u>
Smyrna	<u>Longsuffering</u>
Pergamum	<u>Laxity</u>
Thyatira	<u>Libertinism</u>
Sardis	<u>Lifelessness</u>
Philadelphia	<u>Loyalty</u>
Laodicea	<u>Lukewarmness</u>

LOOKING BACK  
REVELATION 1-3

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16. Fill in the missing descriptive word:

Ephesus	<u>Lovelessness</u>
Smyrna	L_____
Pergamum	L_____
Thyatira	L_____
Sardis	L_____
Philadelphia	L_____
Laodicea	L_____

(The Christians needed this unfolding drama)

The cause of Christ is not a lot easier!

"Don't look about you - look up!"

Rev 4:1

After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

Rev 4:2

At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.

God's power, majesty  
sovereignty + judgment } Ps 103<sup>19</sup>

Rev 4:3

And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne.

on earth only a part is  
seen; in heaven All is seen } The storms are over;  
the struggles have ceased -  
and the Lord remembers!

Rev 4:4

Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads.

Representative of us all  
(12 tribes + 12 apostles) } The faithful of  
all ages  
they sit in judgment (Dan 7<sup>22</sup>)

Rev 4:5

From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God.

fulfillment, or completion  
omniscience, omnipotence, preparedness

God taking up the cause of  
the faithful against their  
enemies

Rev 4:6

Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.

separation (21') also holiness of God  
separated from God while here on earth  
"laver" used by Priests to wash  
Blood of Christ by whom we are sanctified  
RV 7<sup>14</sup>

Rev 4:7

The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle.

Kingship - strength - Matthew  
Servant - service - Mark  
Adam - intelligence - Luke  
God/man - Swift new - John

Rev 4:8

Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

eternality of God  
Isaiah 6:1-3

Rev 4:9

Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever,

Rev 4:10

the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say: *eternality of God*  
*total submission*

Rev 4:11

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

## STUDIES IN REVELATION REVELATION 4

Revelation 4 is the "Throne Scene" with the theme of "The Glory of The Father." The word "throne" appears 12 times in eleven verses, and about 37 times in the book. The book starts with a throne (1:4) and concludes with a throne (22:3). The Revelation is the "Throne Book of the Bible."

The throne is symbolic of God's power, sovereignty, majesty and judgment. "The Lord has prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom rules over all." (Psalm 103:19). One fact stands out clearly and that is God is ruling and not man. This is what the Christians needed to know because the physical picture didn't look that way. In Revelation 4, the curtain is pulled back and John begins to see the drama unfold. From this point forward in rapid sequence, will be presented visions to assure the persecuted Christians that the cause of Christ is not a lost cause. Christ never promised an easy life. The fight will be perhaps long and bitter, but when the curtain falls at the end of the drama, complete assurance of victory will be demonstrated.

Although our citizenship is in heaven while we dwell in this physical tabernacle, we are a part of this world and its troubles. The Christian will not be spared the horrors of war, famine and pestilence.

### TWO TERMS USED IN REVELATION 4 EXAMINED

**THE SEA OF GLASS (6A)** Two ideas are presented on the use of this term:

1. As John was separated from the seven churches by the sea, so also Christians are separated from God while in this earthly tabernacle. But, notice in Revelation 21:1, "the sea is no more." Thus Christians now are in direct fellowship with God before His throne.
2. The word "sea" can also be translated "laver." The idea might be a comparison with the earthly tabernacle. The laver was used by the priests to wash themselves before entering the Holy Place. Symbolically it contains the blood of Christ by which we are sanctified in which the saints have washed their robes and made them white (7:14).

### **THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES (6B-9)**

1. There are similarities with these verses and with Ezekiel 1 and Ezekiel 10.
  - (1) These were called "living ones" (Ezekiel 1:5; Revelation 4:6)
  - (2) The symbolical number is the same (Ezekiel 1:5; Revelation 4:6)
  - (3) Their appearance is compared to that of man, lion, ox and eagle (Ezekiel 1:10; Revelation 4:7)

- (4) They are associated with the throne (Ezekiel 1:26; Revelation 4:6)
- (5) They are said to be studded all over with eyes (Ezekiel 1:18,21; 10:12; Revelation 4:8)
- (6) A rainbow encircles the throne with which the living ones are associated (Ezekiel 1:28; Revelation 4:3).

2. Ezekiel 10:20 tells us that these are the Cherubim, thus angelic forces of the highest order that guard the holy things of God (Genesis 3:24; Exodus 25:20).

Thus, in Revelation 4 we see man (24 elders), Spirit, and the angels before the center of attraction - the throne and He who sits upon it.

#### NOTES ON REVELATION 4

##### I. THE **PREVIEW** OF THE THRONE SCENE IN HEAVEN - Verse 1

1. An open door in heaven - the door of proclamation. God opens and no one can shut. God shuts and none can open.
2. The trumpet sounds - John is summoned by a voice.
3. "I will show the things hereafter" - only God can foresee the future. Only God can reveal what is to be, and only a fool will refuse to listen.
4. "I was in the Spirit" - Revelation 1:10 - the presence of God was a reality - the heavens opened (Ezekiel 1:1; Mark 1:10; John 1:51).

##### II. THE **PERSON** "ON THE THRONE" - Verses 2,3

1. The promise of the throne in Revelation 3:21. Mentioned in every chapter of Revelation except 2,8 and 9. Consider Psalm 47:8; Isaiah 6:1.
2. The presence of the throne - brilliance of jasper, and the glory of the sardis stone. Both are found in the breast-plate of the High Priest (Exodus 28:17-20). Also found in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:10,11,19,20).

##### III. THE **PLEDGE** "ROUND ABOUT THE THRONE" - Verse 3

1. The rainbow is emblematic of God's pledge. On earth we see a part, but in heaven it is complete. The whole picture is one of indescribable beauty, awe, and wonderment.
2. For the children of God, the storms of life are over, the struggle has ceased and peace is ours. The Lord remembers and the Lord fulfills.

#### IV. THE PERSONS "ROUND ABOUT THE THRONE" - Verse 4

1. The word "seats" is the same word for "throne."
2. Their song identifies them as the redeemed of all ages (5:9).
3. The number "24" - probably representative of the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles. Representative of us all. Consider Revelation 21:12-14, and the walls and foundations.
4. Described as being clothed in "white raiment and having crowns of gold" - Consider Revelation 19:8.

#### V. THE PROCEEDINGS FROM "OUT OF THE THRONE" - Verse 5

1. The throne of deity is the throne of judgment. "Lightnings and thunderings" and "voices" - judgment is here. Consider Revelation 8:5; 10:3; 11:19; 16:18.
2. Expression of God's anger and wrath - Ezekiel 1:13; Psalm 77:18; Exodus 19:16.

#### VI. THE PORTRAYAL "BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD" - Verses 5,6

1. The Seven Spirits of God (Revelation 1:4; 3:1; 5:6). Seven represents fullness or completeness. The Holy Spirit's omniscience and omnipotence. Prepared to execute judgment and burning (Isaiah 4:4).
2. "Sea of glass like crystal" - beauty and preciousness, a flash of light, brilliant breath-taking, indescribable, dazzling purity, too great to look upon like God's purity.
3. The immense distance - never familiarity, but light and distance.

#### VII. THE PRAISE "IN THE MIDST OF THE THRONE" - Verses 6-11

1. The "Four Living Creatures" - always near the throne of God. Full of eyes, wings, praising and worshipping God. They pour out the vials of God's wrath (15:7). Probably the cherubims of the Old Testament, or guardians of the throne of God.
2. "Lion" - strength; "Ox" - service; "Man" - intelligence; "Eagle" - swiftness. All for God's service continually.
3. No rest day or night, but speaking the holiness of God.
4. All the redeemed cry out! They worship Him! God alone is the object of our worship. The eternity of God is affirmed.
5. The crowns are cast before Him. Complete submission. God is the Conqueror of the souls of men. The subduer of the universe of nature.

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
REVELATION 4

1. Why do you feel John was shown this scene in heaven?
2. Why were precious stones used to describe the scene? Are they literal stones? *no  
using physical symbols to paint a spiritual picture*
3. What was the purpose of the rainbow around the throne?  
*the Pledge of God (Appears after the storm is over) - "Do not worry - God Rules & is faithful"*
4. Who do you think the 24 elders represent?  
*vs 4,10,11*
5. What does the "sea of glass" represent?
6. Describe the "Four Living Creatures." What do they represent?
7. Describe the "throne" scene of chapter 4.
8. What are three things that characterize the 24 elders?  
*Possess crowns (2:10)      Possess Thrones (5:10 Ro 5:17)      wear white garments (7:9,14)*
9. Define the following:
  - (1) Twelve (as used in the Revelation) *symbol of organized religion in the world; denotes completeness of God's people*
  - (2) Eagle *symbol of aspiration, penetration & swiftness (47)*
  - (3) Eyes *symbol of enlightenment and understanding*
  - (4) Face of man - *symbol of intelligence*
  - (5) Face of a lion - *symbol of courage and bravery*
  - (6) Face of an eagle - *swiftness speed vision*
  - (7) Face of an ox - *symbol of strength, patience and endurance*
  - (8) Throne - *symbol of authority; symbolic of God's power, sovereignty, majesty and judgment*
10. What is the "theme" of Revelation 4?  
*God is sitting on His throne, Ruling all the universe.  
Every living thing worships and praises Him.*

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
REVELATION 4

1. Why do you feel John was shown this scene in heaven?
2. Why were precious stones used to describe the scene? Are they literal stones?
3. What was the purpose of the rainbow around the throne?
4. Who do you think the 24 elders represent?
5. What does the "sea of glass" represent?
6. Describe the "Four Living Creatures." What do they represent?
7. Describe the "throne" scene of chapter 4.
8. What are three things that characterize the 24 elders?
9. Define the following:
  - (1) Twelve (as used in the Revelation)
  - (2) Eagle
  - (3) Eyes
  - (4) Face of man
  - (5) Face of a lion
  - (6) Face of an eagle
  - (7) Face of an ox
  - (8) Throne
10. What is the "theme" of Revelation 4?

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
LOOKING BACK  
REVELATION 4-11

1. Many symbols and the imagery of the Revelation come from the old Testament.
2. Give the 3-fold outline of Revelation as revealed in Revelation 1:19--  
*Things which you have seen; things which are; things that are to come*
3. An appropriate title for Chapter 4 would be "The Throne in Heaven" (*God rules, and not man*)
4. The throne is symbolic of God's power, sovereignty, majesty and judgment.
5. The "rainbow" in chapter 4 could be symbolic of God's pledge.
6. The faithful of all ages is represented by the 24 elders.
7. The theme of chapter 5 is "The Glor of the Lamb." (*The Lamb that is worthy*)
8. A scroll sealed with seven seals would represent what? *that which is unrevealed and unrepresented*
9. Why did John weep in Revelation 5:4? *No one was found worthy to open the seals. (How is Christ described?)*
10. How is salvation appropriated? (How are we saved?) *By the blood of Christ*
11. In Revelation 6 we have the opening of the seals.
12. How does John describe judgment in the 6th seal? *In the language of the prophets, i.e., desolation/destruction  
great earthquake; sun darkened; moon like blood; stars fall; sky rolled up as a scroll;  
islands + mountains moved.*
13. In view of all these terrible things that were to happen, who will be able to stand?  
Why? *The child of God because God knows, cares and protects him.*
14. Revelation 7 contains two visions that take place before the 7th seal is opened. What are the two visions? *Sealing of the servants of God  
The Redeemed before God's throne*
15. Why were these two visions presented to John?  
*To answer the question, "who shall be able to stand?"*
16. God gives His Revelation through things the Christians would understand. He is saying, "I have means of destroying/overcoming your enemies."
17. The main thought of Revelation 9 is --  
*"The Worse is yet to Come!"*
18. The leader's name of the Locust Creatures in Revelation 9 is "Abaddon," which means "Destroyer."  
*Apollyon*
19. God has three instruments which can be used to destroy the oppressors. They are:  
*Natural calamity  
Internal Decay  
External Invasion*

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
LOOKING BACK  
REVELATION 4-11

1. Many symbols and the imagery of the Revelation come from the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Give the 3-fold outline of Revelation as revealed in Revelation 1:19--
3. An appropriate title for Chapter 4 would be \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The throne is symbolic of God's power, \_\_\_\_\_, majesty and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The "rainbow" in chapter 4 could be symbolic of God's \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The faithful of all ages is represented by the \_\_\_\_\_ elders.
7. The theme of chapter 5 is "The \_\_\_\_\_."
8. A scroll sealed with seven seals would represent what?
9. Why did John weep in Revelation 5:4?
10. How is salvation appropriated? (How are we saved?)
11. In Revelation 6 we have the opening of the \_\_\_\_\_.
12. How does John describe judgment in the 6th seal?
13. In view of all these terrible things that were to happen, who will be able to stand?  
Why?
14. Revelation 7 contains two visions that take place before the 7th seal is opened. What are the two visions?
15. Why were these two visions presented to John?
16. God gives His Revelation through things the Christians would understand. He is saying, "I have means of \_\_\_\_\_ your enemies."
17. The main thought of Revelation 9 is --
18. The leader's name of the Locust Creatures in Revelation 9 is "\_\_\_\_\_" which means "\_\_\_\_\_."
19. God has three instruments which can be used to destroyed the oppressors. They are:

"WHO IS WORTHY?" (2)  
The Glory of the Lamb

God is on His throne!  
Christ is alive!  
all is well!

Rev 5:1

Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. *full of meaning + important - God's eternal purpose*  
*unrevealed*  
*unexecuted*

Rev 5:2

And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?"

Rev 5:3

But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it.

Rev 5:4

I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. *why?*

Rev 5:5

Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." *He 49<sup>9,10</sup>*  
*2sm 7<sup>12</sup> ps 89<sup>28,35,36</sup>*  
*co 2<sup>14,15</sup> By the cross*

Rev 5:6

Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, *Perfect strength*  
*Perfect knowledge*  
which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. *Turned to see a Lion, but instead saw a Lamb*

Rev 5:7

He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. *God's scheme for man was fulfilled in Christ*

Rev 5:8

And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Rev 5:9

And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."

Rev 5:10

You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Rev 5:11

Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders.

Rev 5:12

In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"

Rev 5:13

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

Rev 5:14

The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

*Salvation as God sees it, and not as man sees it*

*Redemption described by four qualitative terms -*

- 1. For God*
- 2. Through blood of Christ*
- 3. Unlimited --*
  - ethnic - kindred (tribe)*
  - linguistic - tongue (language)*
  - social - people*
  - political - nation*
- 4. Redeemed are a Kingdom*

Chapter 4  
Creator  
Power

Chapter 5  
Redeemer  
Love & mercy

REVELATION 5

"THE SEALED BOOK," and "THE LAMB THAT IS WORTHY," would be a good title for this chapter. The theme of chapter 5 is "THE GLORY OF THE LAMB." Chapter 5 ties very closely with chapter 4 by continuing the scene as seen in heaven. It is the same story, only one more comes to pay honor and glory before the Father.

VERSE 1 - "THE SEALED BOOK"

1. "Book" - better translated as "scroll."
2. "Written within and on the back" - full of meaning and importance.
3. "Sealed with seven seals" - that which is "unrevealed and unexecuted."

VERSES 2,3 - "THE CRY OF THE STRONG ANGEL"

1. Not an "ordinary angel." - note where his voice was heard.
2. "Angel" - messenger

VERSE 4 - "JOHN WEEPS" - Why?

VERSES 5 - 14 "CHRIST THE LION, AND THE LAMB"

1. Lion of the Tribe of Judah - Genesis 49:9,10
2. Root of David - II Samuel 7:12; Psalm 89:28,35,36.
3. Has overcome - "How?" - See Colossians 2:14,15 - BY THE CROSS
4. "Seven Horns" - See Daniel 8:7
5. "Seven Eyes" - Perfect knowledge, or omniscience. Also preparedness

VERSES 9,10 - "THE NEW SONG"

1. The first song was sung in Revelation 4:8. See Isaiah 6:1-3.
2. What Four qualitative terms describe redemption in verses 9,10?  
Note: This salvation AS GOD SEES IT, and not as man sees it.
  - (1) FOR GOD
  - (2) THROUGH BLOOD OF CHRIST
  - (3) UNLIMITED - ETHNIC, LINGUISTIC, SOCIAL, POLITICAL
  - (4) REDEEMED ARE A KINGDOM

SUMMARY OF 4 & 5 -- worship, glory and honor should be given to the Father and the Lamb, and not to any arrogant and evil, earthly ruler - "no matter what you hear from here you can be assured everything is under my control, and to your ultimate benefit."

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 5

"The Sealed Book and The Lamb That Is Worthy" would be a good title for this chapter. The major theme is "The Glory of the Lamb." This is the same story of the preceding chapter, only one more comes to pay honor and glory before the Father.

#### I. THE SEALED BOOK - Verse 1

1. "Book" - literally, the "scroll."
2. "Written within and on the back" - full of meaning and importance. Could be God's eternal purpose.
3. "Sealed with seven seals" - unrevealed and unexecuted.

#### II. CRY OF A STRONG ANGEL - Verses 2,3

1. Indication that he was not an ordinary angel.
2. In verse 3, we have the indication how strong his voice was.

#### III. JOHN WEEPS - Verse 4

#### IV. CHRIST THE LION AND THE LAMB - Verses 5-14

1. Lion of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:9,10)
2. Root of David (2 Samuel 7:12; Psalm 89:28; 89:35,36). As the root is before the tree, Jesus was before David. Consider Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5; Luke 3:31; Acts 2:30.
3. Has overcome (Colossians 2:14,15).
4. He turns to see the Lion and sees a slain lamb (John 1:29)
5. "Seven horns" - perfect strength or power (Daniel 8:7).
6. "Seven eyes" - perfect knowledge or omniscience.
7. "Which are the seven Spirits of God, sent forth into all the earth" - with the power and knowledge to take care of His people.

He now takes the book, and the angels and men fall down before Him and worship Him.

1. "New Song" - the first song they sang was in Revelation 4:8.
2. This song had been sung before in Isaiah 6:1-3.
3. Now they sing a song that could not have been sung before because Jesus had not come to earth to die for men.

Consider Daniel 7:13,14 with Revelation 5:13.

God is on the throne, Christ is alive, and all is well with the world.

# THE PARADE OF GOD'S POWER!

## FIRST FOUR REPRESENT

GOD'S POWER TO HURT

THE EARTH IN RETRIBUTION

## CHAPTER 6

AND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

2 And I saw, and behold <sup>1</sup>a white horse: and <sup>2</sup>he that sat on him had <sup>3</sup>a bow; and <sup>4</sup>a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

PURITY  
HOLINESS  
VICTORY

WEAPON OF WAR

TO OVERCOME

ROYAL, EXALTED  
RANK

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

DANGER  
BLOOD  
WAR

4 And <sup>1</sup>there went out another horse <sup>2</sup>that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

SLAY, SLAUGHTER, BUTCHER (USED "SACRIFICE")

MACHIRE (CURVED FOR CUTTING) - SHARP

5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo <sup>1</sup>a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

FOREBODER OF DEATH

TO WEIGH  
WITH

LESS THAN A QUART  
1 MAN FOR 1 DAY

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, <sup>1</sup>A measure of wheat for <sup>2</sup>a penny, and <sup>3</sup>three measures of barley for a penny; and <sup>4</sup>see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

- 17<sup>th</sup>

- COARSER THAN WHEAT

- COMFORTS OF LIFE

NOT FAMINE, BUT  
ECONOMIC DISCRIMINATION  
cf. RV 18:17

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

GREENISH-WHITE  
STRICKEN WITH  
DISEASE OF  
DEATH

8 And I looked, and behold a <sup>1</sup>pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and <sup>2</sup>Hell followed with him. And Power was given unto them over the <sup>3</sup>fourth part of the earth, <sup>4</sup>to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, <sup>5</sup>and with the beasts of the earth.

EC 14<sup>21</sup>

Rhompha  
LONG SWORD - WAR

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under <sup>1</sup>the altar the <sup>2</sup>souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for <sup>3</sup>the testimony which they held;

SACRIFICED  
FOR BEING  
FAITHFUL

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, <sup>1</sup>How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

NOT FOR SELVES, but for CAUSE

11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that <sup>1</sup>they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

cf. RV 7<sup>9-17</sup> 14<sup>1-5</sup> 15<sup>2</sup> 20<sup>4-6</sup>

THERE HAS BEEN  
PERSECUTION, AND  
THERE WILL BE MORE  
PERSECUTION, BUT  
EVENTUALLY THE  
PERSECUTOR WILL  
BE BROUGHT TO DEFEAT

NOT THE FINAL DAY OF JUDGMENT →

BUT ANTICIPATION  
of some coming  
event which the  
people fear to face.

S Z 12-22 DESTRUCTION OF  
JUDAH & JERUSALEM

IS 13 9-16 FALL OF BABYLON

IS 34 4 FALL OF EDOM

HO 10 8 FALL OF SAMARIA

JL 2 28-32 COMING of new age  
FALL OF JEWISH NATION  
POURING out of H.S.

NOT "has passed" ←

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

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

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

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

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

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

RV 7

cf. JL 1<sup>15</sup> 2<sup>1,2,10,11,28-32</sup>  
2P 14,15 1S 13<sup>6-11</sup>

JUDGMENT!

Joel 2<sup>11</sup>  
MAL 3<sup>1,2</sup>

Chapter 4 - Is Rome railing against God? God is on the Throne!

Chapter 5 - Is history out of control, the future unknown? God holds the Book, and the Lamb is worthy to open it

Chapter 6 - Hasn't the Lamb of God been slain? yes, but He is alive again! He will vindicate his church before the eyes of the enemy!

Lindsay - stars

into meteorites

into Russian nuclear missiles

prior to 1988

Walvoord -

John's ignorance in  
presented him  
from accurately nuclear  
describing warfare

FIRST FOUR -  
 WAR - MILITARY CONQUEST  
 BLOODSHED - WAR  
 FAMINE - FAMINE  
 DEATH - PESTILENCE

FORCES WHICH GOD CAN USE TO  
 DESTROY THE OPPRESSORS  
 OF HIS PEOPLE.

PREDICTIONS OF  
 INCREASED PERILS  
 WHICH ARE YET TO  
 BEFALL THE CHRISTIANS  
 IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

TRUE KEY is Christ  
 discourse

FIRST SEAL - White Horse (Conquest) VERSES 1, 2

RICHARDSON { Christ, OR THE CAUSE OF CHRIST - THE PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL  
 16X { white crown Bow  
 PURITY - ROYALTY - OVERCOMING THE ENEMY  
 The VICTORIOUS COURSE OF THE GOSPEL

ALLAN { CONQUEST - MILITARISM - ARMED STRENGTH TO SUBDUCE new foes  
 DANA { WHITE  
 VICTORY PARTHIAN CAVALRYMAN - MOST DREADED ENEMY OF ROME  
 SMITH { PICTURE TO THE CHRISTIANS THAT VICTORY IS COMING

FOLLOWS A  
 SET PATTERN

opens the whole affair because  
 He is in control  
 of everything

white identifies the Rider as Christ - color is significant - never  
 used in RV of anything evil

horse means "war" - righteous war (white horse indicating truth/righteousness)  
 war began at Christ's ascension

Other interpretations are --  
 anti Christ (Dake) <sup>living in Europe now</sup> Lindsay & Walwood  
 conquering military power (Roberts)  
 selfish, lustful conquest (Swete)  
 victorious warrior (Beckwith)

A PERIOD OF GREAT PROSPERITY FOR THE CHURCH UNTIL A.D. 180

SECOND SEAL - (RED HORSE) VERSES 3, 4

identified as "WAR"

bloodshed, warfare & desolation

"should slay one another" = religious persecution

does not indicate the church - "they"

B nes A PERIOD OF 92 YRS BEGINNING WITH THE DEATH OF COMMODUS.

THIRD SEAL - (BLACK HORSE) - Famine<sup>+ economic hardship</sup> - VERSES 5, 6

famine always follows in the wake of war  
symbol of great "economic difficulty + inequality"

3d my PERIOD OF EXCESSIVE TAXATION PRIOR TO A.D. 248

FOURTH SEAL - (PALE HORSE) - PESTILENCE - VERSES 7, 8  
(chloro<sup>z</sup>)

NAME OF DEATH - HADES FOLLOWS

DREAD EFFECTS OF PESTILENCE WHICH FOLLOWS WAR & FAMINE

$\frac{1}{4}$  part - judgment only partial

A.D. 248 TO A.D. 268 in which  $\frac{1}{2}$  the people on earth (Gibbon)  
died of these factors.

Lindsay  
(1988)

Barnes

1<sup>ST</sup> FOUR SEALS = MEANS OF JUDGMENT  
FIFTH, SIXTH = REASONS FOR JUDGMENT

"who shall be able to stand?"	{	CONQUEST	NATURAL CALAMITY
		WAR	RAGE
		FAMINE	
		PESTILENCE	

## FIFTH SEAL - MARTYRED SAINTS (PERSECUTION) - VERSES 9-11

symbolism changes with THIS SEAL

MARTYRS OF THE DOMITIANIC PERSECUTION cf. 2<sup>13</sup> ANTIPAS

Reflects the moral necessity for judgment

White Robe - VICTORY & PURITY; TOLD TO BE PATIENT - TIME NOT RIFE  
FOR God's RETRIBUTION

NOT angry appeal for revenge, but a cry for justice + vindication of God

God's answer = ① white victory robes (enemy had not triumphed at all!  
death granted victory, rest, + glory

②  
GOD WOULD ACT!

martyrs? ancient saints of Judaism (Roberson)  
perished under Nero (Beckwith)

All the saints who ever perished for the Word of God.

## SIXTH SEAL - EARTHQUAKE (JUDGMENT) - VERSES 12 - 17

SUN TO DARKNESS

MOON TO BLOOD RED

STARS fell like figs

heavens rolled up

MOUNTAINS & ISLANDS DISAPPEARED

PEOPLE OF ALL CLASSES HID THEMSELVES

DANA &  
PICTERS

1. DOES NOT REPRESENT FINAL JUDGMENT (only temporal judgment by natural means)

cf. 6<sup>th</sup> story (final judgment appears at RV 20<sup>11-15</sup>) They say --  
incomplete -  
more to be added

- (1) VIEW IGNORES OT usage of this idea
- (2) IS A VISION & given in symbol
- (3) INTRODUCED AT THE WRONG PLACE

Prophetic description of the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming & Judgment

2. IS FINAL JUDGMENT - RECAPITULATION THEORY

a collapse of order in human affairs -

PREDICTED FATE OF ROME - judgment in oncoming events of history

EARTHQUAKE - signifies social & political chaos

SUN & MOON - signifies the passing of a leader, or political order

The horrible hopelessness of the wicked when God acts

Kings, princes, chief-captains, rich, strong, bondman, freeman  $\Rightarrow$  all classes of people  
no one spared who  
who has resisted  
TRUTH

Chapter 7 =

heaven acts  
wk + shield  
= who are God's

4, 5, 6  $\Rightarrow$  set the dramatic stage for all that follows in the book!

Lessons  
for us today?  
God is in control, & His  
people under His watchful  
eye!  
Look behind the scenes!

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION SIX

No effort will be made to interpret these seals as referring to persons, or historical events in the past, present, or future, but simply to relate the symbolism to the other symbols in the book.

The imagery of the horse is similar to Zechariah 1:7-11; 6:1-8. (Consider Jeremiah 14:12; 24:10; 42:17). In the Old Testament, the horse is often the emblem of war (Job 39:25; Psalm 76:6; Proverb 21:31; Ezekiel 26:10).

#### **I. THE FIRST SEAL** - The White Horse (1,2)

1. White - purity, holiness, victory. The victor always rode a white horse after a victorious battle.
2. Carrying a bow - means of overcoming the enemy (Psalm 45:4-6).
3. Wearing a crown - mark of royal, or exalted rank.
4. Conquering and to conquer - translated "overcome" in Revelation 3:21; 5:5; John 16:33.
5. Who is the rider? Many commentaries say, "The Christ." His name is the Word of God, verse 13 (Consider Revelation 19:11-16). One commentator (Swete) says, "The riders have nothing in common beyond the white horse."

#### **II. THE SECOND SEAL** - The Red Horse (3,4)

1. Where ever the rider on the white horse goes, the red horse follows. This seal may refer to religious persecution of God's people. Cf. Matthew 10:34.
2. Red - flame colored; blood red. Cf. 2 Kings 3:22.
3. Connotation of danger, blood or war.
4. Given to take peace from the earth.
5. Peace was taken by making them "slay one another." Cf. Revelation 5:9; 6:9.

#### **III. THE THIRD SEAL** - The Black Horse (5,6)

1. Black - forerunner of death. The color of mourning and famine. Cf. Jeremiah 4:28; 8:21; Malachi 3:14.

2. Balance in his hands - scale with which to weigh. To eat by weight refers to a condition of economic hardship.
3. Measure of wheat for a shilling - less than a quart - enough to support a man of moderate appetite for one day - shilling: about 18 cents, or one day's pay.
4. Three measures of barley - an alternative. One could either buy the wheat to feed one, or buy the barley and feed three. Barley was the food for the poor, cheaper in the time of famine and took more to support life.
5. The oil and wine hurt not. There was plenty of this. Wheat and barley, oil and wine were the staple foods of Palestine and Asia Minor.
6. Cf. Revelation 13:17.

#### IV. **THE FOURTH SEAL** - The Pale Horse (7,8)

1. Pale - greenish white - the color of one stricken with the disease of death.
2. Name "Death" - and hell followed with him. Death slays and Hades reaps. (Hades - the abode of the disembodied spirits; from Haides - "a" privative plus "idein" - to see)
3. Authority over fourth part of the earth - Ezekiel 14:21.
4. The sword of war.

#### V. **THE FIFTH SEAL** - Souls Under the Altar (9-11)

1. Blood of the sacrifices was poured at the bottom of the altar (Leviticus 4:7). This was the Altar of Sacrifice (Exodus 39:39; 40:29). The Lamb was slain and these martyrs have followed the example of their Lord.
2. Souls - Leviticus 17:11
3. Altar - Revelation 8:4 - before the throne of God
4. Slain for the Word of God - sacrificed for being faithful to their Lord
5. Cried with a loud voice - for their cause
6. Persecution is not over yet.

VI. **THE SIXTH SEAL** - Judgment (12-17)

1. Cf. Joel 1:15; 2:1,2,10,11,28-32; Zephaniah 1:14,15; Isaiah 13:6-11.
2. The Day of Jehovah is judgment upon the wicked in time.
3. John uses the language of the prophets to paint the picture of desolation and destruction.
4. Verses 15,16 - no one is hurt, yet - an announcement of judgment to come.
5. Who shall be able to stand? In view of the terrible things to happen, what about the Christian? Chapter 7 answers the question.

NOTE: IN THE SIXTH SEAL, THERE ARE TWO SETS OF SIXES:

1. Six things enumerated:

- (1) Great Earthquake (Ezekiel 38:19; Amos 8:8; Joel 2:10)
- (2) The sun darkened
- (3) The moon the color of blood
- (4) Stars fall to the earth
- (5) Heavens curled up
- (6) Mountains and islands removed

2. Six classes of mankind:

- (1) Kings
- (2) Princes
- (3) Officers
- (4) Rich men
- (5) Strong men
- (6) Slave and Freeman

Chapter → parenthetical  
God's faithful will be able to stand in the day of the Lamb's wrath against Rome.

REVELATION 7 - The Pause in advance of unleashing  
fury on Rome

Instead of the 7th seal being opened, there are two visions of John recorded in this chapter. The first vision is the sealing of the servants of God (1-8), and the second, of the redeemed before the throne of God (9-17). The chapter deals with the question, "Who then shall stand?"

I. VERSE 1 - John sees 4 angels holding back the four winds.

1. "Winds" or "wind" is often used to depict the "activities of God. destruction by wind a common element *Jr 23<sup>19</sup> 30<sup>23</sup> Ps 104<sup>4</sup> (Hb 1<sup>7</sup>)*

2. The judgment of God pictured as wind is a prominent idea in the Old Testament. Some scriptures are Jeremiah 4:11,12; 18:17; 49:32,36; Ezekiel 5:2; 12:14; Psalm 106:27; Job 38:24; Isaiah 41:16.  
*JR 49  
Elam  
JR 51<sup>1,2</sup>  
Babylonia  
DN 7<sup>2110</sup> Judgment*

3. The four winds are held prisoner by angels at each of the four corners. Some Jews held the winds from the "due" direction to be a favorable wind, while those from the "angles" were unfavorable. *of Ezekiel 9<sup>1-10</sup> Judgment is ABOUT TO FALL!*

II. VERSES 2,3 - "Angel coming from the East" (the direction of light) - *cf judgment of dark sun  
bearer of good news*

1. "Cries with a great voice" - could be heard everywhere. Does so to hold back the Divine retribution until the seal is placed. *To be spared the utter desolation which God had in store*
  2. "Having the seal of the Living God" - signet ring, as would be used by Oriental monarchs - gives validity to official documents. *cf. RV 9<sup>4</sup> 14<sup>1</sup> 22<sup>4</sup> (The leaders in the struggle knew their followers)*
- GOD'S WAY OF SAYING THAT THE RIGHTEOUS ARE NOT BEING PUNISHED  
safety in time of TROUBLE*

III. VERSE 4 - "144,000" - out of every tribe of Israel. *all the believers who would remain faithful in spite of persecution*

1. Cf. Ezekiel 9:1-6. Representing safety in the time of trouble. Protected so the destructive winds do not harm them.
2. Notice the use of "sealing."
  - (1) Protection against tampering - Matthew 27:66; Revelation 5:1
  - (2) Show ownership and destination - II Timothy 2:19; Song of Solomon 8:6
  - (3) Proof of genuineness - Esther 3:12.
3. There is wide disagreement on the meaning of the 2 groups mentioned in Chapter 7.
  - (1) The 144,000 represents Jewish Christians and the Great Host represents Gentile Christians.
  - (2) The symbolism used does not divide the redeemed into two groups. (PTO)

4. It is a sacred number of religious significance (12), multiplied by itself, and then by a thousand (the number used signify completeness) The result represents "absolute completeness."

*NOT ONE MEMBER IS LOST!*

"144,000"

PIETERS - 2 GROUPS ARE "CHURCH MILITANT" (on earth)  
"CHURCH TRIUMPHANT" (in heaven)

RICHARDSON - church universal - ALL CHRISTIANS  
NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN JEW & GENTILE

SMITH - VISION OF GOD'S CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE AMID THEIR EARTHLY TRIBULATIONS  
TRUE ISRAEL (GA 6<sup>16</sup>)  
VISION OF THE HEAVENLY TRIUMPH OF THE MARTYRED HOST

SWETE - THE 2 ARE THE SAME BODY UNDER WIDELY DIFFERENT CONDITIONS

BECKWITH - THE WHOLE BODY OF THE CHURCH

3 series of 7

Seven Seals 6<sup>1</sup>-8<sup>1</sup> God's concern over the fate of His Church, & promises the overthrow of Rome for her persecution of the saints

Seven Trumpets 8<sup>2</sup>-11<sup>19</sup> preliminary judgments upon the Empire (punishing only by measure / degrees)  
(a warning & opportunity to repent) Apparently they didn't (RV 9<sup>20, 21</sup>)

Seven Bowls of wrath 15<sup>1</sup>-16<sup>21</sup>

Complete & final doom to the empire (cf. RV 15<sup>1</sup>)

## REVELATION 7, Page 2

church on earth that has been sealed -

Ep 1:13, 14 Rm 8:16 2Co 1:26 Ep 4:30  
1Jn 3:1, 2 Ab 13:5, 6 2Th 16:10 Rm 8:31 Co 3:1-4

144,000 are on the earth  
GAI in heaven itself ("before the throne")  
(assurance to those on earth)

5. Notice that exactly 12,000 from each tribe listed - suggests the number is not to be taken literally. *Symbol of protection*

### IV. VERSES 5-8 The Listing of the Tribes.

1. The list is not geographical. Dan and Ephraim are left out, but Joseph is included. Joseph had two sons (Ephraim and Manasseh) and each was made the head of a tribe.
2. When the tribes were listed, Levi was usually omitted because of having no regular inheritance, as was Joseph's name omitted. In this chapter Joseph and Levi are listed, so two have to be omitted.
3. There are various listing of the tribes in the Old Testament. (Genesis 35:22f; 46:8f; 49; Exodus 1:1ff; Numbers 1:2; 13:4ff; 26:34; Deuteronomy 27:11f; 33:6ff; Joshua 13-22; Judges 5)

### V. VERSES 9-17 The Great Hosts and the "Purpose" of Trials.

1. John sees a great host beyond the ability of man to number. This group is not sealed because they are past the need for protection.
2. They recognize the source of their victory and John not only points the afflicted Christians to safety, but to the joy that awaits on the other side.
3. To emerge through trials is one thing, but to emerge from it with unstained faith and conscience is something else.
4. The two visions together give the most complete picture of the security of God's people before the judgments pointed out in chapters 6 and 8.

### VI. NOTE ON VERSE 12

1. In this verse the definite article precedes each item of praise. This represents the fullest, deepest sense of excellencies pertaining to God.
2. Cf. *blessing*; *glory*; *wisdom*; *THANKSGIVING*; *honor*; *Power*; *MIGHT*.  
eulogia; doxa; sophia; eucharistia; time; dunamis; ischus.

### VII. NOTE ON VERSES 13-17

1. "That come out of the great tribulation" (present, active) - they who are coming out - a thing of the moment. *White (Purity)*  
*Jn 12:13 ← PALMS (victory & joy)*
2. Before the throne (perfect communion); Serving (perfect service); His Tabernacle (perfect protection); Hunger and thirst no more (perfect provision); Shepherd (Perfect Leadership); Water of Life (perfect life); No tears (perfect joy).

Answer the question - "who shall be able to stand?"

The Lord's faithful church will endure to its  
reward by the protection, power & purpose of God

THREE SERIES OF SEVEN:

SEVEN SEALS (6:1-8:1) GOD'S CONCERN OVER THE FATE OF HIS CHURCH, AND PROMISES THE OVERTHROW OF ROME FOR HER PERSECUTION OF THE SAINTS.

SEVEN TRUMPETS (8:2-11:19) Preliminary judgments upon the Empire (punishing only by measured degrees) - A warning and opportunity to repent. APPARENTLY THEY DID NOT - REVELATION 9:20,21.

SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH (15:1-16:21) COMPLETE AND FINAL DOOM TO THE EMPIRE.

144,000 ?

JESUS DIED FOR ALL - HB 2:9  
5:8,9

14:1 "ON THE MOUNTAIN" - HB 12:22, 23

14:3 "REDEEMED" - I PT 1:18, 19 AC 20:28

14:4 "UNDEFILED" - 2 CR 11:2 EP 5:25-27

14:4 "FOLLOW THE LAMB" PI 2:5 I PT 2:21

14:4 "FIRST FRUITS" - JS 1:18

14:5 "TRUTH TELLERS" - EP 4:25; I PT 2:1, 21, 22

14:5 "WITHOUT BLEMISH" - EP 5:27

THE SEALED --

EP 1:13,14 ; 4:30

RM 8:16,31

2 CR 1:22

1 JN 3:1,2

HB 13:5,6

2 TH 1:6-10

CO 3:1-4

## Are Only 144,000 Going to Heaven?

J. J. TURNER

The Jehovah's Witnesses compass land and sea teaching what they call the "good news of the kingdom." This "good news" upon being compared with the Scriptures actually is bad news. One element of their so-called "good news" is the teaching that only 144,000 are going to heaven. This is bad news for the many thousands today who believe they have a hope of going to heaven. Note the following quote from one of their publications:

In the past did you believe that all good persons go to heaven? If so, and if you endeavored to live a good life, you may well have expected to be included among them. You may also have hoped in this way to be reunited with your loved ones whom you had lost in death. But when you had this expectation, did you know that the Bible says that such faithful servants of God as King David and John the Baptist did not go to heaven? . . . At that time did you know that only 144,000 chosen from among mankind over the past nineteen centuries would gain heavenly life? (The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life, pp. 78, 79, pub. by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.)

This false doctrine is based upon a literal and false interpretation of Revelation 7:4 and 14:3. A careful reading of these two chapters (Rev. 7 and 14) will reveal that the above verses are in the context of highly figurative language. For those who choose to make the 144,000 literal we raise the following questions: (1) Is the context full of figurative language? (2) Are the four angels literal in chapter 7:1-4? (3) Does the earth have four literal corners? (4) Was the seal in Rev. 7:1-4 a literal seal? If so, how and where was it to be fixed? Can one of the so-called 144,000 show us this seal today? Was it, and is it, placed upon their foreheads literally? (5) Are the sealed to be just from the literal tribes of Israel? Can one of the 144,000 today tell us which tribe he is from? How does one know today if he is one of the 144,000? If a Gentile becomes a proselyte today, can he then become one of the 144,000? If so, what tribe would he become a member of in Acts 8?

Nowhere in these passages does it state ONLY 144,000 literal persons are going to heaven. In fact, nowhere in the Bible does it make such a statement. The Bible teaches that Jesus died for all (Heb. 2:9; John 3:16), and is the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him (Heb. 5:8, 9). This is the essence of the promise made by Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-47). In fact, according to this false doctrine Peter himself couldn't be one of the 144,000 (if they hold that Rev. 14:1-5 is literal) because he was married (Mark 1:30; 1 Cor. 9:5), and thus not a literal virgin as described in Revelation 14:4.

I believe that the following exegesis of Revelation 14 will prove that the term 144,000 is figurative of all the faithful Christians in the Lord's church.

In Revelation 14:1 we see this group pictured with Christ on the mountain. From Hebrews 12:22, 23 we learn that those in the mountain are in the church, thus saved (Acts 2:47). This is in complete harmony with the sealed 144,000 who have obeyed the gospel (Acts 2:38; Eph. 1:13).

2. In Revelation 14:3 they are described as men redeemed from the earth. In 1 Peter 1:18, 19 we learn that ALL Christians are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and in Acts 20:28 Paul states that the church was purchased with the blood of Christ.

3. In Revelation 14:4 they are described as undefiled with women—they are virgins. In 2 Corinthians 11:2 Paul referred to Christians as virgins. In Ephesians 5:25-27 the church is referred to as a pure bride. Also in verse 4 they are said to follow the Lamb. To follow the Lamb is to follow Christ—thus a Christian (Phil. 2:5; 1 Peter 2:21). We also learn from verse 4 that these are firstfruits. James

1:18 uses this same term to refer to the first group of Christians in the first century.

4. They are described as truth tellers in Revelation 14:5. In Ephesians 4:25 we learn that the church is to have no liars in it; also read 1 Peter 2:1, 21, 22. Verse 5 also describes them as being without blemish. In Ephesians 5:27 Paul states that the church is without blemish.

From the above harmony of scriptures the only person who meets these qualifications is a Christian who has been redeemed by the blood of Christ and is a member of the church purchased by that same blood (Acts 20:28; 2:47; Eph. 5:23-27).

Therefore, the number 144,000 in these passages is used symbolically to describe ALL Christians who suffer, and will suffer, for the gospel's sake and live faithfully unto death (Rev. 2:10). In Revelation 7:9 John uses an innumerable multitude interchangeably with the figurative 144,000 of verses 1-7, and shows this innumerable multitude in heaven before the throne of God.

It's wonderful to know that Jesus has prepared a place for everyone who will obey him (John 14:1-6; Heb. 5:9).

White's Ferry Road School of Preaching, West Monroe, La.

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 7

Instead of the 7th seal being opened, there are two visions of John recorded in this chapter. The first vision is the sealing of the servants of God (1-8), and the second, of the redeemed before the throne of God (9-17). The chapter deals with the question, "Who then shall stand?"

### ANALYSIS

#### I. Verse 1 - John sees 4 angels holding back the four winds.

1. "Winds" or "wind" is often used to depict the "activities of God."
2. The judgment of God pictured as wind is a prominent idea in the Old Testament. Consider Jeremiah 4:11,12; 18:17; 49:32,36; Ezekiel 5:2; 12:14; Psalm 106:27; Job 38:24; Isaiah 41:16.
3. The four winds are held prisoner by angels at each of the four corners. Some Jews held that the winds from the "due" direction to be a favorable wind, while those from the "angles" were unfavorable winds.

#### II. Verses 2,3 - "Angel coming from the East" - the direction of light

1. "Cries with a great voice" - could be heard everywhere. Does so to hold back the Divine retribution until the seal is placed.
2. "Having the seal of the Living God" - signet ring, as would be used by Oriental monarchs - gives validity to official documents.

#### III. Verse 4 - "144,000" - out of every tribe of Israel.

1. Cf. Ezekiel 9:1-6. Representing safety in the time of trouble. Protected so the destructive winds do not harm them.
2. "Sealing"
  - (1) Protection against tampering - Matthew 27:66; Revelation 5:1
  - (2) Shows ownership and destination - 2 Timothy 2:19; Song of Solomon 8:6
  - (3) Proof of genuineness - Esther 3:12

3. There is wide disagreement on the meaning of the two groups mention in chapter 7.

(1) The 144,000 represents Jewish Christians and the Great Host represents Gentile Christian.

(2) The symbolism used does not divide the redeemed into two groups.

4. It is a sacred number of religious significance (12) - multiplied by itself, and then by a thousand (the number used signify completeness). The result represents "absolute completeness."

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3. There are various listings of the tribes in the Old Testament. Consider Genesis 35:22ff; 46:8ff; Exodus 1:1ff; Numbers 1:2; 13:4ff; 26:34; Deuteronomy 27:11f; 33:6ff; Joshua 13-33; Judges 5.

#### V. Verses 9-17 The great hosts and the "purpose" of trials.

1. John sees a great host beyond the ability of man to number. This group is not sealed because they are past the need for protection.

2. They recognize the source of their victory and John not only points the afflicted Christians to safety, but to the joy that awaits on the other side.

3. To emerge through trials is one thing, but to emerge from it with unstained faith and conscience is something else.

4. The two visions together give the most complete picture of the security of God's people before the judgments pointed out in chapters 6 and 8.

## VI. Verse 12.

1. In this verse the definite article precedes each item of praise. This represents the fullest, deepest sense of excellencies pertaining to God.
2. "Eulogia; Doxa; Sophia; Eucharistia; Time; Dunamis; Ischus"

## VII. Verses 13-17

1. "That come out of the great tribulation" - present, active - "they who are coming out; a thing of the moment."
2. Before the throne (perfect communion); serving (perfect service); Tabernacle (perfect protection); hunger and thirst no more (perfect provision); Shepherd (perfect leadership); Water of life (perfect life); no tears (perfect joy).

Answers the question - "Who shall be able to stand?" - The Lord's faithful church will endure to its reward by the protection, power and purpose of God.

Penits which were to  
accompany the Divine  
wrath about to come  
upon Rome.

Gives Rome the opportunity  
of Repentance & salvation.

10 5/THUNDERS 7<sup>5</sup>  
Songs 48, 11 5<sup>12</sup>, 13  
CRY FROM UNDER ALTAR 6<sup>10</sup>  
A: 7<sup>10</sup>, 12

THE PRAYERS  
RESULT IN JUDGMENT!

"DOES GOD HEAR  
AND ACT?"

FIRST FOUR  
AFFECT ENVIRONMENT

NEXT THREE AFFECT  
THE WICKED DIRECTLY

## CHAPTER 8

(PTO)

AND when he had opened the  
seventh seal, there was silence  
in heaven about the space of  
half an hour.

2 And I saw the seven angels  
which stood before God; and to  
them were given seven trum-  
pets.

3 And another angel came  
and stood at the altar, having a  
golden censer; and there was giv-  
en unto him much incense,  
that he should offer it with the  
prayers of all saints upon the  
golden altar which was before  
the throne.

4 And the smoke of the in-  
cense, which came with the  
prayers of the saints, ascended  
up before God out of the angel's  
hand.

5 And the angel took the cen-  
ser, and filled it with fire of the  
altar, and cast it into the earth:  
and there were voices, and  
thunderings, and lightnings,  
and an earthquake.

6 And the seven angels which  
had the seven trumpets pre-  
pared themselves to sound.

7 The first angel sounded, and  
there followed hail and fire  
mingled with blood, and they  
were cast upon the earth: and  
the third part of trees was  
burnt up, and all green grass  
was burnt up.

8 And the second angel  
sounded, and as it were a great  
mountain burning with fire was  
cast into the sea: and the third  
part of the sea became blood;

9 And the third part of the  
creatures which were in the sea,  
and had life, died; and the third  
part of the ships were  
destroyed.

10 And the third angel  
sounded, and there fell a great  
star from heaven, burning as it  
were a lamp, and it fell upon the  
third part of the rivers, and  
upon the fountains of waters;

11 And the name of the star is  
called Wormwood: and the third  
part of the waters became  
wormwood; and many men died  
of the waters, because they  
were made bitter.

12 And the fourth angel  
sounded, and the third part of  
the sun was smitten, and the  
third part of the moon, and the  
third part of the stars; so as the  
third part of them was dark-  
ened, and the day shone not  
for a third part of it, and the  
night likewise.

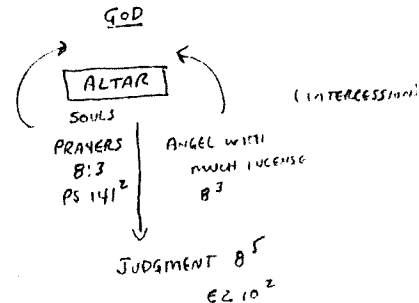
13 And I beheld, and heard  
an angel flying through the  
midst of heaven, saying with a  
loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to  
the inhabitants of the earth by  
reason of the other voices of the  
trumpet of the three angels,  
which are yet to sound!

Judgment of God  
descends upon CORRUPT  
STATE OF HUMANITY

ZE 2<sup>13</sup> HA 2<sup>20</sup> DRAMATIC SUSPENSE  
emphasizes the impact of the judgments  
about to be revealed.

NB 10<sup>1-10</sup> { CALLING OF CONGREGATION  
JOURNEYING OF THE CAMPS  
CALL TO WAR  
ALARM

cf JL 2<sup>1-3</sup>



LAND DISASTER

SEA DISASTER

LAND/WATER DISASTER

Abnormal functioning  
of heavenly bodies

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### CHAPTER 8

Chapter 8 divides into three major sections. All three sections deal with the opening of the Seventh Seal.

Introduction to the opening of the seal (1-5)  
The Four Trumpets (6-12)  
Announcement of the Final Three Trumpets

### ANALYSIS

Verse 1      Silence - Two prevalent views concerning the reason for the silence:

- (1) Dramatic effect by profound stillness with no elder, or angel, speaking. No chorus of praise, nor cry of adoration, no thunder from the throne. A temporary cessation in the revelation.
- (2) Symbolical of delayed judgment. Consider 7:1-3.

Verse 2      Trumpets were used to summon armies, give orders to charge, and announce things or events.

Verses 3-5    A prelude to the Seven Trumpets which will begin to sound.

Verses 6-13    The angels with their trumpets to sound. The first four trumpets bring woe upon the earth in partial destruction. They represent woe upon nature in its four-fold aspect. This is the classification of nature as known to man in that day - land, sea, fresh waters and heavenly bodies.

These are pictures of God's warning judgments sent upon wicked man. The "third" was conventional way of expressing a "large part."

- (1) The First Trumpet (v. 7 - land disaster) - hail and fire mixed with blood - earth, trees and grass.
- (2) The Second Trumpet (vs. 8,9 - sea disaster) - as it were a great mountain burning with fire - sea became blood - creatures of the sea and ships.
- (3) The Third Trumpet (vs. 10,11 - fresh water) - falling great burning star - rivers and fountains of waters - named "Wormwood" - Exodus 15:23; Jeremiah 9:15; 23:15.
- (4) The Fourth Trumpet (v. 12 - heavenly bodies) - sun and moon and stars turned to darkness.

Verse 13 "Eagle" - strongest of birds - sometimes a symbol for vengeance - flies where all can see, and cries where all can hear.

There is more and worse to come - the last 3 trumpets are known as the "Three Woe Trumpets."

God gives His revelation through things they would understand. He is saying, "I have means of destroying your enemies."

Notice the patience of God - "Repent and turn from your evil."

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
REVELATION 9

This chapter is one of the most frightening scenes in the Revelation. Its theme is "The Worse Is Yet To Come!" Chapter 9 contains plenty of symbolical language and pageantry. It also contains two major sections: The Sounding of the 5th Trumpet; (2) The Sounding of the 6th Trumpet. Verses 20 and 21 state the purpose of the instruments of destruction.

I. THE SOUNDING OF THE FIFTH TRUMPET (Verses 1-12)

- Definition  
9 "star"*
1. "A star fell from heaven" - cf. Luke 10:18. The star is given power to open the Abyss. (Cf. Luke 8:31 - the abode of demons)
  2. "Smoke" - can represent deception and delusion; sin and sorrow; and darkness and degradation; moral blindness (Cf. 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2)
  3. "Locust" - a common pest of the day; also the universal symbol of destruction. These locusts are described in a special way, and have a special function.

- (1) Horses - war;
- (2) Crowns - victory;
- (3) Faces of men - intelligence;
- (4) Woman's hair - strength or beauty;
- (5) Lion's teeth - power;
- (6) Armor - protection;
- (7) The sound of their wings made a tremendous noise - a mighty number

4. The description of the locust creatures do not represent the Cobra Helicopter Gunship, as some interpreters say)! *cf. Hel Lindsey - "The Late Great Planet Earth" (Job 9:20-26)*
5. They were told not to hurt the grass (common food to the locust), but to spend five months (length of the life of a locust), in tormenting man - to create anguish so as to desire death, but death is not granted. *cf. 9  
2 & 3*
6. Their leader's name is "Abaddon," or "Apollyon" - translated as a "Destroyer," or "Destruction."
7. Many attempts have been made to determine the exact meanings of every detail of this picture:
  - (1) Some make this parallel with the horsemen in the next section;
  - (2) Some bypass interpretation altogether;
  - (3) Some say they symbolize the hellish spirit which penetrates the earth;
  - (4) The Forces of decay for retribution upon Rome;

- (5) Representatives of internal rottenness and internal decay of the Roman Empire.
- (6) This is pictured as coming from within the empire.

- 8. God has now indicated two instruments with which can be used to destroy the oppressors - (1) Natural Calamity; (2) Internal Decay.
- 9. The third instrument is the next section. Verse 12 says there are two more woes to go!

## ✓ II. THE SOUNDING OF THE SIXTH TRUMPET (Verses 13-21)

- 1. The symbolism of this section is full of dramatic details. For the intent of these trumpets, please read Revelation 6:9,10; 8:3,4. The answer to the prayers of "vindication."
- 2. The four angels were loosed that were bound at the Euphrates, and led a great army bent on destruction. The Euphrates would represent the land of the enemies, or evil.
- 3. The army numbered 200,000,000. In regular formation, this would make a troop of soldiers 1 mile wide and 85 miles long.
- 4. Another vivid description is given - men with breastplates of fire; horses' head were as the heads of lions; out of their mouths were issuing fire, smoke and brimstone. Their tails were like unto serpents and had heads.
- 5. This vision could represent External Invasion.
- 6. This completes the instruments used of God - Natural Calamity; Internal Decay and External Invasion.
- 7. Verses 20,21 show the purpose of the instruments that reveal God's will.
- 8. Just as the seventh seal contained the seven trumpets, the seventh trumpet contains, in a sense, the seven bowls of wrath.
- 9. But first, there is an interlude (10:1-11), so that John can eat a little book, and know there are some bitter things to prophesy.

Rev 10:1

Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars.

Judgment (2P 1<sup>15</sup> Ps 97<sup>2</sup>)

FAITHFULNESS

HOLINESS

Rev 10:2

TRACT; Pamphlet

He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land,

} message for all  
He controls both

Rev 10:3

ATTRACTS ATTENTION

and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion.

When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke.

} indicates a storm is coming -  
Thus a WARNING

Rev 10:4

And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down."

Rv 1<sup>19</sup>

} why? - Rv 10<sup>6</sup> - no more warning; no more delay -  
The end is near

Rev 10:5

Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven.

Rev 10:6

And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, "There will be no more delay!"

Rev 10:7

But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets." (1 Pt 1<sup>10-12</sup>)

This sounds in Rv 11<sup>14-19</sup>  
BUT FIRST - words of comfort

Purpose of God with  
regards to the church

↓  
Satan's forces will not be  
allowed to defeat that purpose!

Rev 10:8

Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me once more: "Go, take the scroll that lies open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." *Ezra 8-3<sup>14</sup>*

Rev 10:9

So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me, "Take it and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey."

*The judgments of God upon those who had rejected Him*

Rev 10:10

I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour.

*The experience of receiving God's revelation  
Tastes good when receiving (studying) } But when applied, becomes bitter } Ps 119 103, 104  
↳ "woes & denunciation"*

Rev 10:11

Then I was told, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings."

*"In this interlude God will show to John and to the suffering church on earth what their mission was to be during the time Rome is feeling the full force of divine wrath for its sinfulness"*

*Two Visions: The Little Scroll (10<sup>1-11</sup>)  
The Two Witnesses (11<sup>1-14</sup>)*

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 10

We are interrupted in the Trumpet Judgments by two more visions. Chapter 10 contains the first vision, and chapter 11:1-13 contains the second vision. Two main themes are discussed in Chapter 10 - The Seven Thunders (1-7), and The Little Book (8-11).

#### I. THE FIRST THEME - "The Angel, and the Seven Thunders (1-7)"

1. Verse 1 - Write a description of the angel "come down from heaven." What do you think the symbols represent?
2. Verse 2 - One foot on the sea, and one foot on the earth would indicate all the world is to be included in the message to follow. The angel had great authority and great power. The message is for all, and he controls both realms.
3. Verse 3 - "Loud voice" - attracts attention to what he was to say. "Thunder" indicates a storm is approaching; a symbol of warning; a premonition of judgments of divine wrath.
4. Verse 4 - "Seal up those things" - there was to be no more warning! Consider the next few verses.
5. Verses 5,6,7 - the warning of the six trumpets had been enough needed. Now there is to be no further delay.
  - (1) "Right hand to heaven" - done when oath is taken.
  - (2) "Mystery" - to be known in the days of the voice of the 7th angel. He will sound in Revelation 11:14-19.

#### II. THE SECOND THEME - "The Little Book" - verses 8-11

1. Verse 8 - instructions are given regarding the little book.
2. Verse 9 - "eat it up" - acceptance and responsibility.
  - (1) "Sweet as honey" - joy of revelation and trust. It tastes good when studied, and has a sweet ending.
  - (2) "Bitter" - comes in the delivery of God's message of condemnation of sin of men. "Bad news!" (Consider Psalm 119;103,104; 19:7-14)

CONCLUSION: There has been much conjecture over the contents of the "Little Book." It does appear that its contents deal with matters of sorrow and woe. Cf. Ezekiel 2:8-3:14.

SEPARATION BETWEEN THE  
CLEAN AND UNCLEAN } "Measures"  
2 SM 8' 1" 2 EL 40' 2" - 42' 2"

What is the standard for measuring?  
(The Word of God)

Rev 11:1

I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshipers there.

→ The faithful church - Rev 5<sup>12</sup>

SPIRITUAL Temple of God  
1 COR 3:16 1 PT 2:5

(Worship + Service)

God's purpose to protect & preserve  
against harm - under God's direct control and care

Rev 11:2

But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.

→ symbolic of the world of humanity outside } given over to sin  
The body of Christ and doomed to  
eventual destruction

permitted to abuse (not destroy) the church  
Time of limited duration

Rev 11:3

And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

"Two" - that which has been  
strengthened, or doubled

Two witnesses -  
The entire faithful church during  
the time of the impending  
ordeal, and signifies the  
mission of the church under  
such a circumstance; i.e.,  
continued faithful preaching  
of the gospel.

Rev 11:4

These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

God's power through His spirit

Rev 11:5

If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die.

vs 5, 6 = Those who oppose their  
work will suffer the wrath of God  
as his due reward.

Rev 11:6

These men have power to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

ELIJAH

MOSES

Rev 11:7

Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them.

association with  
the powers of evil

vs 7-10 = signifies what  
happens to the witnesses  
after they have accomplished  
their task.

Rev 11:8

Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified.

Appears to have  
conquered

- worldliness

Captivity &  
False religion

Jerusalem - persecution

44 are wicked places -  
could signify Rome  
4666

↓  
Great indignity!

Rev 11:9

For three and a half days men from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial.

Rev 11:10

The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the earth.

Rev 11:11

*short indefinite time*

But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them.

*Rises from the ashes of persecution  
(as Rome crumbled, the church survived)*

Rev 11:12

Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.

} *symbolizes exaltation of those martyrs  
who died for their faith - victory!*

Rev 11:13

At that very hour there was a severe earthquake - *judgment of God* and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.

Rev 11:14

The second woe has passed; the third woe is coming soon.

Rev 11:15

The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said:

*The Kingdom of God has won!*

"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever." *Ac 2<sup>34-36</sup> , CR 15<sup>24-28</sup>*

*"Forever and ever" = 'refers to a  
an institution which will prevail  
until some expressed or  
implied conditions are  
satisfied"*

*cf. EX 12<sup>14</sup> - Passover  
EX 31<sup>17</sup> - Sabbath*

*(until Covenant has  
accomplished its  
purpose)*

Rev 11:16

And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God,

Rev 11:17

saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign.

Rev 11:18

The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great-- and for destroying those who destroy the earth."

*Reward to the faithful saints, and  
destruction of Rome*

Rev 11:19

Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

CONCLUSION:

*God is in control of history, and  
His church is not going to be destroyed  
by its enemies - Matthew 16:18*

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 11

Chapter 11 contains 3 sections for consideration: The Measuring of the Temple (1,2); The Two Witnesses (3-13); The Seventh Trumpet (14-19).

#### I. THE MEASURING OF THE TEMPLE - Verses 1,2

1. "Measure" - what is the indication of this word?
2. "Court" - the thought is that the world will continually attack the church.
3. "42 months" - symbolical period of time. The figure is used whenever persecution is under consideration. The number represents uncertainty, restlessness and turmoil.
4. SUMMARY OF THIS SECTION - God protects His own during a period of time of turmoil and difficulty by the hands of the world.

#### II. THE TWO WITNESSES - Verses 3-13

1. Various interpretations are offered:
  - (1) Literally two men having supernatural power and divine protection;
  - (2) Applies to the apostasy of the church until the time of the reformation - the true church and the preacher;
  - (3) The number "2" is symbolism which carries the thought of strength. In this case they would symbolize a testimony, or witness, of great power. The gospel will be carried out even in the face of adversity.
2. SUMMARY OF SECTION - Thus ends the interlude containing the messages of divine judgment. There is to be a delay no longer (10:1-7); God's message of judgment is to be proclaimed (10:8-11); God's people are known and protected (11:1,2); there will be a strong witness of the gospel during distress awaiting ahead. But when it is all over, Christianity will be vindicated (11:3-13).

#### III. THE SEVENTH TRUMPET - Verses 14-19

1. This vision carries over into the rest of the book. The message is "God and His Kingdom have won."
2. In the Seventh Trumpet we have two thoughts to note: (1) Victory - as indicated by songs; (2) Defeat - as indicated in verse 18.

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
LOOKING BACK  
REVELATION 4-11

1. Many symbols and the imagery of the Revelation come from the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Give the 3-fold outline of Revelation as revealed in Revelation 1:19--
3. An appropriate title for Chapter 4 would be \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The throne is symbolic of God's power, \_\_\_\_\_, majesty and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The "rainbow" in chapter 4 could be symbolic of God's \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The faithful of all ages is represented by the \_\_\_\_\_ elders.
7. The theme of chapter 5 is "The \_\_\_\_\_."
8. A scroll sealed with seven seals would represent what?
9. Why did John weep in Revelation 5:4?
10. How is salvation appropriated? (How are we saved?)
11. In Revelation 6 we have the opening of the \_\_\_\_\_.
12. How does John describe judgment in the 6th seal?
13. In view of all these terrible things that were to happen, who will be able to stand?  
Why?
14. Revelation 7 contains two visions that take place before the 7th seal is opened. What are the two visions?
15. Why were these two visions presented to John?
16. God gives His Revelation through things the Christians would understand. He is saying, "I have means of \_\_\_\_\_ your enemies."
17. The main thought of Revelation 9 is --
18. The leader's name of the Locust Creatures in Revelation 9 is "\_\_\_\_\_" which means "\_\_\_\_\_."
19. God has three instruments which can be used to destroyed the oppressors. They are:

20. What is the church's mission during times of persecution?
21. The "Little Book" was \_\_\_\_\_ to the mouth, and bitter to the \_\_\_\_\_.
22. The "Two Witnesses" represent the \_\_\_\_\_.
23. "Sodom, Egypt and the place where our Lord was crucified" indicate \_\_\_\_\_.
24. Three things are to be measured in Revelation 11. They are:
25. What does the "measuring" indicate, or mean?

SUPPLY THE CORRECT ANSWER

1. Number of elders around the throne
2. Number of the Spirits of God
3. Number of beasts about the throne
4. Number sealed from each tribe
5. Number of the "witnesses"
6. First seal
7. Second seal
8. Third seal
9. Fourth seal
10. Fifth seal
11. Sixth seal
12. First trumpet
13. Second trumpet
14. Third trumpet
15. Fourth trumpet
16. Fifth trumpet
17. Sixth trumpet
18. Seventh trumpet
19. "Destroyer"
20. One outstanding lesson you have learned from your study so far--

The People (1-6)  
The Plot (7-16)  
The Prelude (17)

Chapters 12-22  
The Struggle Against Satan

The Child Delivered (1-6)  
the Heavenly War (7-12)  
the Earthly War (13-17)

Rev 12:1

A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven:  
a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon  
under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her  
head.

Rev 12:2

She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she  
was about to give birth. *messianic Hope!*

*Micah 4<sup>10</sup> 5<sup>3</sup>*

Rev 12:3

Then another sign appeared in heaven: an  
enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten  
horns and seven crowns on his heads.

*Evil on the Horizon!*

*That common figure representing  
evil (evil, sinister, destructive,  
opposed to God)*

Rev 12:4

His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky  
and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in  
front of the woman who was about to give birth,  
so that he might devour her child the moment it  
was born.

*Formidable enemy!*

*Satan wants to destroy  
Jesus and His work*

Rev 12:5

She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will  
rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her  
child was snatched up to God and to his throne.

*the child caught up;  
woman left on earth - spiritual Israel?  
Ro 2<sup>28</sup> Co 2<sup>11,12</sup>*

Rev 12:6

The woman fled into the desert to a place  
prepared for her by God, where she might be  
taken care of for 1,260 days.

Rev 12:7

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his  
angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon  
and his angels fought back.

*Daniel 10<sup>13,21</sup> 12<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 9*

Rev 12:8

But he was not strong enough, and they lost  
their place in heaven.

*Defeat!*

EXAMPLES OF SATAN'S STRUGGLES  
WITH GOD --

*Satan battles - Christ; He is defeated  
Church; He is defeated  
Heaven; He is defeated  
Now, He will battle the SEED...*

1. Cain/Abel - saved by Seth (Ge 4<sup>25</sup>)
2. Seth to Noah - saved by Noah (Ge 6<sup>7,8</sup>)
3. Athaliah killed all the royal seed, except Joash (2Kg 11<sup>1,2</sup>)
4. Esther - 3<sup>13</sup> 4<sup>14</sup>
5. Christ - cross

Rev 12:9

The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

*Defeat!*

*"How to Be Victorious!"*

Rev 12:10

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.



Rev 12:11

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb → 1 Pt 1<sup>18-20</sup> RV 1<sup>5</sup> 1 Jo 1<sup>7</sup>  
and by the word of their testimony; they did not → 2 Ti 2<sup>2</sup> Ro 1<sup>18-17</sup>  
love their lives so much as to shrink from death. → Ro 12<sup>1,2</sup> LK 9<sup>23</sup>

Rev 12:12

Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short." *he will take all he can get!*

Rev 12:13

When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child.

Rev 12:14

The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach.

*Daniel 7<sup>25</sup>*

*3 1/2 years - period of persecution,  
but will be nourished & be  
triumphant  
(entire gospel dispensation?)*

Rev 12:15

Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river, to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent.

*False religions attempt to destroy influence of the church*

*"water like a river"*

*Symbol of ungodliness Ps 18<sup>4</sup>*

*Symbol of destruction by godless men Ps 124<sup>4,5</sup>*

*Symbol destruction by Assyria 15<sup>8</sup> 5-8*

*Symbol of wickedness 15<sup>57</sup> 19<sup>20</sup>*

Rev 12:16

But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

Rev 12:17

Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring--those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

*Each believer must examine himself to make sure he follows closely to the Lord*

*The Flock must stay close together with the Shepherd*

*We must not jeopardize our soul!  
stay close - remain within*

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 12

Our previous major section of study (1-11) dealt with the struggle of the church and the world. The struggle resulted in victory for the church. We now see with greater force a conflict between Christ and Satan. As this conflict closes in Revelation 20, we shall see the Dragon and his allies consigned to the lake of fire.

Revelation 12 divides into three headings: The People (1-6); The Plot (7-16); The Prelude (17).

#### I. THE PEOPLE - Verses 1-6.

##### 1. The Woman with Child - there have many interpretations:

- (1) The church of the Old Testament - "the mother of whom Christ came after the flesh."
- (2) Mythological idea, and source - with no interpretation.
- (3) The virgin Mary.
- (4) The people of God, the Ideal Zion, represented alike by the people of the Old and the New Covenants.
- (5) The Israel of God for all time - God's covenant related people - Philippians 3:3; Galatians 6:16.
- (6) Fleshly Israel - then, Spiritual Israel.

##### 2. The Child - He was to rule all the nations with a rod of iron (Psalm 2:6-9; Hebrews 1:5; Revelation 19:15).

##### 3. The Dragon - Psalm 74:13,14. Verse 9 identifies the dragon as the devil.

- (1) "Seven heads" - authority, world dominion
- (2) "Ten horns" - power, destruction, strength
- (3) Seven crowns - rule - "diadema" (rule); not "stephanos" (victory)
- (4) Cf. Daniel 7. This chapter in Daniel is full of these descriptions

#### II. THE PLOT - Verses 7-16 ("The Big Battle")

1. Satan tried to destroy the Christ during His sojourn on earth. At last he appeared victorious in the death of Christ on the cross. But, Christ arose, and Satan loses the first battle (Verse 5).

2. The scene shifts to heaven as Satan even tries to invade heaven to destroy the Christ. Here is war in heaven. Michael and his angels do battle with Satan and his forces. Satan is cast down and Satan loses the second battle (Verse 9).
3. He now tries to exercise destruction on the woman. She is fleeing the wrath of the Dragon. She is protected although there is turmoil and trouble. She is given wings to flee. She is safe and the Dragon is unable to destroy her. Satan has lost the third battle (Verse 16).

### III. THE PRELUDE - Verse 17

1. Satan now turns to fight his fourth battle. It is directed against the remnant of the woman's seed, and he finds some allies to help him in this battle.
2. Note: Some commentators place the woman as the church, and since Satan can never destroy the church as a whole, he concentrates on the individual (Verse 17).
3. All of this now introduces Revelation 13 and 14.

### QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. How does Part 2 of Revelation relate to the episode of the "Little Book?"
2. In what way is the continuity between the Old and New Covenants shown in the figure of the pregnant woman?
3. Describe the dragon as seen in Revelation 12.
4. Identify the child born of the pregnant woman. How did he escape the dragon? What does this signify?
5. What happened to the woman after she had given birth?
6. Who is the "Israel of God" today? Give scripture. *Ro 2<sup>28-29</sup>*
7. What do you think is the primary message of Revelation 12 to the readers of the First Century?

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 13

Revelation 13 concerns two major discussions - The Beast From The Sea (1-10); The Beast From The Earth (11-17). Satan is turning to do battle with the "rest of her seed," and John now describes the forces Satan uses and also, the forces God uses. Satan has the "Sea-Beast" and the "Earth-Beast" and the "Great Harlot" (17:1).

The forces of Good are led by God and His Allies - "The Lamb" (14:1) and the "Sickles" (14:14,17). These indicate the Christ and Eternal Judgment. The battle will be long and bitterly fought, but God is victorious!

#### I. THE SEA-BEAST - Verses 1-3 The Civil Persecuting Power of Rome.

1. "Coming up out of the sea" - consider Revelation 17:1,15. The Sea of Humanity - the source of evil - Isaiah 17:12.
2. "Ten Horns" - Old Testament symbol of power - Deuteronomy 33:17; 1 Samuel 2:10; 1 Kings 22:11; Luke 1:69.
3. "Seven Heads" - representative of authority - complete power and perfect authority; only as it was given him - Revelation 13:5,7.
4. "Ten Crowns" - kingly nature, symbolizing rule, or reign.
5. "Names of Blasphemy" - Consider verse 5,6. To blaspheme God and His saints.
6. Consider verse 2 - The Description - as also found in Daniel 7:1-8. The idea is that this is a terrible sight and difficult to describe. Rome is the persecuting power.
7. Consider verse 3 - "One Head Smitten" - "Death stroke healed." Nero was first to persecute Christians, but committed suicide in A.D. 68. As a persecutor Rome received its death stroke. Domitian started the persecution again - the death was healed.
8. "The Sea-Beast" symbolizes the persecuting power of Satan embodied in all the nations and governments of the world through out all history. (Hendriksen)
9. We have the power of the Beast in verses 4-8, and the encouragement for the Christian to hold fast in verses 9,10.

#### II. THE EARTH-BEAST - Verses 11-18. Rome as a False Religion - Emperor worship

1. "Two Horns Like A Lamb" - outward religious appearance.

2. "Voice of a Dragon" - wolf in sheep's clothing!
3. "Exercises authority of the first beast" - authority derived from Emperor, or from the Roman state.
4. "To worship the first beast" - forced man to worship the Sea-Beast.

NOTE: All of these descriptions seem to identify the body in Asia Minor to enforce the state religion. (Summers)

5. "Sign" - 2 Thessalonians 2:9
6. "Image to the Beast" - good description of Emperor worship.
7. "Mark" - cf. the 3rd seal. Economic discrimination in time of plenty.
8. "Right hand" - symbol of power, or industry, or work.
9. "Forehead" - thought, life, or mind. Notice "The Seal Versus The Mark!"

### III. THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST - Verse 18.

1. Of the many debated areas of the Revelation, this one has probably received the most varied treatment. Men have been trying to define it since the time of Irenaeus (c. 180).
2. Supposed meanings include Nero re-incarnated in Domitian; the Latin church; the Pope; Hitler, etc.
3. The number, and not the name, is the significant thing. The number "6" gave a feeling of dread to the Oriental. It fell short of "7" and was therefore an evil number. By itself it signified "doom" and when raised to a series ("666") it represented an evil that could not be greater. It represented evil raised to its highest power.
4. "The string of "6's" represented to a Christian everything that was distasteful, evil, terrible and brutal." (Summers). It seems the ruler of Rome was that "everything."

#### IDENTIFY

ἑβδόμη κόρη ἑβδόμη κόρη ἑβδόμη

1. The Woman
2. The Child
3. The Dragon
4. The "other children"
5. The Sea-Beast
6. The Earth-Beast

Chapter 12 - Satan Cannot Win  
Chapter 13 - Allin of Satan  
Chapter 14 - Allin of Righteousness  
Triumph

Rev 14:1

Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.

no longer persecuted - triumphant  
belong to God - ownership - loyalty - safety - companionship

Rev 14:2

And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder.

The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps.

Rev 14:3

And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders.

No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. purchased - 1 Pt 2<sup>9</sup>

Rev 14:4

These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. —————→ Pure (Ho 4:12 2Co 11:2 J3 4:4)

Total Spiritual Condition -  
vs 4,5

They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They —————→ obedient

were purchased from among men and offered as —————→ separated

firstfruits to God and the Lamb. —————→ belong to God (James 1<sup>8</sup>)

no spiritual adultery

Rev 14:5

No lie was found in their mouths; they are —————→ undefiled

blameless. —————→ free from defilement

The Church is Christ's Bride  
RV 21:9 Ep 5:27

DISTINGUISHED FROM GREAT HARLOT  
RV 17'

Rev 14:6

Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth--to every nation, tribe, language and people.

no defilement with idolatry of  
Caesar worship

Rev 14:7

He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water." not Caesar!

Rev 14:8

A second angel followed and said, "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great, (which made all the nations drink the maddening wine of her adulteries.)" → Reason for Rome's Punishment & Fall

Hour of Divine Judgment - not final judgment, but dissolution of political entity

Place of arrogance and rebellion against God (never been rebuilt)

symbolic of Rome 1 Pt 5<sup>13</sup>

Rev 14:9

A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: "If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand,

Rev 14:10

he, too, will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb.

→ "undiluted" Heaven's full wrath w/o mercy

Rev 14:11

And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."

no fate worse imagined  
cf verse 14:13 in contrast to the saints

Rev 14:12

This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus.

How short sighted we are sometimes

Rev 14:13

Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

blessed by God  
Rest from labors  
works follow them

not polluted by Rome's fornication  
no compromise of the faith  
not destined to drink God's wrath

in the faithful performance of their duties  
in harmony with the Lord's will for your life

Rev 14:14

I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one "like a son of man" with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand.

Rev 14:15

Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." → *ἄρ' αὖν* - to dry up; wither (that of grain, not grapes)

Rev 14:16

So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth, and the earth was harvested.

Rev 14:17

Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle.

Rev 14:18

Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe."

*Rev 6<sup>9</sup> 8<sup>3-5</sup>*

*To flourish; come to maturity*

Rev 14:19

The angel swung his sickle on the earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath.

*iniquity is full  
Ge 15<sup>16</sup> 49 10-12 15 63<sup>1f</sup>  
Joel 3<sup>12</sup> Lam 1<sup>15</sup>*

Rev 14:20

They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia. (about 200 miles)

*graphic + frightening!  
not wine, but blood!*

*extends to all men everywhere who  
find themselves beyond the pale of  
Divine protection!*

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 14

Revelation 14 deals with the two forces of righteousness that will combat the forces of the evil one. These two forces are "The Lamb" and "The Sickles of Judgment."

#### I. THE LAMB - The Victorious Christ - Verses 1-5

1. "Mount Zion" - Several passages deal with this phrase - 2 Samuel 5:6-10; 6:12,13; 1 Kings 8:1
  - (1) Symbolical of Jerusalem - Psalm 2:5,6; 15:1; 48:1,2
  - (2) Term used in prophecy - Zechariah 8:1-3; Daniel 2:34,35
  - (3) Cf. Isaiah 2:2-4; Hebrews 12:22,23 - thus, it is Jerusalem envisioning the church
  - (4) God is still in Zion - Psalm 110:1,2; Hebrews 12:22,23; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:21,22
  - (5) Therefore, "Zion" is the location of God.
2. The "144,000" - <sup>→ perfect number of the saved (symbolical)</sup> those "purchased out of the earth" - they bear a "name" now, and not a "mark." They are--
  - (1) Exalted - Verse 1
  - (2) Exultant - Verses 2,3a
  - (3) Exclusive - Verse 3b
  - (4) Exemplary - Verses 4,5 (*free from impurities*)
    - A. In Conduct - "Not defiled with women"
    - B. In Consecration - "Follow the Lamb"
    - C. In Calling - "Redeemed from among men"
    - D. In Conversation - "In their mouth was found no guile"
    - E. In Character - "Without fault before the throne"
3. "Voice from heaven" - Waters (rhythm); Thunder (volume); Harps (melody).

#### II. THE FOUR HEADLINE BANNERS - <sup>"more"</sup> "Confidence" - Verses 6-13.

1. First angel - the triumphant of righteousness - verses 6,7
2. Second angel - the judgment of wicked Babylon - verse 8
3. Third angel - emperor worshippers are judged - verses 9-12
  - will drink of the wrath of God*
  - will be tormented with fire & brimstone forever*

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
REVELATION 14

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4. Verse 13 - the Voice proclaiming Christians will triumph.

### III. THE SICKLES OF JUDGMENT - Two Aspects of Judgment - Verses 14-20

1. Viewed by the righteous (verses 14-16) - a beautiful figure of death is "going home."
2. Viewed by the wicked (verses 17-20)
  - (1) Fire - symbolism of destruction
  - (2) Fully ripe - iniquity is full
  - (3) Winepress of the wrath of God - figure of grapes being crushed. The wicked are destroyed - Isaiah 63:1ff
  - (4) Without the city - outside Jerusalem, or Zion - thus, the non-Christian
  - (5) Blood - the wicked will be punished

3 series of seven in THE Book -

Rev 15:1

I saw in heaven another great and marvelous sign: seven angels with the seven last (no alternative - reaches its end) plagues--last, because with them God's wrath is completed. 4<sup>6</sup> 21'

7 Seals (4'-6'<sup>17</sup>) Christians would be protected - God is in control and will not allow His people to be destroyed.

Rev 15:2

And I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire and, standing beside the sea, those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and over the number of his name. They held harps given them by God

Rome tried to destroy, but here Christians stand in victory

7 Trumpets (8'-11'<sup>9</sup>) Partial judgments (1/3) against Rome - possibility of repentance and salvation - God's holiness is tempered with mercy - designed to bring about repentance

7 bowls - Full fury of God's wrath against Rome

Rev 15:3

and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: "Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages.

Deliverance!

Rev 15:4

Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed." 6-23

The singular honor God deserves not the emperor, but God! preservation and justice

Rev 15:5

After this I looked and in heaven the temple, that is, the tabernacle of the Testimony, was opened.

Rome's overthrow was judgment by God, and not mere act or accident of history

Rev 15:6

Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues. They were dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden sashes around their chests.

holiness of mission

Rev 15:7

Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever.

Rev 15:8

And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 15

Revelation 15 concerns the announcement of judgment which is to come on Rome, and that this judgment is of God. It is complete, everlasting and without mercy.

- I. When the trumpets were blown in Revelation 8-11, God's mercy was mixed with His wrath, and was given that man might repent (only affected a third part). Now the line that separates God's mercy and His wrath has been crossed, and His wrath will not be mixed with mercy. Cf. Hebrews 12:29,32; Romans 1:24; 1 John 5:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:11,12
- II. VERSES 2-4. The rejoicing saints on the other side share the comfort Christians have to whom John is writing in the light of the terribleness of God's wrath that is to be poured out.
  - 1 "Sea of Glass" - now mingled with fire. In Revelation 4:6, God could not be approached by man because of the sea. In Revelation 15, those who have overcome stand upon the sea. In Revelation 21:1, the sea is no more, and man is in intimate fellowship with God.
  2. "Harps of God" - symbolical of giving praise to God (Psalm 33:2; 92:1-5).
  3. "Song of Moses" - typical of the deliverance of the Christian. In the song 4 things are praised - Works; Ways; Name; Acts.
- III. VERSES 5-8. The Judgments That Are At Hand.
  1. "Temple of the Tabernacle" (Sanctuary). Judgment comes from the very place God dwells. Before, the judgments had come from the altar (8:3-5).
  2. "Seven Angels" - seven plagues - seven bowls" - The complete destruction that now awaits the non-penitent ones.
  3. The dress of the angels (verse 6) are similar to the priests of God.
  4. Seven golden bowls - used in service unto God.
  5. "None able to enter" - they enter to offer sacrifice, thus the priests could no longer enter the Temple to make intercession for sinners.

CONCLUSION: Judgment is set, and even if Rome repented, their destruction was still set. final judgment is on the way.

Rev 16:1

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth." *The overthrow of a proud and sinful Empire - not final judgment*

Rev 16:2

The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly and painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshiped his image.

*The first four parallel the  
First Four Trumpets*

1. Land destruction
2. Sea Destruction
3. Fresh water Destruction
4. Heavenly Body Destruction

Rev 16:3

The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died.

5. Internal decay
6. External invasion
7. Judgment on Rome

Rev 16:4

The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood.

Rev 16:5

Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged;

Rev 16:6

for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve."

*The Reason*

*"Those who live by the sword  
shall die by the sword"  
Galatians 6:8,9*

Rev 16:7

And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments."

*Prayers 6:9-11  
8:3-5*

Rev 16:8

The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire.

Rev 16:9

They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him.

*Hebrews 6<sup>6</sup>*

Rev 16:10

The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony

*weakening and diminishing of  
world influence*

Rev 16:11

and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.

Rev 16:12

The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East.

*Land of the enemy; evil  
no obstacle to prevent - worst fear imagined!  
(Parthians overran Rome)*

Rev 16:13

Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. *symbolic of evil  
propaganda to deceive*

*not going down without a fight!  
"Frogs" - influences of evil (cf. v14)  
(2 Th 2:8-12, 1 Ti 4:1-2)*

Rev 16:14

They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty.

Rev 16:15

"Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed."

Rev 16:16

Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

*A place where those who rebelled against  
God went down in defeat*

Rev 16:17

The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!"

*Results- Rv 19*

*"MT of Megiddo" (Lit)*

*The scene of never to be forgotten battles*

*Judges 5:19 Against overwhelming odds  
God's people still won*

*2 Kings 9:27 Enemy defeated*

*2 Kings 23:28,29 Josiah died at  
Megiddo*

*Zechariah 12:11 Recalled by Zechariah*

Rev 16:18

Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake.

Rev 16:19

The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath.

*UTTER CHAOS!*

Rev 16:20

Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found.

*GOths - A.D. 410*

*VANDALS - A.D. 455*

*ODoACER - A.D. 476*

Rev 16:21

From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
REVELATION 16

Revelation 7 concerns the "Seven Bowls of Wrath." The judgment announced under the 6th seal (6:12-17), and further explained by the 7 trumpets (8:6-11:19) is now about to be carried out. The trumpets warned men, and gave opportunity for repentance, but man did not repent (9:20,21). In Revelation 15, things are announced showing no more warnings are to be given, and Revelation 16 shows that judgment will be final.

- VERSE 1                    "A great voice out of the Temple" - Cf. 15:8. God's judgment - the 7 vials will indicate the "what" and the "where" of His judgment.
- VERSE 2                    The 1st Vial - "upon the earth" - Land Destruction. It affects only those who have the mark of the beast.
- VERSE 3                    The 2nd Vial - "upon the sea" - Sea Destruction
- VERSES 4-7                The 3rd Vial - "upon the rivers and fountains" - Fresh Water Destruction.
- V.5 - indicates the righteousness of God's judgment  
                                 V.6 - indicates the why of god's judgment (persecution)  
                                 V.7 - tells of the voice from the altar (6:9-11; 8:3-5)
- VERSES 8,9                The 4th Vial - "upon the sun" - heavenly bodies destruction
- VERSES 10,11            The 5th Vial - "upon the seat of the beast" - the throne which had been given him by the dragon (13:2). The beast's power and authority is affected. (Internal decay - note v. 11 - blasphemed God).
- VERSES 12-16            The 6th Vial - "upon the great river Euphrates" (land of the enemy - Jeremiah 1:13) - external invasion - Cf. "river dried up" - hence, no obstacle in the way. The way is clear for entering the land.
- VERSE 13 - The 3 unclean spirits - sent to deceive and to gather forces to do battle of that "great day of God Almighty." Represents the influences of the dragon, 1st beast and 2nd beast. "The love of the world, worldly power and self-deceit, i.e., the devil, the world, and the flesh." (Plummer).
- VERSE 15 - vigilance necessary for the saints.

VERSE 16 - "Armageddon" - In the history of Israel it was the place of never to be forgotten battles. (ISBE, Vol II, page 1340). Cf. Judges 5:19; 2 Kings 9:27; 23:28,29; Zechariah 12:11 - a place where those who rebel against God go down in defeat. Previously there were wars (the 1st six trumpets), but now it is THE WAR. "It is the war for any ungodly nation who rears its ugly head against God." (Baird) The battle is described in Revelation 19. The name is indicative of battle and slaughter, and intimates the complete overthrow in store for the dragon and the kings of the earth.

#### VERSES 17-21

The 7th Vial - "into the air" - Satan is the prince of the powers of the air (Ephesians 2:3). The dwelling place of evil. Note the intense earthquake which indicates intense judgment.

"Divided into three parts" - somewhat uncertain, unless the idea is one of complete destruction.

"Talent" - about 100 pounds.

CONCLUSION: "These visions are designed to set forth the promise of the ultimate triumph of righteousness over all the evil forces which oppose it." (Summers).

#### NOTE:

##### TRUMPETS

Earth, 8:7  
Sea, 8:8  
Waters, 8:10,11  
Sun, 8:12  
Smoke, 9:1-11  
Great River, 9:13-21  
The Issue, 11:15-18

##### BOWLS

Earth, 16:2  
Sea, 16:3  
Waters, 16:4-7  
Sun, 16:8,9  
Throne of the Beast, 16:10,11  
Great River, 16:12-16  
It is done, 16:17-21

(These are more intense)

Note the stark contrast of the harlot  
WITH THE Pure Bride of Christ

Rev 17:1

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters.

Held sway over many peoples, and  
was secure

Rev 17:2

With her the kings of the earth committed adultery and the inhabitants of the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her adulteries."

Rev 17:3

Then the angel carried me away in the Spirit into a desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was covered with blasphemous names and had seven heads and ten horns.

desolated

Rev 17:4

The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet, and was glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls. She held a golden cup in her hand, filled with abominable things and the filth of her adulteries.

wealth & splendor

Rev 17:5

This title was written on her forehead:  
MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT THE  
MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE  
ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Rev 17:6

I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who bore testimony to Jesus. When I saw her, I was greatly astonished.

Rev 17:7

Then the angel said to me: "Why are you astonished? I will explain to you the mystery of the woman and of the beast she rides, which has the seven heads and ten horns.

Rev 17:8

The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come.

*Nero*

Rev 17:9

"This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits.

Rev 17:10

They are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; but when he does come, he must remain for a little while.

*may represent totality of  
power personified in the  
Emperor*

Rev 17:11

The beast who once was, and now is not, is an eighth king. He belongs to the seven and is going to his destruction.

Rev 17:12

"The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority as kings along with the beast.

Rev 17:13

They have one purpose and will give their power and authority to the beast.

Rev 17:14

They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings--and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers."

Rev 17:15

Then the angel said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and languages.

Rev 17:16

The beast and the ten horns you saw will hate the prostitute. They will bring her to ruin and leave her naked; they will eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

Rev 17:17

For God has put it into their hearts to accomplish his purpose by agreeing to give the beast their power to rule, until God's words are fulfilled.

Rev 17:18

The woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth."

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
REVELATION 17

Revelation 17 carries the theme of "The Great Harlot." Revelation 14 introduces us to Babylon, and the indication that she had already fallen. Chapter 16 says again that Babylon falls. Revelation 17 is going to tell us who, or what, Babylon is. The outline of this chapter is: (1) Introduction, Verses 1-6; (2) The Mystery of the Beast, Verses 7-17; (3) The Mystery of the Woman, Verse 18.

NOTES

Verse 1	Introduction - the key thought is the showing of judgment of the Harlot
Verse 2	The judgment includes all who have had anything to do with her. The kingdoms she conquers are partaking of the evil with her.
Verses 3-6	The description of the woman (not the same as Revelation 12). She sits upon a red beast, full of names of blasphemy, seven heads and ten horns.
Verse 4	Dressed in purple and red, adorned with precious stone and pearls, and holds a golden cup containing abominations and the filth of her fornication.
Verse 5	Wears the name "Mystery, Babylon, The Great, The Mother Of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth"
Verse 6	She is drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Christ.  (Babylon - Ezekiel 27,28 - great industrial and commercial center. Luxury, vice, glamour, worldliness. Cf. 1 John 2:15-17).  (A harlot allures, tempts, seduces away from that which is right).
Verses 7-18	These verses contain the interpretation of the "mystery." (Of the woman and the beast that carried her - verse 7).
Verses 8,11	The beast and description - "was and is not, and yet is." Shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go to perdition.
Verse 9	"Seven Heads" - seven mountains where the woman is sitting.
Verse 10	"Seven Kings" - 5 fallen, one is, and one yet to come. When the last one is, he will rule for a short time.

Verses 12-14,  
16,17

"Ten Horns" - ten kings, not yet existing, receive authority as kings for one hour, ruling with the beast. They have one purpose, and worship allegiance to the beast. They make war with the Lamb and His followers, but they shall hate the whore, make her desolate, and will eat and burn her flesh (16). They fulfill the will of God. (Suggestions include barbaric nations that Rome has conquered).

Verse 15

"Waters" - peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues.

Verse 18

"Woman" - the great city reigning over the kings of the earth. In John's day, it could only mean one place.

CONCLUSION: By now we have been introduced to the 3 forces Satan uses in his warfare. Beginning in chapter 18 we see their downfall. War is begun between the Beast and his followers, and the Lamb and His followers. The Lamb shall overcome because of the character of the Lamb (He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords), and because of the character of His followers. They are "called, chosen and faithful."

Rev 18:1

After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor.

Sins of spiritual  
fornication - (1-3)  
and of Pride - (4-8)

Rev 18:2

With a mighty voice he shouted: "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home <sup>(1)</sup>  
for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a <sup>(2)</sup>  
haunt for every unclean and detestable bird. <sup>(3)</sup>

Dwelling place of evil

Rev 18:3

*influence on other nations*

For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries."

carnally minded  
worldly  
no time for God

Rev 18:4

Then I heard another voice from heaven say: "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues;

God's people

The cry of all ages - 1s 48<sup>20</sup> JR 50<sup>8</sup> ze 2<sup>7</sup> 2 Co 6<sup>16-18</sup>

("What are some ways we do not come out today?")

Rev 18:5

for her sins are piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes.

Rev 18:6

Give back to her as she has given; pay her back double for what she has done. Mix her a double portion from her own cup.

Punishment doubled

Rev 18:7

Give her as much torture and grief as the glory and luxury she gave herself. In her heart she boasts, 'I sit as queen; I am not a widow, and I will never mourn.'

Rev 18:8

*"very quickly; suddenly"*

Therefore in one day her plagues will overtake her: death, mourning and famine. She will be consumed by fire, for mighty is the Lord God who judges her.

Rev 18:17

In one hour such great wealth has been brought to ruin! "Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off.

Rev 18:18

When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, 'Was there ever a city like this great city?'

Rev 18:19

They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: "'Woe! Woe, O great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin!

Rev 18:20

Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you."



Rev 18:21

Then a mighty angel picked up a boulder the size of a large millstone and threw it into the sea, and said: "With such violence the great city of Babylon will be thrown down, never to be found again.

force  
suddenness  
does not return

Rev 18:22

The music of harpists and musicians, flute players and trumpeters, will never be heard in you again. No workman of any trade will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone will never be heard in you again.

"No more life as usual"

no music	- no rejoicing
no craft	- no industry or economic life
no food	
no light	- darkness; symbol of lack of knowledge
no marriage	- no love

Rev 18:23

The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voice of bridegroom and bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the world's great men. By your magic spell all the nations were led astray.

vs 23, 24

Reasons for judgment

Rev 18:24

In her was found the blood of prophets and of the saints, and of all who have been killed on the earth."

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
REVELATION 18

This chapter contains "pronouncements of doom." We will see the fall of "Babylon" and how great it really was. We will see how pride is humbled, power is smashed and friends grieved. A brief outline is: (1) Babylon's Sin, Verses 1-8; (2) Babylon's Lament, Verses 9-24.

NOTES

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Verse 1      | The angel comes that has authority, and whose glory lights the earth.   |
| Verse 2      | The destination and judgment of Babylon. In alluding to this destruction, John uses the description of the prophets in depicting destruction of Babylon of their time - Isaiah 13:20-22; 14:22,23; Jeremiah 13:9-11; 51:37,42.  |
| Verse 3      | The reason for judgment. Because of spiritual fornication and pride. this same call has sounded to God's people of all times - Isaiah 48:20; Jeremiah 50:8; Zechariah 2:7; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18.   |
| Verse 4      | The call for separation.  |
| Verses 5-19  | <p>The wailing dirge of the peoples for their Babylon. Comfort is seen in that God has not overlooked the sins of Babylon - verse 5.</p> <p>For the kings, there will be no more kingdoms (9,10)<br/>For the merchants, there will be no more selling (11-17a)<br/>For the mariners, there will be no more cargoes (17b-19)</p> |
| Verses 21-24 | <p>The result of God's vengeance.</p> <p>Babylon is violently and completely overthrown (21). The cessation of life as they have known it.</p>  |

VICTORY - REJOICING

Salvation, glory and power were claimed by Rome. They never belonged to her - ONLY TO GOD!

Rev 19:1

After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

"PRAISE THE LORD"

vs 1,2 REJOICE

"Judgment of the prostitute"

Rev 19:2

for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants."

REASON

Rev 19:3

And again they shouted: "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever."

v 3 REJOICE

Eternal judgment

Rev 19:4

The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: "Amen, Hallelujah!"

IT IS God ALONE who is worshipped in Revelation

v. 4 - Their approval

Rev 19:5

Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!"

lowest to the highest praises

Rev 19:6

Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

vs 6-9 REJOICE

The Marriage Ceremony is come

Rev 19:7

Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

Hosea 2:19  
EZEKIEL 16:7

The closest and most Loving of all ties - the church  
Ep 5:22-33

Rev 19:8

Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

Contrast Rv 17<sup>4</sup> 18<sup>16</sup>

Pure and WORTHY

Rev 19:9

Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

Rev 19:10

At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

*object of true worship*

Rev 19:11

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war.

*ISAIAH 11:4,5*

*VICTORY*

*RV 15:3*

*AC 17:31*

REJOICE

*The Victorious Christ*

*(VICTORY HAS BEEN*

*ACCOMPLISHED*

*OVER THE HARLOT)*

Rev 19:12

*RV 1:14*

His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.

*"DIADEMS" - RULE; DOMINION*

Rev 19:13

*ISAIAH 63:3*

He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

*John 1:1-3 1 John 1:1-4*

*NOT blood of martyrs,  
BUT HIS OWN!*

Rev 19:14

The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

Rev 19:15

Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.

*RV 1:16*

*PS 2:6-9*

*RV 14:20*

Rev 19:16

On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

*RV 17:14*

Rev 19:17

And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God,

Every one can see AND Hear

symbolical of the destruction of God's enemies

Joel 3:9-13 1 SAMUEL 17:46

Ezekiel 39:4, 17-30 MATTHEW 24:28

Rev 19:18

so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and mighty men, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, small and great."

DESTRUCTION WAS TO BE COMPLETE

Rev 19:19

Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army.

VERSES 19-21

The Fall of the Two BEASTS

Rev 19:20

But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

Beast - Roman Empire

False Prophet - Emperor worship

Fell in 476 A.D.

Rev 19:21

The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

"nations"  
(cf. v. 15)

Roman Empire in general

"SUPPORTS AT  
the Judgment"

### LESSONS:

The downfall of

1. Those who had the mark (15, 16)
2. The Whore (18)
3. The Sea Beast (19:20)
4. The Earth Beast (19:20)

Only Satan is left - He goes down in Revelation 20:1-10.

No Christian of any generation defeats Satan by his own power. There is only one, great power - the blood of Jesus Christ.

The power of Christ is so all-encompassing that there was never a prospect of evil waging a successful holding action - much less a victorious campaign.

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 19

The chapter of Victory! The main themes are: (1) Rejoicing of God's people, verses 1-10; (2) Victory in battle (11-21). The saints rejoice for the reason of the triumph of truth and righteousness. It is found in relief from oppression (2-4), and in the marriage feast (7-9).

### NOTES

Verses 1-10      Rejoicing saints - rejoicing 24 elders and 4 creatures - and rejoicing great multitudes. The reason for rejoicing is "He has avenged the blood of His servants," and thus heard and answered their prayers. It is an eternal judgment (verse 3). All from the saint to the heavenlies praise God. They rejoice because the marriage ceremony is come (verses 6-9). Cf. 2 Corinthians 11:2.

Verses 11-18      The victorious Christ. Victory has been accomplished over the harlot, and now we will see victory over the other two forces of Satan. John gives us a description of the One conquering. Make notice of verses 11-16.

There is not much doubt who the Rider is - Jesus Christ, the One who will conquer all the enemies of God's children.

Verses 17,18      "Standing in the sun" - everyone can see and hear. The invitation to the supper is symbolical of the destruction of God's enemies. Cf. Joel 3:9-13; 1 Samuel 17:46; Ezekiel 39:4,17-20; Matthew 24:28

Verses 19-21      The end of the two beasts. We have waited to see the war, and now here it is - but in verse 20, it is all over. Both beasts have been taken.

CONCLUSION: We have seen the downfall of those who had the mark - chapters 15,16. We have seen the end of the harlot - chapter 18. We have seen the end of the beasts - chapters 19,20. Only Satan is left - we will see him in Revelation 20:1-10.

*"What would be the meaning of verse 10?"*  
*"What is the testimony of John?"*  
*"How is that the spirit of prophecy?"*

Place yourself in John's day -

2 Co 4:4 MT 12:29

MT 4:1-11 LK 4:1-13

LK 10:17,18 Jo 12:30-33

Co 2:15 RV 12:5ff

verses 1-3

"The Glorious Meaning for God's people  
Upon the earth"

verses 4-6

"Description of the condition of  
The victorious saint in heaven"

Rev 20:1

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven,  
having the key to the Abyss and holding in his "Jap hole provided with shaft"  
hand a great chain. 9' 11" 11"

RIGID INTERPRETATION OF RV 20  
WOULD MEAN THAT --

1. Satan is really a dragon, and at the same time an old serpent
2. The pit in which he is imprisoned is literally bottomless
3. People will actually have the mark of the beast on their foreheads
4. There is a literal "Book of Life"

Rev 20:2

He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

(The Deed)

PTO

only other references are -  
LUKE 11:21; MARK 3:27;  
MATTHEW 12:29

2 TH 2:3-10

Rev 20:3

He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving (THE OBJECT)  
the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

Rev 20:4

I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

1000 yrs - symbol of complete period of time - Ps 50:10  
of time - DT 7:9

Souls of the Martyrs - those who had been beheaded. only those who were beheaded entered into the 1000 yrs

IF THE YEARS are literal, then beheading is literal, and only those literally beheaded get into the "millennium."

FIRST DEATH - PHYSICAL  
SECOND DEATH - ETERNAL SEPARATION

Rev 20:5

(The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. (TRIUMPH OF THE MARTYRS)

FIRST RESURRECTION - TRIUMPH OF MARTYRS  
SECOND RESURRECTION - General Resurrection

Rev 20:6

Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

If "reign" is limited to a 1000 yrs, "life" is also limited. If reigning ends with the 1000 yrs, the living ends with a 1000 yrs, and the millennium will end with everybody in it ceasing to live.

Rev 20:7

When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison

(satan released - final + most terrible persecution)

unusual sense because John said, "This is the first..."  
A figurative, or spiritual, resurrection  
cf. Ezekiel 38, 39 - Romans 11:15

Taking from beneath the altar to elevate to thrones was called a resurrection

Revelation 2:11 → 20:6

Souls of the martyrs | all believers who died in their faith → "translation of the soul from this sinful earth to God's holy heaven"

Satan Bound -

"BINDING of Satan in some way  
associated with 1<sup>st</sup> coming of Christ"

"Satan not allowed to destroy the church"

"Before Christ came (OT) Satan exercised  
unlimited authority"

- Gog + Magog - resemblances to history
1. Syria under Antiochus Epiphanes was the best great oppression God's people endured
  2. Enemies were very numerous
  3. was of brief duration
  4. Defeat of armies was most unexpected and most complete

Rev 20:8

and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth--Gog and Magog--to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore.

ancient enemies of God's people  
(apocalyptic writings, Talmud, E238)  
serve as symbols for barbarous people who rally with the devil about the camp of the saints  
"The final attack of anti-Christian forces upon the church"

Rev 20:9

They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

The church of God

Rev 20:10

And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Rev 20:11

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

symbolizes sovereign + holy justice - no questioning of the verdicts rendered.

Rev 20:12

And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

The idea of God's keeping a record of the deeds of man is often found in the scriptures. Figurative way of saying God is keeping an accurate record.

MT 25<sup>31ff</sup> Ro 14<sup>10</sup> 2 Co 5<sup>10</sup>

Rev 20:13

The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.

"one resurrection"  
Jo 6<sup>39, 40, 44, 54</sup>  
Ac 24<sup>15, 21</sup>  
MT 22<sup>31</sup>  
Ab 6<sup>2</sup>

Rev 20:14

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ETERNAL SEPARATION

Rev 20:15

If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

The drama is over! The conflict has been concluded! THE LAMB HAS CONQUERED!

## REVELATION 20:1-10

Revelation is a book of symbols. It was "signified" (Revelation 1:1). There are at least 13 figurative nouns in the first 10 verses, an important observation in understanding the millennium.

Revelation is a book of a vision. "And I saw" tells us that what will be depicted here is drama unfolded before John's eyes. The visions are not to be taken as real events but as dramatic representations of real events. (No one takes the rising of a 7-headed, 10-horned beast out of the sea (13:1) as literal history - Also, to think that an angel actually came, or ever will come, out of heaven to literally do what John saw in the opening scene.

The overthrow of Satan, and not the reign of a 1000 years is the main theme of the first 10 verses of Revelation 20.

This chapter needs to be approached with great humility of spirit, recognition of its difficulties, avoidance of dogmatic statements.

This chapter has been the bitter debating ground for many centuries.

Doctrines of premillennialists, postmillennialists and amillennialists.

A whole system of eschatology, theology and philosophy of history have been constructed from these verses.

We need to ask the question, "What was the probable meaning to John and Christians of his day?"

We need to ask the question, "What did John and the Christians see in the scene which had to do with the saints reigning with Christ a 1000 years?" (Just as Satan was completely bound, the martyrs were completely victorious).

John apparently knew nothing about a "millennium."

Premillennialist - Christ will come - 1000 years of peace

Postmillennialist - gospel will usher in a 1000 year peace at the end of which Christ will come

Amillennialist - no such thing as a millennium taught.

"The millennial kingdom of Chapter 20 must be a reality which follows the judgments accompanying the return of Christ.

"Perhaps one can say the entire process is one of judgment in which the reigning Christ will dispose of His foes, train His people, give opportunity to surviving peoples to live under His own perfect government, and finally, after His administrative task is completed, will transfer the perfected kingdom to the new heaven and the new earth." (Tenney)

The sequence of events--

"Satan is seized, bound, thrown down, and sealed for a 1000 year period. For the same period, the martyred and faithful live and reign with Christ (1st resurrection). Satan is released and has a final assault. He is overthrown and destroyed. The rest of the dead rise and are judged. Thrown into the lake of fire, which is the second death."

"Christ's return will deprive Satan of his power, raise the Christian dead, and set up His kingdom on earth. After 1000 years Satan reimmeges, attempts to destroy the saints, fails and is destroyed. Then comes the resurrection of the rest of the dead, the judgment of the GWT, final destruction of the wicked, and the making of a new heaven and a new earth." (Premillennialism)

"The rapture (resurrection of believers when Christ comes to call his people out of the earth before the great tribulation. Seven years later (2nd stage of the program of the Lord's second coming) a resurrection for those who have become believers and died during the period between the rapture and revelation.

People are converted and die during the millennium which is set up at the "revelation." There is a resurrection of this group at the close of the earthly millennium when the heavenly order is set up.

The wicked dead are raised at a separate judgment. There are at least 4 resurrections."  
(Premillennialism)

There is nothing about a 1000 years reign on earth in the Bible.

Christ reigns, but the reign of Revelation 20 was not the reign of Christ. It was a peculiar and special reign of certain souls with Christ. It does not mention, or refer to the reign of Christ.

Note the pronouns "they" and past tense of "lived" and "reigned."

Revelation 20 does not mention:

- The Second coming of Christ
- A bodily resurrection
- A reign on earth
- The reign OF Christ on earth
- The throne of David
- Jerusalem or Palestine
- Christ on earth
- Does not mention "us"
- Does not mention the rebuilding of the temple
- Does not mention national conversion of Israel
- Does not mention a new dispensation
- Does not mention a 1000 years between resurrections
- Does not mention a new dispensation in which men can hear the gospel

Revelation 20 does not mention that which is essential to premillennial doctrine.

The thousand years is a figure of speech - a symbol of something else - Deuteronomy 7:9 -  
A figure of completeness

### CONCLUSIONS FORCED BY THE DOCTRINE OF MILLENNIALISM

1. Denies that the "throne of David" has been re-established with Christ sitting upon it. (But Christ now sits on David's throne - Acts 2:30,31; Revelation 3:21. Cf. Luke 1:32; Acts 2:30-33).
2. Denies that Christ is now ruling as King. (Acts 2:36; 1 Peter 3:22; 1 Corinthians 15:23-25). *RV 19*
3. Some proponents say the kingdom of Christ on David's throne will be only to the Jews.
4. But this would teach that no Gentile will ever be permitted to be a citizen of the kingdom of Christ. (Cf. Romans 1:16,17; Galatians 3:26-29; Jude 3; Ephesians 2:11-22; Acts 10:34-37; 15:6-11; Romans 11:26,27; Galatians 1:6-10).
5. The doctrine teaches Christ came to fulfill Old Testament prophecies, but the Jews defeated his original purpose.
6. The doctrine teaches Christ is coming to earth a second time at which time the hopes of Israel will be fulfilled in His earthly reign. (Cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
7. The doctrine teaches Christ's kingdom is an earthly kingdom with its capital in earthly Jerusalem, and Christ as an earthly king.
8. The doctrine teaches the "kingdom was deferred, or postponed" until the second coming of Christ.
9. The doctrine makes no provision in god's original plans for the sacrificial death of Christ for man's salvation. It eliminates the cross of Christ.
  - (1) If the original purpose of Christ was to establish an earthly kingdom, then the church was not in the eternal purpose.
  - (2) Christ's being the foundation of the church was not in the original purpose.
  - (3) Christ being the head of the church was not in the original plans.
  - (4) Christ being the Savior of the body was not in the original plan.

DAVID'S THRONE } ONE AND THE SAME → 1 KG 2<sup>12</sup>  
 JEHOVAH'S THRONE } → 1 CH 29<sup>23</sup>

BY COMPARING ZF 6<sup>13</sup> DA 7<sup>13,14</sup> } JESUS ASCENDED TO GOD -  
 WITH Ep 1<sup>20-23</sup> RV 3<sup>21</sup> } SAT DOWN UPON FATHER'S THRONE  
 ∴ UPON DAVID'S THRONE

CHRIST NOW SITS ON DAVID'S THRONE - Ac 2<sup>30,31</sup> RV 3<sup>21</sup>

- (5) The Lord's Supper not in the original plan since death of Christ would not have occurred if the Jews had accepted Christ.
- (6) Christ purchased the church by his death; reconciled Jew and Gentile in this body; and accomplished this by the cross.
  - A. If the church was not in the original purpose then neither was the cross which made all these things possible.
  - B. To reject the church, the Lord's Supper, and the cross as being God's intended purpose, is also to reject the blood of Christ.
10. The doctrine makes God powerless against the wicked choice of man.
11. It makes salvation of the world by the gospel of Christ an accidental thing which turned out to be far superior to God's original plan.
12. It makes no provision in His original plan for the church since the church is "a new and unexpected aspect the kingdom should assume during this rejection of Christ as king." (Cf. Point 9 (6)).
13. It makes the prophets of the Old Testament to be false in their foretelling of the establishment of the kingdom. (Cf. Matthew 16:18,19; Mark 9:1; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:4; Colossians 1:13,14; Revelation 1:9; Hebrews 12:28).
14. It makes the apostles liars and dupes when they speak of the kingdom and the reign of Christ. (Cf. Ephesians 3:9-11).
15. There would be no resurrection; therefore no hope. There would be no gospel; there would be no New Testament; There would be no Great Commission; no Mediator; no High Priest in heaven.

#### CONCLUSION:

The kingdom is now present. The rule of Christ on David's throne is a reality. There will only be one coming, resurrection and there is no scripture that says Christ will come back to the earth. There will be no earth to reign on; (2PT 3<sup>9-11</sup>) there will be no unrighteous to reign over. (Jo 5<sup>28,29</sup>)

NO SECOND CHANCE --

Ro 6<sup>23</sup>  
Hb 3<sup>14, 15</sup>  
Rv 2  
Jo 12<sup>48</sup>  
2Th 1<sup>7-9</sup>

SALVATION AND RESURRECTION --

Jo 5<sup>28, 29</sup>  
Ac 24<sup>15</sup>  
Jo 12<sup>48</sup> 6<sup>44</sup>  
1Co 15<sup>52</sup>

## QUESTIONS OVER REVELATION 20

1. *When did the kingdom of Christ begin?*

Daniel 7:13,14; Acts 1:9; Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 11:15,16

2. *Who were in the kingdom?*

Revelation 1:9; Hebrews 12:28

3. *Who were to reign with him?*

Matthew 19:27,28; Luke 22:29,30

4. *When will Jesus' reign end?*

1 Corinthians 15:22-26

5. *When was Satan bound and who bound him?*

Matthew 12:22-29; Mark 3:22-30

6. *Discuss the GWT and events. When was this to be?*

Revelation 20:11; Matthew 25:31-46

7. *What is the 2nd death?*

Revelation 2:11; 20:6,14; 21:8

8. *What is the Book of Life?*

Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12; 21:27; 22:19

Philippians 4:3; Exodus 32:32,33; Psalm 69:28; Daniel 12:1; Malachi 3:16

## A LOOK AT REVELATION 20:1-10

1. This passage does not teach the following which are all included in the doctrine of millennialism:
  - (1) It does not teach the second coming of Christ. The Bible clearly teaches that Christ will come again, but this passage does not.
  - (2) It does not teach a bodily resurrection. The Bible clearly teaches the resurrection of the body, but this passage does not.
  - (3) A period of "utopia" in which there is no wickedness or sin.
  - (4) An earthly kingdom, nor an earthly reign.
2. Some questions and difficulties of the millennialist theory:
  - (1) Is all of Revelation 20 literal? What portion is literal and what portion is figurative?
  - (2) How is Satan bound?
  - (3) Who lived and reigned with Christ?
    - A. If this is a bodily resurrection, what kind of bodies?
    - B. If this is a literal reigning, then literal living.
    - C. If at end of 1,000 years we would cease to reign with Christ, would we not cease to live with Him?
  - (4) Over whom shall the righteous reign?
    - A. If all the wicked have been destroyed, only righteous remain.
    - B. Will the righteous reign over themselves?
  - (5) Based on John 5:28,29 all the dead (righteous and wicked) will be raised at His coming.
    - A. Then who are the rest of the dead to be raised at the end of 1,000 years if Christ comes before the millennium?
    - B. If Christ comes after the millennium, then no righteous will be raised before the 1,000 years.
    - C. If the FIRST and SECOND resurrections are literal bodily resurrections and come at the beginning (righteous) and ending (wicked) of the 1,000 years then there will be THREE resurrections unless there should be none at the judgment. Cf. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 20:13.

(6) Who are the nations to be deceived by Satan when loosed for a "little season?"

- A. If only the righteous have been raised, are they to be deceived? If so, then Satan will have an opportunity to corrupt the righteous after their resurrection!
- B. If the wicked must be raised before the "little while", are they not already deceived?
- C. If there is a bodily resurrection of both righteous and wicked before the "little season" this places all men from the beginning living upon the earth at one time! Any idea how many billions this would be? Present world population is 5+ billion.

3. Some conclusions:

- (1) You cannot say that John mentions the second coming of Christ in Revelation 20:1-10 without adding to the words of this book.
- (2) You cannot say that Revelation 20 teaches that Christ will reign on the throne of David upon the earth without adding to the word.
- (3) You cannot say that the saints will be resurrected in body to reign with Christ a thousand years without adding to His word.
- (4) You cannot say that the number in Revelation 20 who reigns with Christ refers to us or to all the righteous without adding to the word.
- (5) You cannot say that Revelation 20 teaches an earthly reign of Christ at any time without adding to the word.

## QUESTIONS OVER REVELATION 20:1-11

1. The **Characters** - An angel (not Jesus)  
Man's archenemy - "the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan"
2. The **Nature** of the binding - chain binds Satan; abyss is the realm of confinement; Key is the authority to put him there; earlier (9:1-10) it belched forth smoke and stinging locusts with serpents - like power; King of these creatures was Apollyon (Destroyer). cf. Rev 11:7 - came from the abyss but was headed for perdition (17:8)  
abyss (Ro 10:7) = hades realm of the dead; Lk 8:31 is the abode of demons (a place of dread for them); "deep" (KJV)
3. The **Extent** of the binding -
4. The **Purpose** of the binding -
5. The **Time** of the binding -
6. The **Duration** of the binding -

## THE MILLENNIUM REVELATION 20:4-6

1. The Thousand Year Reign -
2. Who lives and reigns? -
3. In what condition do they reign? -
4. Where do they reign? -
5. When do they reign? -
6. What does "they lived" mean?
7. What is the "First Resurrection?" -
8. What is the spiritual status of these souls? -

THE LOOSING AND FINAL END OF SATAN  
REVELATION 20:7-11

1. The *duration* of the loosing -
2. *Satan's activities* when loosed -
3. The meaning of *Gog and Magog* -
4. The *nature* of the attack -
5. The *result* of the attack -
6. *Satan's eternal destiny* -

CONCLUSION

# An Exegesis of Revelation 20:1-10 —The Millennium (1)

Gary Workman

Revelation is a book of symbols. It was "signified" (Rev. 1:1) or made known in signs. Therefore, in the interpretation of this book some normal hermeneutical rules are reversed. We should take a term as figurative unless there is a reason not to. This is especially true in Revelation 20 where there are at least 13 figurative nouns in the first 10 verses, an important observation in understanding the millennium.

Also, the book of Revelation is a vision. The opening words of this chapter ("And I saw") tell us that what will be depicted here is drama unfolded before John's eyes. The visions are not to be taken as real events but as dramatic representations of real events. No one takes the rising of a seven-headed, ten-horned beast out of the sea (13:1) as literal history. Likewise, it would be a mistake to think that an angel actually came, or ever will come, out of heaven to literally do what John saw in the opening scene.

It is also important to notice that Revelation 20 cannot follow chapter 19 chronologically. Revelation is not chronological but ideological and brings us to the end of the world several times as the book unfolds. Every premillennialist understands that verses 4-6 of chapter 20 go back to cover the same time period as verses 1-3. It should not seem unlikely, therefore, that verses 1-3 themselves are simply a fresh treatment of ground already covered. Notice that the innumerable people of the nations of the earth are gathered together for war in 20:8,9. But the kings and armies of the earth were already gathered for war in 19:19 and, together with "all men" of the ungodly world (v. 18), were completely destroyed in verses 20 and 21. Therefore, it is an absolute necessity to see chapter 20:1-10 as a recapitulation, with some added details, of time periods already discussed in Revelation. Just as chapter 12 abruptly reverts back to the birth of Christ after having gone to the end of time in chapter 11, without specifically informing the reader of the break in chronology, so chapter 20 goes back to pick up the story of Satan's curtailment and final doom after the world is vanquished in chapter 19. Verses 1-6 of chapter 20 cover most of the Christian era and verses 7-10 cover the final conflict just before the close of history, which ends with the second coming of Christ.

Revelation 20:1-6 is supposed to be the bulwark of the theory of premillennialism. In fact, it is admitted by some premillennialists that "this is the only passage in the entire Bible which teaches a temporal *millennial* kingdom. . . ."<sup>1</sup> But in reality such a millennial kingdom cannot be found even here, for this passage does not contain any of the cardinal tenets of that theory. There is no mention of a rapture, the second coming of Christ, a reign of Christ on earth, a bodily resurrection of the saints, the conversion of Israel, a throne in Jerusalem, or

a thousand years of earthly peace! Nor can such a millennium be found anywhere else in scripture.

The Bible speaks of only *one* literal, future coming of Christ—and it is at the end of the world. Premillennialism has *two* (the "rapture" and the "revelation") and it is still not the end. The coming of Christ is symbolically but graphically portrayed in chapter 19 of this book. But there Jesus does not come to convert non-Christians to 1,000 years of peaceful living. He comes to render vengeance—to "judge and make war" (v. 11; cf. 2 Ths. 1:7-9). What chapter 20 proposes to tell us is that not just human beings but even Satan himself is under God's control and will eventually be disposed of forever. John has already finished with the "beast" and the "false prophet." It only remains to assure the readers of our arch-enemy's inability to destroy either the church or the departed souls of faithful Christians and then to relate his ultimate fate.

## The Binding of Satan (20:1-3)

### The Characters:

As the vision of chapter 20 unfolded, John saw an angel. Since Jesus has "the keys of death and of Hades" (1:18), and since this angel has "the key of the abyss," some think that the angel here must be Jesus. However, the text does not say so and Jesus is nowhere described in this book as an "angel." Instead, it would appear that the vision is telling us that God's power is great enough to deal with Satan by just sending some unnamed angel. As Michael was able to overcome Satan in battle (12:7,8), so this angel can handle him too, for he has the power of God behind him. John also saw in the vision man's arch-enemy himself and described him as "the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan" (v. 2)—a repetition of the even fuller description of him given earlier (12:9).

### The Nature of the Binding:

Since Satan is a spirit being, we should not understand John to mean that he is actually a dragon or a serpent. Likewise, the key, the chain and the abyss must be understood in a non-literal sense. These metaphorical terms stand for or symbolize something. The "chain" would be the thing that could actually bind Satan (the divine decree?), the "abyss" or "bottomless pit" is the realm of confinement, and the "key" is the authority or power to put him there (cf. 1:18; 9:1).

In one verse of the New Testament, "the abyss" refers to the Hadean realm of the dead (Rom. 10:7). In the only other occurrence of the term outside the book of Revelation, "the abyss" stands for the abode of demons—a place of dread for them (Luke 8:31). (In both of these passages the KJV translates the term as "the deep.")<sup>1</sup>

When "the pit of the abyss" was unlocked earlier in Revelation, it belched forth smoke and stinging locusts with scorpion-like power (9:1-10). The king of those creatures was "the angel of the abyss" whose name in Hebrew (*Abaddon*) and in Greek (*Apollyon*) means "Destroyer" (9:11), doubtless a reference to Satan. The sea-beast of chapter 13 is also called "the beast that cometh up out of the abyss" (11:7). He came from the "abyss" but was headed for "perdition" (17:8). Thus, the abyss is always pictured in Revelation as a place of evil but not the place of final punishment (20:10). Just as sinning angels are confined to "chains (or pits) of darkness" (2 Pet. 2:4) and are in "bonds" (Jude 6) awaiting judgment, so the devil too is chained. His confinement is experienced as a "prison" (Rev. 20:7) from which he longs to be released.

### **The Extent of the Binding:**

Premillennial interpreters like Robert Shank often assert that Satan cannot be bound at the present time since Revelation 20 pictures his binding as absolute, whereby he is rendered "totally inoperative."<sup>2</sup> But this is not what the text says. In that case John would have said that he was bound with 1,000 chains or shut in with 1,000 seals. Furthermore, such a complete binding of Satan during the supposed earthly millennium should indicate a period of sinlessness for the millennial subjects. However, Shank is unable to harmonize this "total" binding theory with his acknowledgement of the presence of "impenitent sinners" still in "rebellion" against God during that millennium, especially in view of his admission that "such will not be present" during the eternal age.<sup>3</sup> That theory is wrong. For Satan to be "bound" simply means that he will be restricted in some way and to some degree, but it does not necessarily indicate that he will be rendered completely inactive as far as man is concerned. Let us notice how the word "bound" (*deo*) is used elsewhere in the New Testament:

1. A colt was "tied" (Mark 11:2-4, same Greek word), but he would have still been able to kick and the range of his activity depended on how long his rope was.
2. Lazarus was "bound" hand and foot with grave clothes, but he was still able to "come forth" at the call of Jesus (John 11:43, 44).
3. John the baptizer was "bound" in prison (Mark 6:17), but he could still call and send his disciples (Luke 7:18-22).
4. Jesus was "bound" before Pontius Pilate (Mark 15:1), but he was still able to preach the truth and witness the good confession (1 Tim. 6:13).
5. Paul was "in bonds" while in prison (Col. 4:3), but he was still active in proclaiming the gospel (Acts 28:31) and converting souls (Phm. 10).
6. Agabus was "bound" hand and foot, but he was still able to prophesy (Acts 21:11).
7. Satan had "bound" a woman with an infirmity, but she was still able to go to the synagogue and respond when Jesus called her (Luke 13:10-16).
8. A woman is "bound" to her husband (Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:39), and man to his wife (v. 27), not meaning that they are disabled but only that they are not free to marry others.

From these usages of the word "bound" it is obvious that no one can rightly claim that Revelation 20 indicates

a complete blinding of Satan unless John specifically says so, and he does not. Jesus said just before the cross that "now" Satan will be cast out (John 12:31), yet a number of years later Peter said that Satan still "walketh about" (1 Pet. 5:8). The seeming paradox is solved by not trying to understand the casting out in an absolute sense. The same is true in regard to John's account of the blinding of Satan.

### **The Purpose of the Binding:**

As we have just noticed, being "bound" means only that one is restricted in some way. The four angels who were "bound" at the river Euphrates (Rev. 9:14) were restricted from going ahead to "kill the third part of men" (v. 15). But in chapter 20, what is Satan restricted from doing? The answer is "that he should deceive the nations no more" (v. 3). The passage says nothing regarding Satan's influence over *individuals*. He still remains the subtle "serpent" (2 Cor. 11:3), the "angel of light" (v. 14), and the "roaring lion" who "walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). However, he is restricted from controlling *nations* in this regard: he cannot, while bound, instigate a worldwide or international persecution against the church. We know that this is what the binding means, for this is what Satan does as soon as he is "loosed" (vv. 3, 7). He will then "deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth" into laying siege to "the camp of the saints" (vv. 8, 9). Whereas Satan was once permitted a worldwide attack against Christians, he was later "bound" from doing so—until shortly before the end of time when he will once again be allowed to wreak his havoc upon the church.

### **The Time of the Binding:**

Outside of our present passage, the only other specific reference to a binding of Satan is in Matthew 12:29 and Mark 3:27. Jesus had just healed a man of demon-possession. The context of Jesus' explanation indicates that Jesus had bound "the strong man" (Satan) in order to enter his "house" (the demoniac) and "spoil his goods" (cast out demons). Thus, Jesus curtailed some of Satan's activity. But Jesus was not yet finished dealing with Satan, nor is he even now. Later, when the seventy returned from their commission saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in thy name," Jesus replied: "I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:17-18). This indicates a further reduction of Satan's power. Then just before his death Jesus said, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (John 12:31). Our Lord died to "bring to nought... the devil" (Heb. 2:14). On the cross he "despoiled the principalities and powers" (Col. 2:15). So, following Jesus' ascension back to glory, Satan was "cast down" and overcome "because of the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 12:9-11).

Jesus came into the world to "destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8), but it did not all happen instantaneously. In different ways and in various stages Satan was bound by the birth, life, teaching, works, death, resurrection, ascension and reign of Christ. It was a gradual thing. And it will only be at the end of time that

Jesus will finally and completely bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15). Before the cross Jesus began to restrict Satan in his possession of *bodies*, and after the cross in his possession of *souls*. But the binding of Revelation 20 has to do with the possession of *nations*. John does not specify the exact time for this binding but it was evidently accomplished later, for Satan was still marshalling the empire against Christianity at the time John wrote, himself being in exile on the Isle of Patmos (1:9).

Let us notice a sequence of events: (1) Satan was "cast into the earth" as the result of the cross (Rev. 12:9), then (2) he was "cast . . . into the abyss" (20:3), and finally (3) he will be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" (20:10). The devil had only "a short time" following the first event (evidently before the second event—the curtailment—would take place), during which he "persecuted the woman" (12:13). But the church finally emerged about three centuries later from international persecution as the result of Satan's binding and banishment to the abyss. He could not destroy the church as a whole (Matt. 16:18), so he "went away to make war with the rest of her seed"—individual Christians (Rev. 12:17).

### **The Duration of the Binding:**

John said that Satan was bound "for a thousand years" (Rev. 20:2). Just as we do not look for a literal dragon or serpent, nor a literal key or chain, nor understand that a literal abyss was literally shut and sealed, neither can we look for a literal thousand years. Revelation is full of symbolic terms—including symbolic numbers. The number ten denotes completeness, such as "ten days" of tribulation (Rev. 2:10), while the multiple 1,000 (10 times 10 times 10) simply intensifies the idea or indicates the vastness of it. How inconsistent of premillennialists to symbolically interpret most of the numbers in the book and yet all of a sudden get very literal when it comes to this one. Some few of them will, to their credit, not press the exactness of the number. However, they are still in error as to the nature of the millennium.

The number "thousand" indicates completeness, but the question still remains as to *what* will be complete. A popular error, with Augustine as its source, is that John does not refer to a time period at all but to the nature of the binding. It is said that Satan is bound "in relation to the godly," so that "for them, Satan has been completely bound," but that he is loosed in regard to the ungodly.<sup>4</sup> As one writer put it, "Satan is bound and he is loosed for a thousand years."<sup>5</sup> This view is manifestly false. John did not say that Satan was bound "that he should deceive the church no more," but rather "that he should deceive the nations no more" (v. 3). If the "nations" in verse 3 are Christians, who are they in verse 8? They are not the saints but rather the enemies of the saints. When Satan is loosed, he does not go forth to deceive the church but to deceive the nations and unleash them against the church (vv. 8, 9). If this simultaneous binding and loosing theory were true, Gog and Magog would have to be Christians!

Moreover, the text clearly states that Satan is not

bound and loosed at the same time. He is bound for a symbolic 1,000 years, "after" which he will be loosed (v. 3). It is only when the 1,000 years are "finished" that Satan will be loosed (v. 7). The number "thousand" is a symbolic term, but "years" is not symbolic, for what could it signify? It is a time period of some definite duration. The number "thousand" attached to it indicates that it is a *long* time and signifies "all" the years of that period, just as Psalm 50:10 refers to *all* the hills of the earth and Deuteronomy 7:9 means *all* the generations of the chosen nation. The actual years of Satan's binding is a number known only in heaven (Matt. 24:36). It is not for us "to know times or seasons which the Father hath set within his own authority" (Acts 1:7). But from this vantage point in history, we can see that the "thousand years" is longer than a literal number would indicate.

Those who hold that Satan is bound and loosed at the same time have an impossible interpretation in which words have no meaning. John made it clear that Satan will not be loosed for *anybody* "until the thousand years should be finished" (v. 3). It is a time duration, "after" which there is another duration called "a little time" (v. 3). How could anyone think that these two periods run concurrently? The terms John uses: *until . . . years . . . finished . . . after . . . time* (v. 3), *when . . . years . . . finished . . . shall be* (v. 7) make it overwhelmingly clear that the last phrase of verse 2 does not mean "bound completely" but "bound for a complete period of time." Then, toward the end of earth's history, Satan will be loosed for that "little time" before his final punishment. This latter period is described in verses 7-10. Evidently, God sees it as a "must" (v. 3)—a necessary event to bring on the end of the world.

In the next installment we will look at the thousand-year reign and the loosing of Satan.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>George Eldon Ladd, *A Commentary on the Revelation of John* (Eerdmans, 1972), p. 267. See also the similar statement by Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Eerdmans, 1977), pp. 356-357.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Shank, *Until* (Westcott, 1982), pp. 403, 404.

<sup>3</sup>Shank, pp. 284, 285.

<sup>4</sup>Alfred Plummer, "Revelation," *The Pulpit Commentary* (Eerdmans, 1950), v. 22, p. 471.

<sup>5</sup>Ray Frank Robbins, "Apocalyptic," *Revelation: Three Viewpoints* (Broadman, 1977), p. 217.

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# An Exegesis of Revelation 20:1-10 —The Millennium (2)

Gary Workman

In our first installment (January 1986) we presented some introductory material to Revelation 20 and gave an exegesis of the first three verses. We will now take a close look at the next seven.

## The Thousand-Year Reign (20:4-6)

It must be admitted that no attempt to understand verses 4-6 is without its difficulties. This is due to the short, concise way in which the description of the millennium is given and the fact that no millennium is mentioned elsewhere. The various interpretations that men have arrived at may be summarized under five major views: (1) a future reign of Christ on earth with his saints for a literal thousand years, (2) a golden age of peace, prosperity and conversions prior to the Lord's return, (3) a spiritual reign of individual Christians in this life during the entire gospel age, (4) a resurrection of the cause of Christianity by coming out of Roman persecution, and (5) a present reign of the souls of deceased Christians with Christ in heaven.

The first view mentioned above is the only one of the five which is dangerous to believe because it alone disparages some of the purposes of God in the cross of Christ and the establishment of the church. Surely if verses 4-6 were not in the Bible, no Christian would ever have thought of an earthly, millennial reign of Christ. Yet, the inclusion of these verses fails to support it. Not only that, but a careful examination of the text will also fail to support a number of other views as well. To understand the passage rightly, let us ask and answer a few questions.

### Who Lives and Reigns?

As the scene unfolds John sees occupied thrones but he does not specifically say who it was that "sat upon them" (v. 4). It is probably not just God and Jesus, for their throne is expressed in the singular (22:3). Some have thought them to be the apostles, who were promised thrones by Jesus (Matt. 19:28). Another suggestion is the heavenly elders, who also were said to sit on thrones (Rev. 4:4; 11:16). But most likely it is the "souls" that are identified in the rest of verse 4, possibly along with others mentioned above. This would more closely correspond to the similar setting of Daniel 7:9-27. In any case, it is these "souls" who are said to "live and reign" and to whom we must turn our attention.

Some see in John's description just one group of people—Christian martyrs. The KJV supports this view. Taking liberties in the translation, this is also the way the NIV represents it. But the natural reading of the verse indicates two groups of Christians: (1) *martyrs*—"them

that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus" and (2) *others*—"such as worshipped not the beast" (v. 4). The second group is indicated by the use of "and" plus the indefinite relative pronoun "whoever" (*hollines*), represented in the ASV by "and such as." The pronoun hearkens back to the word "souls." John saw "the souls of them that had been beheaded (executed) . . . and such (souls) as worshipped not the beast . . ." The passage describes *their* reign with Christ. It is not Christ's reign that is emphasized or defined by the "thousand years."

### In What Condition Do They Reign?

The passage speaks not of Christians living on earth but of those who have died and live beyond the grave. This is why verse 5 refers to "the rest of the dead" (the ungodly). While the word "souls" can sometimes refer to whole persons in the flesh (Acts 2:41; 1 Pet. 3:20), here it is souls as distinct from bodies that are in view. John did not just say "I saw souls" or "I saw them" but rather "I saw the souls of them." The use of the genitive is decisive, for such wording is not used of any but disembodied souls. He saw the souls of those who had died—those who were executed and who otherwise finished their course. It is the identical construction as that found in 6:9, "the souls of them that had been slain." These were slain by the wicked and their death cried out for vengeance (vv. 10, 11). All agree that the souls of chapter 6 were still disembodied. But such is also true of those in chapter 20. Their bodies were destroyed, but their souls lived on as Jesus both explained (Matt. 10:28) and experienced (Acts 2:27).

In the future these souls will return with Jesus (1 Ths. 4:14) and will be reunited with their resurrected bodies (1 Cor. 15:21-23, 52) at the last day (John 6:40), at which time they will go to their respective destinies (John 5:28, 29). But the vision John sees here (Rev. 20:4-6) is prior to that day (vv. 11-15).

### Where Do They Reign?

These souls reign "with Christ" (v. 4). Since Jesus was "received up into heaven" (Mark 16:19) where he now sits at the right hand of God (Acts 2:33; Heb. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:22), and where he will remain until the end of all enemies including death (Acts 2:34, 35; 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:24-26), that is where these souls are also—yet in an intermediate state. "Throne" is used forty-seven times in Revelation and, except for that of Satan and the beast, it is always in heaven. A faithful Christian who dies will "depart and be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23) so that he is "absent from the body" and "at home with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8). This home is called "paradise" (Luke 23:43) and is located in heaven (2 Cor. 12:1-4).

## When Do They Reign?

The souls John sees are reigning during the same "thousand years" that Satan is bound (vv. 1-3), for it is at the end of the thousand-year reign (v. 6)—when "the" thousand years of that reign are finished—that Satan shall be loosed (v. 7). Therefore, the reign takes place while the world still exists and prior to judgment day. The future tense of "shall reign" (v. 6) is without temporal significance because John also said "reigned" (past tense) in verse 4. Not every soul that John saw reigns during the totality of the thousand years, for an individual's own personal reign may begin either early or late in the Christian era (cf. Matt. 19:30—20:16). "They" is used in a collective sense just as in the case of the Israelites in their forty-year wilderness wanderings (Josh. 5:4-6; Heb. 3:9, 17). It is both illogical and unbiblical to interpret the thousand-year binding and the thousand-year reign as anything other than the same period of time.

## What Does "They Lived" Mean?

Toward the end of verse 4 John said concerning these souls that "they lived" (*ezesan*). This verb is the aorist (past) tense of *zao*, to live. The word occurs some 242 times in the New Testament and is used of physical life in this world, spiritual life in this world, the life of the soul beyond the grave, and bodily resurrection. The question is, what does it mean in Revelation 20:4? Some think that the word "live" cannot be used in the same context (vv. 4, 5) with two different meanings unless there is an indication of a distinction as in John 5:25-29. But there are passages elsewhere in which two meanings of "live" and "die" occur without word clues to differentiate them. One of these is John 11:25, 26 which refers first either to "life in paradise" or "resurrection life," then to "present spiritual life." But Jesus said nothing specific to indicate the change in meaning. Likewise, "die" in verse 25 means "die physically" while "not die" in verse 26 means "not die spiritually." One must discern the difference in meaning from general biblical teaching on this subject—that there are two stages of life for the Christian and two stages of death for the non-Christian. Paul said that whether we "wake or sleep" Christians should "live together with him," i.e., with Christ (1 Ths. 5:10). It is this living with Christ in the intermediate state while the body is asleep in death that is spoken of in Revelation 20:4-6.

It is common for premillennialists to see in Revelation 20:4 two meanings for "live": the resurrection of dead saints and the rapture of the living. Yet, the passage speaks only of "dead" people (v. 5), not the transformation of the living. If premillennialists insist on a dual meaning of the one occurrence of "lived" in verse 4, why should they think it so preposterous to see a dual meaning between the two occurrences of the word in separate statements about two different groups of people? In this objection they are highly inconsistent.

In Romans 14:8 Paul says "we live," referring to our life here on earth. Then he says that Christ "lived" (v. 9, the word "again" in the ASV is not in the Greek), referring to his resurrection. Then Paul again refers to people in this life by the word "living" at the end of verse 9. Yet the

only contextual definition to show the difference in meanings is the statement that "Christ died" and then "lived." In Revelation 20, the contextual definition is that the first group was Christians who lived as "souls" while time (the 1,000 years) was still going on, whereas the second group was non-Christians and time (the 1,000 years) was finished.

Premillennial interpreters usually insist that *ezesan* ("lived") must be taken as an ingressive aorist meaning "came to life"<sup>1</sup> and that the basic verb *zao* ("live") is never used of the existence of a disembodied soul.<sup>2</sup> But they are wrong. In reference to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who had long since died, Jesus said that God is "not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him" (Luke 20:38). Jesus' point was that though these people are dead in body, their souls live on in the intermediate state.<sup>3</sup> And, as we have already pointed out, this is also part of the meaning of "live" in 1 Thessalonians 5:10, if not also in John 11:25. Therefore, *ezesan* in Revelation 20:4 does not have to mean "came to life" (as in Rev. 2:8) but may and does mean "continued to live" (as in Rev. 13:14; cf. v. 3).

## What Is the "First Resurrection"?

In verse 5 John said, "This is the first resurrection." The word "this" refers back to verse 4, and the "first resurrection" is therefore the experience of living and reigning with Christ in that realm beyond the grave. Becoming a Christian (the new birth) is sometimes referred to as a resurrection since the spiritually dead are "raised" to life (Eph. 2:6; John 5:24, 25) by being "translated" out of Satan's realm into Christ's kingdom (Col. 1:13). But John does not speak of that, nor does he describe the resurrection of a cause. Slain souls are not told to wait for vengeance until persecution is no more but until "their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course" (Rev. 6:10, 11). It is only at the end of time, when death is no more, that "vengeance" will be rendered against the ungodly and anti-Christian world (2 Ths. 1:7, 8). Too, if it were the resurrection of a cause it would be Christians on earth who reign (as in 5:10). But John in this vision sees souls whose earthly life is over, who have been "translated" from earth to heaven (Heb. 11:5). It happens after death. It is the resurrection of the soul (cf. Luke 16:22).

The first and second resurrections are not of two entirely different groups of people but of two entirely different events. The first resurrection is in order to sit on thrones and reign with Christ while the earth continues to exist (vv. 4, 6); it is only for the saved. The second resurrection is in order to stand before the judgment throne of God after the earth has "fled away" (vv. 11-13); it is for the saved and lost alike.

## What Is the Spiritual Status of These Souls?

The reigning souls are out of Satan's reach. While on earth a Christian has to be "sober" and "watchful" against the devil (1 Pet. 5:8), for it is still possible to lose one's salvation. Jesus said, "hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11). But once a

person has overcome it is an absolute certainty that he will "not be hurt of the second death" (Rev. 2:11). Only when souls have gone to realms above can it be said that "over these the second death hath no power" (Rev. 20:6).

Jesus was born King of the Jews and told Pilate that he was a king (John 18:36,37), but his reign did not actually begin until he "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3). Similarly, Christians reign in a limited sense here in this life (Rev. 1:6; 5:9, 10), but in a fuller sense Jesus promised "the crown of life" on the other side of death (Rev. 2:10). In each of the seven letters (Rev. 2-3) Jesus spoke of those who "overcome." The word refers to those who keep his works "unto the end" (Rev. 2:26). These are promised a reign (v. 27). They will sit down with Jesus in his throne just as Jesus began his own reign when he overcame and went to the Father's throne (3:21). This is the fulfillment of Paul's promise: "If we died with him, we shall also live with him; if we endure, we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:11, 12).

### **The Loosing and Final End of Satan (20:7-10)**

Nothing is more clearly stated in this chapter than the fact that the loosing of Satan occurs after "the" 1,000 years have ended (v. 7)—the 1,000 years of the reign just mentioned in verse 6. No one knows how long the symbolic 1,000 years will last, but "whenever" (*hotan*—an indefinite word rather than "when") that happens, Satan "shall be loosed out of his prison" (v. 7).

#### **The Duration of the Loosing:**

Just as Satan had only "a short time" to persecute the church (12:12-17) before God put a stop to it by casting him into the abyss, so now he again has only "a little time" (20:3) to marshal his international forces before the end comes. By means of the contrast between "little time" and "thousand years," we know that the duration of this period will be brief. Whereas the symbolic 1,000 years of the binding signifies the bulk of the time between the Lord's first and second comings, the loosing signals the onset of a final conflict just before the end of the world. This "little time" ends when there shall be "time no longer" (10:6)—when Jesus comes again (19:11-21) and Satan is cast into "the lake of fire and brimstone" (20:10).

#### **Satan's Activities When Loosed:**

As we have already noticed, the binding of Satan prevents him from "deceiving the nations" (v. 3) into an onslaught against the church. When he is loosed he will have no such restriction. Therefore, he will immediately go forth "to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth" (v. 8). This has to do with "war" against "the camp of the saints" (vv. 8,9). For now the church is safe—"the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). But after the thousand-year binding is over, Satan will initiate "the war." It is the same one mentioned earlier under the symbolic place-name of Har Magedon (Armageddon)—"the war of the great day of God the Almighty" (16:14-16). When Satan's hordes "war"

against the Lamb (17:14), it will be "the war" against Jesus at the second coming (19:19, the definite article is in the Greek). Now in this further description we learn that the war will be brought against Jesus by attacking his church in a worldwide persecution (20:9). And the only thing that will prevent the destruction of the church is divine intervention from heaven, which marks the return of Jesus and the end of the world.

#### **The Meaning of Gog and Magog:**

Magog was one of the sons of Japheth and a grandson of Noah (Gen. 10:2); two other sons of Japheth were Meshech and Tubal (Gen. 10:2; 1 Chr. 1:5). Many centuries later, Ezekiel uttered a prophecy against an enemy of Israel—a certain Gog who came from the land of Magog and was the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal (Ezek. 38,39), obviously the same lineage. The apostle John was inspired to utilize the Old Testament names of Gog and Magog in an extended sense. Here they represent not some specific nations (like Russia and China) but the wicked world in general.

Earlier these end-time allies of Satan were described as "ten kings" (17:12), the number ten symbolically meaning "all" kings. Now under the label of "Gog and Magog" John again refers to "the nations which are in the four corners of the earth" (20:8). These are "the kings of the whole world" (16:14), "the kings of the earth and their armies" (19:19). They are innumerable "as the sand of the sea" (20:8) and they cover "the breadth of the earth" (v. 9). In no clearer way could John convey the fact that this last-ditch stand of Satan involves the whole world.

#### **The Nature of the Attack:**

The ungodly forces are said to encompass "the camp of the saints" and "the beloved city" (v. 9). This speaks of the people of God by using Old Testament terms. The fortified "camp" goes back to the wilderness wanderings (Ex. 29:14; cf. Heb. 13:11) and is set in contrast with "an abiding city" (Heb. 13:14). This reminds us that while in this life we are but sojourners, "strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:9, 13). John's reference to the "city" points to the heavenly reality, mentioned here by way of anticipation. It is the "city" that God has prepared for his people (Heb. 11:16), "the Jerusalem that is above" (Gal. 4:26). Since "our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20), we Christians are said to have already come to "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12:22).

The "beloved city" (Rev. 20:9) therefore refers to the church on earth in terms of its ultimate heavenly fulfillment (cf. 3:12; 21:2). Since the church is universal and spiritual, it is not to be understood in terms of some specific locality, much less the earthly city of Jerusalem, which in this book is disparagingly called "Sodom" and "Egypt" (11:8). Just as the "great city" (17:18) stands for the unchristian world wherever it exists, so the "beloved city" is the church wherever it may be found.

#### **The Result of the Attack:**

It has often been said that though the ungodly forces are prepared for war, no battle actually takes place between the Christians and their enemies because of

divine intervention. But this is surely incorrect. The reason no battle is pictured in these passages having to do with the great war is because the two sides fight on different planes. Christians are not to engage either now or at the end of time in a fight against "flesh and blood" (Eph. 6:12), as Jesus long ago pointed out (John 18:36). But we are continually engaged in a "spiritual war" (Eph. 6:12). However, the world does not go by our rules, and so their warfare will have no such restrictions. Just as in John's day Christians were being exiled (Rev. 1:9) and killed (6:11), so there will be an intensification of such tribulation toward the end of time when Satan is loosed to unleash his fury upon the church.

We are no match for the world when persecution takes the form of a carnal attack. All we can do is remain "faithful unto death" (Rev. 2:10). Over and over in the book of Revelation, Christians are frankly told of the physical onslaughts of Satan's worldly forces. It is not our role to fight back on their level either now or when the final holocaust comes. And there is no need to, for Jesus will fight for us. When the time is right, heaven will be "opened" for the return of Jesus—the warrior pictured on the white horse (Rev. 19:11). In one fell swoop he will conquer all of Satan's hordes (v. 12-21). "These shall war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them" (17:14). There will be no contest, for he will slay them "with the breath of his mouth... at the manifestation of his coming" (2 Ths. 2:8).

John has described this final victory already, and therefore he wraps up the last conflict in Revelation 20 by simply saying that "fire came down out of heaven and devoured them" (v. 9). This is the end of the world when Jesus is revealed from heaven "in flaming fire, rendering vengeance" (2 Ths. 1:7, 8).

### **Satan's Eternal Destiny:**

One of the main purposes of chapter 20 is to discuss the devil and his destiny. It begins with his binding and imprisonment, and it ends with his consignment to "the lake of fire and brimstone" (v. 10). The evil trinity of Satan, the beast and the false prophet have now received their final overthrow. Whereas the emphasis at the end of chapter 19 was on the destruction of the beast (ungodly political forces) and the false prophet (ungodly religious forces), here the emphasis is on the final end of Satan himself. Both Satan and all who make themselves a part of his allies "shall be tormented day and night forever and ever" (v. 10). There is no annihilation for the ungodly but rather an eternity of conscious torment.

### **Conclusion**

Revelation presents many pictures of the persecution and death of Christians. But the question is—Is death the end and does Satan win? Paul partially answered the question in 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14, saying that eventually those who are "fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him" when Jesus returns. But in Revelation 20 John gives us a glimpse behind the scenes into the spirit world: Satan is restricted as to how much he can do to Christians, and the dead in Christ are really alive and

reigning with their Lord. Satan cannot destroy the church (Matt. 16:18), nor can he destroy the souls of those whom he has killed (Matt. 10:28).

Revelation promises reward in heaven, not peace on earth. Christians who finish their lives here have a promise over there. No millennial utopia will come to earth, but we can go to heaven. Revelation tells us that though death is experienced here, life is over there. Here we have tribulation (1:9), but we "come out of the great tribulation" (7:14) only as we live beyond the grave. When our souls "come off victorious" (15:2) they are seen in heaven with Christ where they "shall reign with him a thousand years" (20:6). Finally, when time is no more and bodily resurrection is ours, we shall reign not in terms of "years" but "for ever and ever" (22:5).

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>Robert Shank, *Untill* (Westcott, 1982), p. 421.

<sup>2</sup>George Eldon Ladd, "Historic Premillennialism," *The Meaning of the Millennium*, Robert G. Clouse, ed. (InterVarsity, 1977), p. 190.

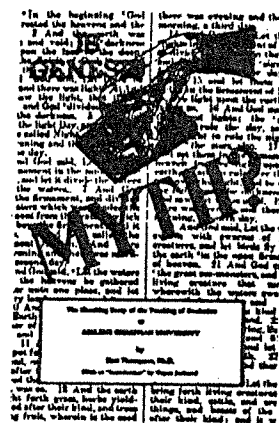
<sup>3</sup>Cf. Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Eerdmans, 1979), p. 233.

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## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 20

Three of the allies of Satan have gone down in defeat, but as long as Satan is free, the "remnant of her seed" will not be safe. Hence, in the first three verses we see the binding of Satan.

### NOTES

- I. THE BINDING OF SATAN - Verses 1-3. Satan is bound for a 1000 years. He should not deceive the nations until this time is finished. Then he must be loosed for a little time. Comfort is given to the persecuted Christians by showing Satan's power of deception being bound.
- II. THE REIGN OF THE SAINTS - Verses 4-6. Comfort is again shown by the fact that the ones who had departed this life were alive and reigning with Christ. We notice the reign is wherever Christ is; and it is after death. They will be judging, living and reigning with Christ. The "who" involves all the souls of the martyrs, and all others who died faithful.

"The First Resurrection" - over those the second death has no power. Consider Revelation 2:11. We see they that "overcome" are not hurt of the second death. Therefore, the overcomers take part in the first resurrection. How do you overcome? Consider Revelation 2:26. Therefore, between death and life, there is resurrection. Those of verse 5 did not partake of the first resurrection, thus, they went to torment. Cf. Jude 6; Luke 16:23ff.

"The Thousand Years" - "Ten" is a complete number. The Holy of Holies measured 10 X 10 X 10. It is completeness taken to the last power. Consider Psalm 50:10; Deuteronomy 7:9. It is symbolical of the complete period time, and is not literal.

In Revelation 6:9, we saw the souls "under" the altar. Now, they are on the thrones and have been vindicated. Consider Revelation 18:20.

- III. SATAN LOOSED AND DESTROYED - Verses 7-10. Again Satan will be given his power to deceive the nations. they are identified as "Gog" and "Magog." Consider Ezekiel 38 and 39. All of this is done in order to give God the glory. We see the scene that all the children long for - the destruction of Satan. All that remains is the final judgment and the final state of the wicked and the righteous.
- IV. THE DESTINY OF THE "UNREDEEMED" - Verses 11-15. Following the context we have seen the destruction of all the forces against God's people and now we see all who are not God's children cast in the lake of fire, which is the second death.

## QUESTIONS OVER REVELATION 20:1-11

1. The Characters -
2. The *Nature* of the binding -
3. The *Extent* of the binding -
4. The *Purpose* of the binding -
5. The *Time* of the binding -
6. The *Duration* of the binding -

## THE MILLENNIUM REVELATION 20:4-6

1. The Thousand Year Reign -
2. Who lives and reigns? -
3. In what condition do they reign? -
4. Where do they reign? -
5. When do they reign? -
6. What does "they lived" mean?
7. What is the "First Resurrection?" -
8. What is the spiritual status of these souls? -

THE LOOSING AND FINAL END OF SATAN  
REVELATION 20:7-11

1. The *duration* of the loosing -
2. *Satan's activities* when loosed -
3. The meaning of *Gog and Magog* -
4. The *nature* of the attack -
5. The *result* of the attack -
6. *Satan's eternal destiny* -

CONCLUSION

## STUDIES IN REVELATION

### REVELATION 21

Revelation 21 shares with us the bliss and reward of the saint of God. Its symbolism is not to be pressed too literally, but a stern and a glorious reality is behind it. This was the main theme which the Christians of that, as well as ourselves, desired to know.

#### I. PERFECT FELLOWSHIP - Verses 1-8 - The Tabernacle

1. Verse 1 - "new" - new order of things. The persecution is put down, and the saints are victorious - 2 Peter 3:13.

"Sea" - the sea is a picture of roaring, raging, agitated and tempest-tossed waters.

2. Verse 2 - "new Jerusalem" - Consider Hebrews 11:10; 12:18-24.
3. Verse 3 - "tabernacle" - God dwells with man and there is a renewing of the covenant. Consider Genesis 17:7,8; Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:2,3,6; Jeremiah 24:7; 30:22; 31:33; Ezekiel 11:20; Zechariah 13:9.
4. Verses 4-7 No tears, death, sorrow, crying or pain - all things are new - eternal life and heirs of God!
5. Verse 8 - The second death.

#### II. PERFECT PROTECTION - Verses 9-24 - The City

1. Verse 9 - "the Bride" - the Lamb's wife.
2. Verses 10-27 - the description of the city.

Great, holy, of God, a place descending out of heaven, has God's presence, high wall for security, twelve gates, angels, names of 12 tribes of Israel, foundations with names of 12 apostles. The description given is worth more than anything has ever been worth. Gates of pearl - could be symbolizing the entrance is by the way of suffering, i.e., the pearl is produced by suffering and pain in overcoming difficulty. The Lamb is the Light. Only those in the city will enjoy this protection and these blessings.

3. The numbers used create the impression of perfection and completeness. The entire description presents a strong, spacious, complete and beautiful city.

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
REVELATION 22

Revelation 22 is a continuation of chapter 21. There seems to be an unfortunate break between Revelation 19-22.

I. PERFECT PROVISION - Verses 1-5 - The Garden (the supply of all needs)

1. Verse 1 - "river" - eternal life, full and free; the gift of God's grace.

"Out of the throne" - salvation brought about by the grace of God, and by the blood of Christ. The water is pure - sin shall not mar this fellowship.

2. Verse 2 - All of these items help see the super abundant character of salvation, a full helping of complete communion with God.
3. Verse 3 - "throne" - God's sovereignty.

"His servants" - no handicaps in heaven!

II. PERFECT DIRECTIONS - Verses 6-21 - Conclusion - John impresses us with the importance of his message. The final word is given.

1. Verses 6,7 - The Authority of the book.
2. Verses 8,9 - The Personal Testimony.
3. Verses 10-15 - The importance, time, probation ended, judgment and preparation.
4. Verse 16 - The Signature.
5. Verse 17 - The Invitation.
6. Verses 18,19 - The Warning
7. Verses 20,21 - The Prayer.

STUDIES IN REVELATION  
LOOKING BACK  
CHAPTERS 1-22

1. Why do you feel the book of Revelation is often a neglected and controversial book?
2. The word "revelation" means:
3. The book begins, and ends with a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The symbols of the book should be interpreted in light of conditions which prevailed when the book was written. T F
5. There are at least four methods of interpretation. T F
6. What do you feel is the purpose of Revelation?
7. Name the seven churches of Asia to whom the book is addressed.
8. Chapter Four is commonly called the \_\_\_\_\_ chapter.
9. Chapter Five is entitled \_\_\_\_\_.
10. The six seals of Chapter 6 are:
11. Trumpets are used to summon armies, give orders and announce events. T F
12. God used three "instruments" to overcome evil forces in Revelation. They are:
13. Chapter 12 is a dividing point in the study. From now on we will see a more intense scene dealing with the battle between Satan and \_\_\_\_\_.
14. How does the number "666" make you feel?
15. In the history of Israel, "Armageddon" was the place of battles \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Chapter 20 is the basis of the teaching of many false doctrines, the most prominent being \_\_\_\_\_.
17. The theme of chapter 20 is \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Revelation 21 and 22 conclude with the victorious saint having perfect \_\_\_\_\_ symbolized the Tabernacle; perfect \_\_\_\_\_ symbolized by the \_\_\_\_\_; and perfect \_\_\_\_\_ symbolized by the \_\_\_\_\_.

19. Give the "gist" of Revelation 22:18,19.

20. Write the impression of how you feel about your study of the Revelation:

1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the members of the committee who have been appointed to the various sub-committees. The names are listed in alphabetical order of the last name.