

Before we begin our study of Revelation there is something we should know first. “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation” - 2 Pet 1:20. This means that there is no unique way to interpret any book of prophesy. The Book of Revelation is a Prophetic Book, and it should be interpreted like any other prophesy of Scripture - *literally*. All prophecies of Scripture concerning Christ’s first coming were literally fulfilled; therefore we must interpret the prophecies regarding His second coming literally as well.

A good rule to follow when interpreting the Bible is: When the plain sense make common sense seek no other sense. Never sacrifice the literal meaning on the altar of symbolism. It is much better to approach Scripture believing that God meant what He said. We reject the theory of interpretation that says that John was explaining as best he could such things as tanks and helicopters. We would rather be wrong with too much faith in literal interpretation than right with too much doubt. We believe that every child of God should approach the Bible with childlike faith. The odds of getting the right message from Scripture are greatly favor literal interpretation.

When you approach Scripture on the assumption that the message is concealed in types and figures then the odds of your final interpretation being right is greatly diminished. Always take a literal approach. Somebody might object to this on the grounds that there is some symbolism in Revelation. That is true, but it should be pointed out that the symbols were revealed to John. For example, in Revelation 17, an angel reveals to John the meaning of the “seven heads and ten horns.” What God wants us to know, He reveals. Had the angel not revealed the mystery of the heads and the horns we would never know their meaning. We might guess, but there is no assurance that our guess is correct.

KEY VERSE

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they [also] which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen, Rev 1:7. The most important thing to understand about Revelation is that it is a Book about the Revelation of Jesus Christ. The Revelation of Jesus is an event that will happen at the end of the tribulation. Most of Revelation is about the events leading up to His return to earth.

FOUR WALLS OF TIME

For simplicity’s sake, we will say that there are four walls of time in Revelation. The first wall is the church age. The second wall is the tribulation. The third wall is the Millennium. The fourth wall is eternity. We are now living in the church age. After the church age, the world will go through a seven year tribulation period. After the tribulation Jesus will back to earth and reign for 1,000 years. This period is known as the Millennium. After the Millennium is eternity. Most of Revelation is about the seven year tribulation period.

THREE KEY EVENTS

Of all the events in Revelation, we will list only three. These key events will greatly help unlock your understanding of Revelation. First is the rapture. This event will bring the church age to an end. The second key event is the sounding of the seventh trumpet. This event will occur at the midpoint of the tribulation. The third key event is the return of Jesus to earth to set up His kingdom

OUTLINE

John outlines the book of Revelation in chapter 1, verse 19. *“Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.”* This verse outlines the

entire book. Notice the *past*, *present*, and *future* tenses in this verse. He wrote the things he **saw**, past tense; the things which **are**, present tense; and the things which shall be **hereafter**, future tense. The outline for the entire book looks like this:

Past	<i>The things which thou hast seen</i>	Chapter 1
Present	<i>The things which are</i>	Chapters 2 - 3
Future	<i>The things which shall be hereafter</i>	Chapters 4 - 22

This outline is vital to a proper understanding of Revelation. It settles one highly debated point: the book of Revelation is written in CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

THEME

The theme for this Book is taken from the title, *The Revelation (revealing) of Jesus Christ*. Unless you understand this truth your understanding of Revelation will always be clouded. In fact, everything in Revelation should be interpreted in light of His coming back to earth again to set up His Kingdom.

APPROACH

We will now begin our study of Revelation. We will study chapter by chapter. You will notice that each chapter has a key verse, a key word or phrase and a key thought as well as an outline. These keys will help you to unlock the meaning of the chapters.

REVELATION CHAPTER ONE

KEY THOUGHT: *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. Verse one opens with this phrase, and verse seven describes this event.

KEY VERSE: *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen, Rev. 1:7.*

KEY PHRASE: *I am alpha and omega.*

OUTLINE:

General Introduction, 1 - 3

Preface to the letters to the seven churches, 4 - 20

THE THINGS WHICH THOU HAST SEEN

John is on an island called Patmos. He has been banished to this deserted island because of his faith in Christ. It is Sunday, and while he is in a state of prayer he hears a voice; he turns to see who it is speaking with him, and he sees Jesus standing in the midst of seven golden candlesticks. Jesus tells him that He has a message for the seven churches that are in Asia. John is to record the message and send it to them.

The key thought for chapter one is the Revelation, or revealing of Jesus Christ. Revelation means reveal. The book is about the revealing or showing of our Lord Jesus Christ. This revealing takes place in Revelation 19. The Book of Revelation is a record of events leading up to the revealing of Jesus.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says, *“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.”* The Revelation of Jesus Christ was given to John by God and confirmed by

an angel. The phrase “*shortly come to pass*” has confused many. It does not say that Christ will be revealed (come) shortly, but that certain *things* will shortly come to pass. The key word for this verse is *things*. As we will see many of these *things* have already come to pass.

Verse 2 says, “*Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.*” John acknowledges the fact that it is he who wrote “*all things that he saw.*”

Verse 3 promises a blessing to those who read and hear (understand) “*the words of this prophecy, and keep (obey) those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*” There is a blessing for those who study and obey the book of Revelation.

Verse 4 tells us that the book of Revelation is an Epistle, or letter. The Book is written “*to the seven churches which are in Asia.*” These were seven literal churches. Verse 11 names them.

We learn more specifically who the book is from in verses 4 and five. It is from *John* the Apostle, and from the *seven Spirits*, and from the *Lord Jesus*.

Verse 5 says, “*And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*” The phrase, “*first begotten of the dead,*” in this verse has caused some confusion among the cults. It simply means that Jesus was the first to rise from the dead in an incorruptible body. He will never die again.

Notice the phrase “*washed in the blood.*” It is a tragedy that newer versions delete it. If you have a newer version you might want to check it.

Verse 6 teaches us that we are made kings and priests. In eternity, we will rule and reign with Christ.

Verse 7 says, “*Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*” This verse sums up everything in this book: **Jesus is coming again!**

Don’t get the rapture of believers confused with the return of Jesus. The *rapture* occurs before the tribulation; the *return* of Christ takes place after the tribulation. The *rapture* could take place at any moment; the *return* takes place at the end of the tribulation. The *rapture* will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; the *return* of Jesus is a grand event seen by everybody. Jesus comes for believers at the *rapture*; He will come with believers when He *returns*. Jesus does not come to earth at the time of the rapture, He appears in the sky; when He returns He will come to earth.

Verse 8 proves the deity of Christ, i.e., Jesus is God. It says, “*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*”

Beginning with verse 9, John explains how the book of Revelation came to be written. While in exile on the isle of Patmos, he was worshipping the Lord on Sunday. He heard a great voice, and turned to see who it was, and saw Jesus standing in the midst of seven golden candlesticks (Rev. 1:12).

In verse 11 Jesus speaks to John: “*I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia . . .*” John is so overwhelmed by the sight of Christ in all His glory that he “*fell at his feet as dead.*” (See verse 17)

John begins describing Jesus in verse 13. He says that He was “*clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps (chest) with a golden girdle.*” According to verse 14, His head and his hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were like a flame of fire. This is a description of Christ in His glorified body. Verse 15 says that his feet were “*like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.*” This is how He will look when we see Him.

In verses 16-18, John tells us that Jesus had several things in His possession: seven stars, a sharp two-edged sword, and the keys of hell and death. Remember this description; it is used to by John later in this book.

Many do not believe that Revelation is written in chronological order. Verse 19, however, plainly tells us that is it. Jesus said, “*Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.*”

Verse 20 tells us the meaning of the seven stars, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches.

REVELATION CHAPTER TWO

KEY THOUGHT: Christ’s messages to His Churches

KEY PHRASES: I know thy works; He that hath an ear; and, to him that overcometh.

KEY VERSE: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Rev. 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:29

OUTLINE:

The Church at Ephesus, 1 - 7

The Church at Smyrna, 8 - 11

The Church at Pergamos, 12- 17

The Church at Thyatira, 18 - 29

THE THINGS WHICH ARE

Chapters 2 & 3 go together. They address the seven churches. These two chapter are about the things which are. (See Rev 1:19) This chapter contains four of the seven messages from the Lord to the church at Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, and Thyatira. These are personal messages to the church.

THE CHURCH AT EPHEBUS

We now come to the first of the seven messages. It is addressed to “*the angel*” of the church in Ephesus. (See verse 1) This would be the pastor of the church. The word *angel* literally means messenger. A pastor is God’s messenger to the local church. Why would Christ instruct John to write a letter to an angel? It is the pastor’s responsibility to deliver the message to the church.

Verse 1 identifies the Person sending the message as Jesus Christ. “*These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.*” Notice that these are Christ’s words, and they are a reference to the vision John saw in chapter one. (See Rev. 1:13)

This was a great church; it had a great history (See Acts 18 & 19); a book of the Bible bears its name; Apollos and Timothy were former pastors; Aquilla and Priscilla were members at one time, and Christ highly praised them in this text. He praised them for several reasons.

He praised them for their patience and labor. *“I know thy works, and they labor and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars”* - verse 2.

He praised them for their doctrinal purity. Verse 2 tells us that they could not bear those who are evil, and verse 6 says that they hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans.

He praised them because they would not compromise. Verse 2 further says: *“thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.”*

Finally, He praised them for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitans. Verse 6 says: *“But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.”*

The word “Nicolaitan” literally means *victory over laity*. In his book, Revelation Illustrated and Made Plain, Tim LaHaye states on page 39, “The word *nicolaitans* comes from two Greek words: *niko*, meaning *to conquer, or overthrow*, and *Laos*, meaning *the people or the laity*.” The nicolaitans tried to establish a class distinction between clergy and laity. Denominationalism with its bishops, archbishops, etc. is simply unscriptural. As a matter of fact, every church you read about in the Bible was an independent, fundamental, Baptist church. As we will see in the next chapter, when nicolaitanism takes root, so does corruption.

Verse 4 says, *“Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.”* These words must have cut deep. Some, no doubt said: “How can He say that? We are faithful, hardworking, patient, and doctrinally pure. What more could He want?”

The problem was that their love had become routine. There was no passion. Yes, they loved Christ, but not like they once did. Their love had grown cold.

This was serious, and unless they repented they would cease to be a church in the sense that Christ intended. (See verse 5) They would lose their power. There are many churches meeting in buildings with steeples on top that have ceased to be a New Testament church years ago.

The seriousness of this sin can be found in the word “*left*” in verse 4. They did not *lose* their first love, they *left* it. If you lose something, you do it unintentionally, but if you leave something, you do it intentionally. Furthermore, if you lose something, you don’t know where to find it. But if you leave something, you know right where it is. Jesus is saying that they have intentionally left their first love, and what’s worse, they will not go back and get it.

Christ gives them three steps to getting right.

The first step is *remembering*. Verse 5 says: *“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works . . .”*

The second step is *repenting*. Admit that you are backslidden and repent.

Finally they are to do again the first works. Getting right with God is never complete until we do again the first works.

There is a definite connection between the words “*first love*”, in verse 4, and the words “*first works*” in verse 5. It is obvious from the book of Acts that their first love was their first work: spreading the gospel. Christ’s last command (“Go ye therefore and teach all nations. . .” - Mt. 28:19) was their first love. They loved soul winning. They left their first love when they stopped doing the first work: soul-winning.

Verse 7 is interesting: *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”* Notice the definite article “the.” This verse says that the tree of life which was once in the

garden of Eden is now in Heaven. There is an invitation and a promise in this verse. The invitation is *“He that hath an ear, let him hear.”* The promise is, *“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”*

THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA

Christ identifies Himself in verse 8 with the words: *“These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive.”* This is a reference to the one John saw in his vision in chapter one, verse 18.

This too was a fine church. They suffered poverty and persecution. (See verses 9 & 10) These hardships, however, only served to strengthen the church. Suffering sanctifies and persecution purifies. Under the flames of persecution impostors quickly vacate the premises, or rather, the promises. Sometimes suffering is God’s way of purging the church of heretics.

THE CHURCH IN PERGAMOS

Notice the words, *“These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges,”* in verse 12. These are the words of Christ (See Rev. 1:16). Again, Christ says He knows their works. (See verse 13) In every age, and in every place Jesus is watching; He knows what we are doing, and why.

John says that Satan’s seat (headquarters) was in the same city as this church. We must remember that the devil is not omnipresent. He can only be in one place at a time, and during the first century Satan’s headquarters was Pergamos.

Jesus praised this church for being faithful to the truth during persecution. According to verse 13, a man named Antipas was martyred there. A martyr is someone who dies for his faith.

In verses 14 & 15 we learn that there are those within the church who hold to the doctrine of Balaam, and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. *“But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.”*

Doctrine is Bible truth, or teaching. Balaam’s doctrine was deadly. You can read about him in Numbers 22-24, and in Deuteronomy 23:4-5. Balaam taught unsaved people how to destroy God’s people. He suggested that lost people intermingle with God’s people. This they did and in time God’s people began living like lost people. In other words, this church believed in separating from the unsaved people.

This church also began accepting the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. Remember, nicolaitanism is a religious hierarchy.

The invitation is the same. *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”* The promise is different, *“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”* What is meant by these promises cannot be stated for certain.

THE CHURCH OF THYATIRA

Verse 18 says that the message is from the *“Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass.”* This is a reference to chapter 1 verse fifteen.

In verses 20 and 21 we learn that Christ has a few things against this church as well: they allow a woman named Jezebel teach and seduce Christians to commit fornication. To make matters worse, she will not repent.

In verse 20 we learn that this woman is doing great harm to this church. In the first place, she should not even be teaching in the church. 1 Timothy 2:12 is quite clear: *“But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”* This self-proclaimed prophet cannot be called of God, because God does not contradict His word.

Verse 21 says that Christ gave her space to repent, but she repented not. Notice the consequences of this woman’s hard heart in verses 22 and 23: *“Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”*

There are some in this church, however, who have not drunk of this woman’s poison. (Rev 2:24) It suggests the possibility that someone can belong to a church that is preaching heresy and still be saved.

The invitation is the same, *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”* As always, the promise is different. *“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of the potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father: and I will give him the morning star.”* One day we will rule with Christ on earth.

REVELATION CHAPTER THREE

KEY THOUGHT: Christ’s messages to His Churches (continued)

KEY PHRASE: I know thy works; He that hath an ear, and To him that overcometh

KEY VERSES: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Rev. 3:6, 3:13, 3:19, and 3:22

OUTLINE

The Church at Sardis, 1 - 6

The Church at Philadelphia, 7 -13

The Church at Laodicea, 14 -22

THE CHURCH AT SARDIS

Jesus is again the one giving the message. He says: *“These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars.”* This is a reference to Rev. 1:16 and 5:6.

This is not a good church. Notice verse 1. *“I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead”* - Rev. 3:1. This church had a reputation as being spiritually alive, but it was dead.

Notice the phrase *“be watchful,”* in verse 2. This is a cure-all for sin. If we live with the constant expectation of the Lord’s return, we will be more apt to live right.

The steps Christ prescribes for them to get right are practically the same as the church at Ephesus. They were to remember, then repent. Then he gives them a prescription for staying right: watch for His return.

Verse 4 is similar to verse 24 of chapter 3. It teaches the possibility of a Christian belonging to a dead church.

A promise of the eternal security is given in verse 5: *“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”* No! You do not have to worry about losing your salvation. Jesus promises the overcomers that their names will not be blotted out of the book of life.

THE CHURCH AT PHILADELPHIA

“These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.” This is also a reference to Jesus (See Rev 1:18).

Verse 8 is interesting. Jesus says, *“I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door.”* This open door can be nothing other than freedom to worship God without interference from the state. This church was independent of state control.

Verse 10 says, *“Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”* This is an obvious reference to the tribulation that will begin in chapter 6. Jesus is saying that true Christians will be saved from that horrible time.

THE RAPTURE

Jesus promises this church that they will be saved from the tribulation. Sometime prior to the beginning of the tribulation, Christians will be taken out of the world to live with Christ in heaven. It should be stated at this point that there have always been Philadelphian type Christians - those who believe the Bible and have not denied the name of Christ, verse 8 - in many different types of Churches.

Verse 11 is also very interesting: *“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”* Although you cannot lose your salvation, you can lose your crown. Heaven is free, but you must earn your crown.

The invitation is the same: *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches”* - verse 13.

The promise is different: *“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.”* It is difficult to understand exactly what Jesus means by this promise. I think He means that the redeemed will support (pillars) the glory and salvation of God with their testimony; we will never be separated from God; we'll be branded with the name of God; we'll be given citizenship to the new Jerusalem, and be given a new name.

THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA

This is the last of the seven churches. Everybody in this church is lost. Verse 14 is a reference to the vision John saw in chapter 1. Notice that Rev. 1:5 and Rev. 3:14 are very similar. Again, we see that the message is from Jesus Christ.

As usual, Jesus says that He knows their works (verse 15), but He does not say what those works are. Then He says, *“I would thou wert cold or hot.”* He does not want a lukewarm church. He would rather it be cold than lukewarm. A lukewarm church does more harm than good.

Christ exposes their condition in verse 17. They are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Furthermore, they don't even realize it.

Verses 18 & 19 record Christ's admonition to them: *"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."* Again notice the word repent. Most will tell you that repentance is a change of mind. It actually goes deeper than that. Repentance is a change of heart.

Verse 20 says, *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."* Notice carefully that Jesus is not *in* this church. This can only mean that they are not meeting in the name of Jesus. *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them"* - Mat 18:20. We also learn from this verse that revival does not take much. If any man would hear His voice and open the door Christ would come in.

REVELATION CHAPTER FOUR

KEY THOUGHT: The worship of God in Heaven

KEY VERSE: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created* - Rev 4:11.

KEY WORD: Throne. The word occurs 12 times in this chapter. It occurs in this chapter more than it does in any other chapter of the Bible except 1 Kings 1, where it also occurs 12 times.

OUTLINE:

John on Earth, 1

John in Heaven, 2 - 11

Beginning in chapter 4 John writes *of the things which must be hereafter*. This means after the things which are - the church age.

John is ushered into Heaven to view from there the things that will take place on earth. He is taken to the throne room. He is so overwhelmed with what he sees that he takes all of this chapter and the next to describe it.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says, *"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter."* This is a type of the rapture. The church age comes to a close when Jesus appears in the clouds and with a shout calls every Christian out of this world to join Him in Heaven. The rapture brings the church age to an end.

After John is called up to Heaven (a type of rapture), he is immediately in the spirit, and ushered into the throne room. He begins to describe what he sees. The first thing he mentions is the throne, and the one *"who sat upon it"* (God, the Father). He also calls attention to a rainbow. (See verse 3) The rainbow reminds us of God's justice as well as His mercy. After God destroyed the world by flood, He said that He would never again destroy the world with water. The rainbow will remind us of God's justice as well as His mercy.

In verses 4 through eleven John describes the activities about the throne. He begins with the 24 elders. They are clothed in white raiment, have crowns of gold upon their heads, and sit upon seats around the throne of God. We will examine these elders more closely in our study or chapter 5.

Verse 5 talks about the seven Spirits. Although it is hard to comprehend what these seven Spirits are, we can make a good guess by comparing this verse to other Scriptures. There are four verses that talk about these seven Spirits, they are as follows:

Rev. 1:4 say, *John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne.*

Rev. 3:1 says, *And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars . . .*

Rev. 4:5 says, *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

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

From these verses we learn that the seven Spirits are:

Before the throne

Of God

In Christ's possession

The lamps about the throne

Sent forth into all the earth.

From this information we conclude that these seven Spirits are the perfect, omniscient, omnipresent nature of God. These seven Spirits are the Holy Spirit.

Verses 6 - 9 describe four beasts (heavenly creatures) that are about the throne. Isaiah identified these same creatures as Seraphim. *"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly"* - Isaiah 6:1-2. They were created by God to offer praise to Him continually before His throne.

Verse 10 says that when the four Seraphim give praise to God, the twenty-four elders fall down and worship *"him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne. . . ."* Then, in connection with this act; they say, *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power . . ."* The redeemed of the ages feel so unworthy of their rewards they lay them at the feet of the Lord Jesus.

REVELATION CHAPTER FIVE

KEY THOUGHT: Christ is worthy to open the book

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

KEY WORD: Worthy & Book

OUTLINE:

The Book that no Man can Open, 1 - 4

Christ is Found Worthy to Open the Book, 5 - 10

All Creation Praises Jesus because He is Worthy, 11 - 14

John is still in the throne room. His attention is focused upon a book in the right hand of Him that is sitting on the throne. The importance of this book cannot be overstated. Notice several things about this book:

It is sealed with seven seals

John weeps because nobody is found worthy to open it

An angel declares that Jesus has been found worthy to open it because he has prevailed

All in Heaven rejoices because Christ has been found worthy to open the book

Jesus is worthy because of Cavalry

The One Who opens the book is worthy of power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory from every creature ever created

All of this adds up to mean that Jesus defeated the devil at Calvary. It also means that He is going to take the earth back from the devil. Remember, the devil is the god of this world. When the devil offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in Matthew 4, he was making a legitimate offer. Remember, the Kingdom of Christ is not yet on earth. He said, *"My Kingdom is not of this world."* Basically, the tribulation is a war between Christ and the devil. By the way, when we say world, we mean the world's system. The earth, is not corrupt.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says that the book is: *"written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals."* You could say that this little book is the title deed to the earth, or the right to reign on earth.

In verse 2, a strong angel proclaims with a loud voice, *"Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?"*

Verse 3 says that no man was found worthy to open the book. Apparently, to qualify as a candidate to open the book one must be human. The verse goes on to say that: *"no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book."* No one, living or dead, in heaven or hell, was found worthy to open this book. It is apparently a great honor to open the book. As we shall see, that honor belongs to Christ.

John tells us in verse 4 that he *"wept much"* because no one was found worthy to open the book. Why does John weep? Because if no one is worthy, then Satan will continue his reign on the earth.

In verse 5, one of the twenty-four elders tells John not to weep, *"because the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David hath prevailed to open the book."* This is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice that Christ prevailed. Prevail means to overcome, or get the victory. Jesus prevailed over Satan, sin and death by His death on the cross.

Verses 6 & 7 say that *"a Lamb, (Jesus) as it had been slain . . . came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne."* This further confirms the fact that the Jesus prevailed at Calvary. John the Baptist said, Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

After Christ takes the book from the hand of God the Father, the twenty-four elders, and the four beasts (seraphim) fall down before him *“having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints.”* To understand the significance of this verse you should read what is commonly referred to as the Lord’s Prayer. The Lord taught His disciples to pray *“Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”* Christians have been praying for justice, peace, the end of suffering, pain, sickness, and death, etc., ever since Christ taught us to pray that way. These prayers are presented at this time; and they are about to be answered!

Verses 9 & 10 record the song that the twenty-four elders sing as a result of Christ taking the book. This song is a testimony as to what God has done for them. We learn four things about these twenty-four elders from this song.

These twenty-four elders are people who have gone to heaven either by death or by rapture. Notice the words: *“for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”* These are people who lived on earth.

These twenty-four elders *represent* all those who have been born again. This becomes clear from the words of their song. They claim to have been redeemed from **every** kindred, tongue, people, and nation. The verse demands that these twenty-four elders **represent** all Christians because there are literally hundreds of nations, kindreds, tongues, etc., and only twenty-four elders.

These twenty-four elders have been made kings and priests. A king is a ruler; a priest is an intercessor. Since these words represent all Christians, we know what our future occupation will be.

These twenty-four elders will reign on the earth. This is a reference to the millennium. Again, since they represent the redeemed of all ages, we learn that we will reign on the earth as well.

Notice also in verse 10 that the 24 elders say, *“and we shall reign on the earth.”* When Christ comes back to earth to reign, we shall reign with Him.

In verses 11 & 12 many angels lend their voices to this celestial choir and sing, *“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.”* This gives us an idea of how many angels there are in heaven: Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.

Verse 13 says: *“And every creature which is heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”* When Jesus takes the book from God the Father, the 24 elders sing the first verse of a song of praise, then many angels and the four beasts join in on the second verse, and finally, every creature joins in on the last verse.

Verse 14 closes out the chapter with the twenty-four elders, and the four beasts (seraphim) falling down and worshipping *“him that liveth for ever and ever.”*

REVELATION CHAPTER SIX

KEY THOUGHT: The beginning of the tribulation!

KEY VERSE: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand. Rev. 6:17

KEY WORD: Seal(s): This word occurs six times in this chapter

OUTLINE:

The Antichrist, 1 - 11

God's Wrath, 12 - 17

John is still in the throne room with his attention still on the book now in the hand of Christ. He will watch Christ open six of the seven seals in this chapter. These seals are judgments, and are opened in *succession*, not *simultaneously*. As the seals are opened, something terrible happens on earth. Everything that will happen during the tribulation is written in this book. As the seals are broken off one at a time, more of the book is revealed and the decrees written therein immediately come to pass on earth. You will notice that with the opening of the first four seals, John sees four horsemen. These four horsemen portray world conditions brought about by the antichrist at the beginning of the tribulation or just prior to it.

VERSE BY VERSE

After the first seal is opened, one of the four seraphim says to John, "*Come and see.*" This seraphim shows John what the result of the breaking of the first seal will be on earth. Many believe that the tribulation begins with the breaking of the first seal.

The tribulation proper begins when antichrist signs a treaty with Israel and many nation for seven years. It is possible that the rapture will take place at the moment the treaty is signed, but unlikely. We know that Christians will be gone before the tribulation begins, but we don't know how long they will be gone. I could be a few days, months, or even years.

Verse 2 says: "*And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*" One of the four seraphim shows John a man riding a white horse. This rider represents the antichrist. The antichrist is a man who will rise to power during, or just prior to the tribulation period. He will claim to be the Christ, and cause all to submit to his will. Many will be deceived by this man. We will study more about the antichrist when we look at Revelation 13. The antichrist is pictured here riding a white horse. Notice how he imitates Christ. When Jesus returns at the end of the tribulation, he will also ride a white horse. (See Revelation 19:11)

The antichrist will do his utmost to impersonate Christ. The same verse goes on to say that the horseman has a bow - a symbol of military power - but no arrow. The antichrist does not take power; it is given to him.

The empire of the antichrist will eventually include every kingdom of the world. The book of Daniel teaches us that in the last days ten nations - formerly of the old Roman Empire - will form an alliance, something like NATO, or the EC. These are the ten toes of Daniel 2, and the ten horns of Daniel seven. After the antichrist gains control of his nation, he will seek membership in this ten nation confederacy. After being accepted, he will gain control and force three charter member nations out, (See Dan. 7:8) and hand pick two other nations to replace those ousted.

This alliance of nations will continue to be the power base of the antichrist until the Lord returns and destroys it at the end of the tribulation in the battle of Armageddon.

Verse 2 ends with the phrase, "*and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*" After the antichrist is firmly seated in power, he will begin a military campaign to conquer the world. He will conquer the entire world in three and a half years. Because the antichrist has a bow, but no arrow, many believe he will conquer the world through diplomacy. This cannot be further from the truth. The antichrist will be responsible for the deaths of countless thousands. His bloodless

revolution will only go as far as the borders of his ten nation confederacy; after which, he will bathe the world in blood.

When the second seal is opened in verse 3, John sees a red horse, and the one sitting on it had power to take peace from the earth. In verse 2, the antichrist is given a crown; now he is given a great sword. (See verse 4) Not only does the confederation *give* him a position (crown), but also power (sword). The confederation of nations will lend him military support.

After Jesus opens the third seal in verse 5, John sees a man with a pair of balances riding a black horse. The context makes it clear that this is the economic balance of trade.

In verse 6 John hears a voice - probably the voice of God - in the midst of the four beasts (seraphim) saying, *"A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."* A measure of wheat was the amount of food an adult needed to live on. Barley was cheaper in those days, and for the same amount of money you could purchase enough barley for three meals. In Bible days a penny was a day's wages. The depression will be so severe that a man will have to work a full day just to earn enough to buy the necessities of life. The wine and oil spoken of in verse 6 are luxuries enjoyed by the rich who are not affected by the depression. Apparently, as the antichrist socializes the countries he conquers, the working class will be taxed to the brink of starvation to support his war campaign and other programs. The first seal (a world ruler) causes the second seal, (a world war) which causes the third seal, (world depression) which causes the fourth seal (death).

After Jesus opens the fourth seal John sees Death riding a pale horse, and hell following after him. In verse 8 we learn that this horseman has power over the fourth part of the earth, *"to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."* Power will be given to this rider to kill one fourth of the world's population. All those slain by this horseman will go to hell. Hell follows death. The methods he will employ to kill these people are war (sword), hunger (famine), death (disease), and beasts. God has used the same means to judge people in time past. (See Ezekiel 5, Jeremiah 14:12; 15:2; 24:10)

After the fifth seal is opened, John sees *"under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held"* - verse 9. Why are these Christians killed? For the Word of God and their testimony. We cannot overemphasize Satan's attack on the Bible.

In verse 10, these martyrs cry with a loud voice saying: *"How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"* They are given white robes and told to wait until their fellow servants are killed. Notice that they are to wait for a little season. That is because the entire tribulation will only last seven years. Up until this time lost people on earth are oblivious to what is happening. But with the opening of the sixth seal their eyes are opened, and they realize that they are in the tribulation. Notice what they say in verse 16, *"And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."* With the opening of the sixth seal all doubt is removed. They know instinctively that they are in the tribulation, and that they are suffering the wrath of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

The plagues that come from the opening of the sixth seal are found in verses 12 -14. Several things happen as a result of the breaking of the sixth seal.

There is an earthquake

The sun becomes black

The moon becomes as blood

The stars of heaven fall

The heaven departs as a scroll

Every mountain and island are moved out of place

It's as if God grabs hold of the earth and shakes it until it falls apart. These events are prophesied in Joel 2:31. Notice that Joel says that these things would happen before that great and terrible day of the Lord (Armageddon).

Verses 16 & 17 speak of the wrath of God and the Lamb (Jesus). Just a thought. Perhaps the tribulation proper does not begin until the seventh seal is opened. The first five seals appear to be the wrath of man.

REVELATION CHAPTER SEVEN

KEY THOUGHT: God's Remnant! 144,000 Christian Jews sealed!

KEY VERSE: And cried with a loud voice, saying, SALVATION TO OUR GOD WHICH SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND UNTO THE LAMB - Revelation 7:10.

OUTLINE:

Some are sealed, 1 - 8

Some are slain, 9 - 17

This is a parenthetical chapter. After breaking the sixth seal, people on earth will finally realize that they are in the tribulation. Before the seventh seal is broken, 144,000 Christians Jews will be sealed with the seal of God in their foreheads. This will be a seal of protection. These 144,000 will go out into the world preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and as a result multitudes will get saved. However, those who become believers will be killed. All of this happens during the first half of the tribulation.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says, *"After these things."* It is not until after the sixth seal that John sees *"four angels standing on the four corners of the earth."* These angels are given power over the weather. These angels are the same angels who blow the first four trumpet judgments in chapter 8.

In verses 2 & 3 we learn of another angel who ascends from the east having the seal of God. He cries with a loud voice to the four angels holding the four winds not to hurt the earth or sea *"til we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."* Notice that this angel speaks in the plural. Apparently, this angel will head a job involving many angels to seal the 144,000. Notice also that this seal will be placed in their foreheads. There have been many suggestions offered as to what this seal is. It is impossible to say whether or not this seal is visible. In Ezekiel 9:4, we have a similar situation. The city of Jerusalem was about to be destroyed by the Babylonians. But before God permitted it, He commanded a man (angel) clothed with linen, and having a writer's inkhorn to: *"Go through the midst of the city. . . and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof."* To the others he commanded to go through the city and *"Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark."* What happened thousands of years ago will happen again in like manner.

In verses 4 - 8 we learn that 144,000 Jews (12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel) will be sealed. There are those who believe that these verses should be taken in a spiritual sense because ten of the 12 tribes have been "lost." They are not lost; God knows where they are.

These 144,000 will go out into the world preaching the gospel and as a result, multitudes get saved. Unfortunately, it will be unlawful to be a Christian. Those who believe the preaching of the 144,000 will be slain. Those killed, however, will go to heaven. They will be ushered into the throne room, and given white robes. They will cry with a loud voice: *“Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”* (See verse 10) Some think Christian persecution will not start until the second half of the tribulation. This is not true, In fact, it will begin before the start of the tribulation.

The revival brought on by the preaching of the 144,000 will bring great rejoicing in Heaven. Verses 10 - 12 says, *“And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”*

In verse 13, one of the elders asks John: *“What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?”* One of the twenty-four elders answers: *“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”*

We learn several things about those martyred in the tribulation:

They are before the throne of God

They serve God day and night in His temple

They enjoy God’s presence

They will not hunger or thirst anymore

The sun will not hurt them anymore

They shall be fed by the Lamb

Jesus shall lead them to living fountains of water

God will wipe away all their tears (See Rev. 8:8 - 11). This is all in reference to the suffering they endured during the tribulation.

You may be wondering what will happen to the 144,000. They will not be killed during the tribulation. The seal placed in their foreheads is a seal of protection. They will not be caught or killed by either plague or antichrist.

REVELATION CHAPTER EIGHT

KEY THOUGHT: Four Trumpet Judgments

KEY VERSE: And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. Rev 8:2

OUTLINE:

The Prayers of the Saints, 1 - 6

The Plagues Trumpet, 8 - 13

We are still in the first half of the tribulation. Contained within the seventh seal are seven trumpet. This chapter records four of those seven trumpet judgments. To understand chapter 8, it is necessary to look back to the first few verses of chapter 7. In chapter seven an angel commands the angels with the trumpets not to sound until the 144,000 receive the protective seal.

VERSE BY VERSE

Within the seventh seal are the seven trumpet judgments. In other words, all seven trumpet judgments are contained in the seventh seal.

You will recall that six of the seven seals were opened in chapter 6. Verse 1 records the opening of the seventh seal. It says: *“And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half and hour.”* Because the judgments upon the earth will be so severe, all heaven will be awestruck for about one half hour. Think about it. Heaven, the Capitol of the universe will be absolutely quiet for a half hour. There will be no praise, no song, no laughter, no prayer, no conversation, no movement. Angels will fold their wings, the seraphim will rest from their singing, and the twenty-four elders will sit speechless for one half hour at the thought of the suffering about to begin on earth. This has got to be one of the most mind boggling verses in the Bible. Not even God makes a sound.

Why the silence? After Christ opens the seventh seal, the trumpet judgments will begin. These trumpets will bring unprecedented pain and suffering. The revelation of these judgments will stagger the minds of all in heaven. There is no way for us to imagine plagues so terrible as to cause all of heaven to sit stunned for one half hour.

After the half hour lapses, John sees, *“seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets”* - verse 2. When these seven angels blow their trumpets, seven terrible plagues befall those on earth.

In verse 3 we see another angel with a *“golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.”* Saints throughout the ages have used the Lord’s Prayer as a pattern for their own prayers. Jesus said in Matthew 6:9-10, *“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”* Sad to say, God’s will is not being done on earth. One day, however, it will, and in answer to the prayer. Saints have been praying since the fall of Adam for peace, justice, and righteousness on earth. We have been praying that Jesus would come back to earth again and set up His Kingdom. These prayers have been preserved and will be offered to God at this time. God will answer these prayers with seven trumpet judgments.

In Rev. 6:10 the saints that were martyred during the tribulation pray: *“How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”* These prayers, likewise, are about to be answered.

Verse 4 says, *“And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel’s hand.”* It is apparent from the context that the plagues of the tribulation are in answer to the prayers of the saints for vengeance. (See Rev. 6:10)

“And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake” - Rev. 8:5. At that point the seven angels with the seven trumpets prepare to blow.

The Trumpet Judgments

In verse 7 we read: *“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 the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.”* This plague is aimed at vegetation.

The **second plague** is recorded in verses 8 & 9: *“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; 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.” Notice the words *as it were* in verse 8. This was not a mountain, but *as* a mountain. This is probably a falling star in the shape of a mountain.

This plague pollutes the seas (probably salt water). One third of the sea will become blood; consequently, a third part of the sea creatures will die, and a third of the ships will be destroyed.

The **third plague** is recorded in verses 10 & 11. It is aimed at fresh water. A great star falls from heaven and pollutes a third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters. This falling star will be called wormwood because a third part of the waters became wormwood (bitter). Some might question how a falling star could contaminate a third of the fresh water. A possible explanation might be that the meteorite breaks apart before hitting the earth.

The **fourth plague** is recorded in verse 12. It is aimed at the sun, moon and stars: *“And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.”* Notice that each plague smites exactly one third of something. You can imagine what havoc these atmospheric changes will cause.

Verse 13 introduces the next chapter. Because the last three trumpet judgments are so terrible, an angel introduces them with a loud voice saying, *“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 come!”*

REVELATION CHAPTER NINE

THEME: Pain and suffering!

KEY VERSE: The key verse for this chapter is the last verse of the previous chapter: *“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!”*

KEY WORD: Woe! (See Rev 9:13)

OUTLINE:

The Fifth Trumpet: Plague of Locusts, 1 - 12

The Sixth Trumpet: Army of 200,000,000, 13 - 21

This chapter records two of the last three trumpet judgments. According to Rev 8:13, these two trumpet judgments will be so terrible they are called woes.

VERSE BY VERSE

After the fifth angel sounds, a star falls from heaven to earth. The context makes it clear that this star is an evil spirit. Notice the pronouns used in reference to this star: *him* in verse 1, and *he* in verse 2. In Rev 22:16 and in Num. 24:17 Jesus is also called a star. This *fallen* angel is *given* the key to the bottomless pit.

This bottomless pit is intriguing to say the least. Questions such as, What is it? and Where is it? flood the mind. There are only 7 verses in the Bible that speak of the bottomless pit; they are as follows:

1. Rev 9:1 says, And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the **bottomless pit**.
2. Rev 9:2 says, And he opened the **bottomless pit**; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3. Rev 9:11 says, And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the **bottomless pit**, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.
4. Rev 11:7 says, And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the **bottomless pit** shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.
5. Rev 17:8 says, The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the **bottomless pit**, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.
6. Rev 20:1 says, And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the **bottomless pit** and a great chain in his hand.
7. Rev 20:3 says, And cast him into the **bottomless pit**, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

After studying the aforementioned verses, we find several interesting facts about the bottomless pit:

It is bottomless

It is some kind of prison for evil spirits

It is now locked

There is only one key to it

Satan is the angel of it

The beast will ascend out of it

It is in the earth. The angel is on earth when he unlocks the door to this pit.

It is a place of fire, because *“smoke arose out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.”*

Verse 3 says: *“And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth.”* These are not ordinary locusts. They do not eat grass (verse 4); and they attack only those who do **not** have the seal of God in their foreheads. They have a scorpion’s sting, and they have a king over them who is the devil. (See verse 11) Normal locusts have no king, Proverbs 30:27.

Who will they torment? Everyone except the 144,000. Some have supposed that Christians will not be hurt by these locusts. Verse 4 only guarantees that those 144,000 who have been sealed will not suffer this plague.

Verses 7 - 10 gives us a description of these locusts: *“And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months.”* After reading these verses you will agree that these can be nothing other than embodied, demonic spirits. These are not helicopters, tanks, or any other type of modern war machine. **These demons will not kill people as do tanks and guns**, but torment them for five months. The pain of their sting will be so bad that people will seek death; yet death will flee from

them. God will see to it that during this time people will not die. Consider the irony of the fact that for 5 months during the tribulation, nobody will die.

Verse 11 teaches us that the king of these demonic spirits is the angel of the bottomless pit whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek ,Apollyon. These are names for Satan.

Verse 12 says, *“One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.”* And this is just the beginning. What will it be like at this time? Aside from crime, hunger, disease, and war; people will live in constant fear of these hideous beasts.

THE SECOND WOE

The second woe is an army of 200,000,000 sent forth to kill a third part of men. After this woe, the antichrist will be the undisputed ruler of the world. This is the last thing to happen before the Great Tribulation.

After the sixth angel sounds, (verse 13) John hears *“a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates”* - Rev. 9:14. These are no doubt fallen angels. There is no record of a good angel ever being imprisoned. However, there are a few instances of fallen angels being bound. Satan, who is a fallen angel, will be bound in the bottomless pit for the duration of the millennium (See Rev. 20:2). Jude 6 speaks of fallen angels who are chained in darkness waiting for the day of judgment.

Verse 15 says that these angels were prepared for a certain time to slay a third part of men: *“And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.”* Verses 16 to 19 describe an army of 200,000,000. These four fallen angels are the power and influence behind this army of evil spirits. Make no mistake about it, this is an army of demons. Their description is like the army of locusts that come out of the bottomless pit. Furthermore, they have power to kill, but not one of them is killed.

Verse 18 says, *“By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.”* This verse staggers the imagination. Let's do a little arithmetic to understand the carnage during the tribulation. Let's assume there will be 6 billion people on earth after the rapture.

The second seal speaks of war. We don't know how many will die in this war. Let's suppose 500 million. This reduces the population to 5.5 billion.

The fourth seal speaks of death to over a fourth part of the earth by reason of war, hunger, execution and beasts. Whether the fourth part of the earth spoken of is heavily populated or no, we cannot say. Let's say for argument sake that it represents a fourth part of the world's population. This plague would reduce the population to 4.125 billion.

The fifth seal speaks of those martyred for their faith. Let's reduce the population to an even 4 billion to show the loss as a result of this seal.

The third trumpet causes the deaths of many men. Let's reduce the population to 3.9 to show this.

The second woe causes the death of one third of the remaining population. This would reduce the population to 2.6 billion people.

Six of the seven plagues have now come to pass, and men still refuse to call upon the Lord. Verses 20 & 21 say: *“And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver;*

and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.” After this plague there will be no believers left on earth.

REVELATION CHAPTER TEN

KEY THOUGHT: The mystery of God should be finished!

KEY PHRASE: Time no longer!

KEY VERSE: *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets* Rev. 10:7.

KEY WORD: Book!

OUTLINE:

The Angel with the little Book, 1 - 9

John with the little Book, 10 - 11

This chapter revolves around a little book [See verses 2, 8, 9, and 10]. This is probably not the same little book we saw in chapters 4 & 5. We know very little about this book. We do know, however, that it is little, opened, edible, and that it is transported from heaven to earth by an angel. This chapter announces the final forty-two month countdown. It announces the coming of the Great Tribulation.. The Great Tribulation is the last three and one half years of the tribulation.

VERSE BY VERSE

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. . .,” verse 1. Some have supposed that this mighty angel is the Lord Jesus Christ. This is unlikely. Tim LaHaye makes an excellent observation in his book **Revelation Illustrated and made Plain**. He says: “The Lord Jesus Christ does not appear in the book of Revelation as an angel. In fact, we will look in vain for a presentation of Him as an angel after the Incarnation.”

In verse 3, the angel cries with a loud voice, and in response to his cry, seven thunders utter their voices. John was about to write what the seven thunders said when a voice from heaven - probably the voice of God - says: *“Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.”* It is ridiculous to try and speculate what these seven thunders said; their words have been sealed.

In verses 5 and 6 the angel swears by Christ that *“time should be no longer.”* This statement has caused a lot confusion. Notice the connection between **time** and **mystery** in the following verses. This means that time has run out and the great tribulation will begin. With the start of the great tribulation the time of Christ’s return will no longer be a mystery. Although the Return of Christ will no longer be a mystery, the vast majority of people on earth will be kept in the dark.

And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets” - Rev. 10:6-7.

The book is opened to make known to the world a mystery that has been hid for ages, i.e. the time of Christ’s return.

Verse 7 refers to the seventh trumpet judgment. *“But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared*

to his servants the prophets.” When the seventh angel begins to sound, the mystery of God will be finished. Again, this mystery is the time of Christ’s return. Consider the following:

- At the moment, the time of Christ’s second coming is still a mystery. No one knows when Christ will return.
- The mystery will not be revealed until after the seventh trumpet sounds.
- This mystery will be revealed at the midpoint of the tribulation (See 11:2, 11:3, 12:14, and 13:5).
- Finally, the mystery must have something to do with the end; apparently verses 6 and seven go together.

Actually, the return of Christ begins with the Great Tribulation. It is the time a purging time just prior to His return.

Although no one knows **when** Christ will return, no Bible believer denies that He **will** return. The time of Christ’s return is at present is a mystery. Jesus Himself said, *“But of that day and hour knoweth no [man], no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only”* - See Matthew 24:36. Just before Christ ascended back to heaven His disciples asked Him: *“Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”* Jesus said, *“It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power”* - Acts 1:6-7. He was saying that although the fact of His return was no mystery, the time was. His return will be a mystery up until the midpoint of the tribulation.

A literal interpretation of Revelation brings you to this same conclusion. From the midpoint of the tribulation to the time of Christ’s return will be exactly 42 months. The reason why we cannot know when the Lord will return is because we do not know the time of the midpoint of the tribulation.

In verse 8, the voice from heaven speaks to John again saying: *“Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel. . .”*

In verse 9 John asked the angel for the little book. The angel gives it to him with instructions to eat it. He further tells John that it will be sweet to the taste, but bitter in the belly; and true to the angel’s word, it was so, verse 10.

Verse 11 is very interesting. After John ate the little book the angel said: *“Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”* As we will see from the next chapter, two witnesses will appear during the tribulation preaching God’s word. I have always entertained the thought that one of these two witnesses is John.

REVELATION CHAPTER ELEVEN

KEY THOUGHT: The ministry, death and resurrection of the two witnesses

KEY PHRASE: I will give power unto my two witnesses

KEY VERSE: And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth, Revelation 11:3.

KEY WORD: Power!

OUTLINE:

Ministry of the Witnesses, 1 - 6

Martyrdom of the Witnesses, 7 - 19

THE MIDPOINT OF THE TRIBULATION

The midpoint of the tribulation is very important to your understanding of Revelation. Six chapters are dedicated to it. Several important events occur during the midpoint of the tribulation that are recorded in chapters 10 through 15.

- Chapter 10, a mighty angel announces the beginning of the Great Tribulation.
- Chapter 11, two witnesses are slain.
- Chapter 12, Satan is cast out of heaven.
- Chapter 13, Satan comes to earth and possesses the antichrist.
- Chapter 14, one hundred and forty-four thousand Jews are found in heaven praising God.
- Chapter 15, seven angels prepare to pour the seven final vial judgments upon the earth.

All of these events occur within a short time of each other. Very little time elapses between chapters 10 & 15.

In verses 1 & 2, John is commanded to measure the temple. This temple is not now in existence, but sometime prior to the midpoint of the tribulation the Jews will rebuild it. As we shall see, the antichrist will negotiate a treaty between the Jews “*and many*” for seven years (Dan. 9:27). The signing of this treaty is the event that begins the tribulation. Among other things, this treaty will allow the Jews to worship freely in this temple. This chapter also records the deaths of two witnesses. These two witnesses begin preaching on the streets of Jerusalem at the time the treaty is signed. They will expose the false peace that the Jews will be brainwashed into thinking exists. These witnesses will go unmolested for three and a half years, exposing this false peace, and preaching the “*gospel of the kingdom.*” This kind of preaching will be treasonous; therefore, the antichrist, will kill them. Their bodies will be left in the street for 3 and one half days. Afterwards, they will rise from the dead and ascend to heaven. In that hour there will be a great earthquake, and many within the city of Jerusalem will be killed.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says, “*And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*” This chapter is the pivotal chapter in Revelation. The first half the tribulation comes to an end, and the great tribulation begins at this point. Daniel 9:24-27 should be read in conjunction with this chapter.

A Study of Daniel Chapter Nine

Seventy weeks are determined upon they people and upon the holy city, to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall

cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

These verses are very important to our understanding of Revelation. They can be divided into three sections. The first section gives an outline of time from the time of Daniel until the Millennium. The second section records the time of His first coming (in Bethlehem). The third section records the time of His second coming. Let's look at these verses in detail.

Section One: Daniel 9:24

Total Time Until Christ Returns

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

There are only seventy weeks left before Jesus comes back to set up His kingdom, make an end to sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. You say, how can that be, thousands of years have already elapsed since Daniel's time? The weeks mentioned above are weeks of years. Think of a week (7) as you would a dozen (12), or a gross (144). Just as you can have a dozen eggs, days, or years; you can have a week (7) of eggs, days, years.

Section Two: Daniel 9:25-26

Time of Christ's First Coming

Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

This section says that from the time that the Jews would be permitted to rebuild Jerusalem to the crucifixion of Christ would be seven weeks (49 years); and threescore and two, or 62 weeks. (434 years) Simply put, from the time that the command was given to rebuild Jerusalem until the rejection of Christ was 483 years (49 + 434 = 483). Scholars have proven this prophecy to be accurate. The people of the prince are the Romans, who, after the death of Christ, destroyed the city and the temple (sanctuary) with a mighty army (flood).

After the death of Christ, the prophetic clock stops, and a period known in Scripture as the "times of the Gentiles" began. We are now living in this time.

Section Three: Daniel 9:27

Time of Christ's Second Coming

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

The antichrist will *confirm*, not *make* a promise (covenant) with many for 7 years (one week). The confirmation of this covenant will start the prophetic clock. This treaty will include the Jews

and many other nations. The Jews will be allowed to reinstitute the sacrificial system, and worship freely in the temple. The signing of this treaty begins the tribulation period.

In the midst of the week (3 ½ years later), the antichrist will break the treaty and cause the sacrifices to cease. He will then make the temple desolate until the end (until the consummation). Jesus Himself said that this event would begin the second half of the tribulation called the Great Tribulation. *“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:). . . For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be”* - Mat. 24.

The forty-two months spoken of in verse 2 are very significant. It is exactly three and a half years. The tribulation begins when the antichrist confirms a treaty between the Jews and many other nations. This treaty will be for seven years; the antichrist, however, will break the treaty after three and a half years. After he breaks the treaty, the city will be overrun with those who promised by reason of the treaty to stay out. (See verse 2)

Verses 3 - 12 speak of two witnesses. Who are these men? Some have suggested Moses, others Elijah, and still others Enoch, or some other Old Testament prophet. We know for certain that one of the two witnesses will be Elijah; but the Scriptures do not reveal who the other might be. Malachi plainly says that Elijah would come: *“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD”* - Malachi 4:6.

Verse 3 says, *“And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses.”* These witnesses are prophets. They will expose the antichrist and his false peace and prophesy of Christ’s coming.

Verse 4 says, *“These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.”* This is a reference to Zachariah 4:14. Zachariah prophesied thousands of years ago that two witnesses would one day prophesy during the tribulation.

Verses 5 and 6 say: *“And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.”* These two witnesses will be immortal until they finish their testimony. No man will be able to lay hands on them. They will literally breathe fire. If any try to hurt them in any way, the plot will backfire and they will be killed in that way. For example, if someone tries to poison them, they will be poisoned.

At the midpoint of the tribulation they will be killed. One of the first things Satan will do after the treaty is broken is to kill these two prophets. (See Verse 7) They will be killed in Jerusalem, and their bodies left to rot in the street. (See verse 8)

Verse 9 teaches us that people from around the world will see their dead bodies lying in the street for three and one half days. Many have supposed that verse 9 teaches that every person on earth will see their dead bodies. The text does not necessarily teach that every person will see their dead bodies, only that people from every nation will see them. The advent of television has made this possible.

Verse 10 says, *“And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.”* An international holiday much like Christmas will be instituted to celebrate the deaths of these two prophets. This is sad. It is obvious that the vast majority of people will consider them

to be false prophets, and the cause of all the suffering on earth. They will blame the world's problems on these two witnesses. People will hate them so much that they will not even give them a decent burial.

Someone might ask: Are the witnesses on earth now? Probably not. They will not be born. They will appear on the earth during the tribulation.

After three and a half days *"the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them,"* verse 11.

Verse 12 says, *"And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."*

According to verse 13, within an hour after the two witnesses depart there will be a great earthquake in Jerusalem, in which a tenth part of the city will fall, and seven thousand men will be killed. Those not killed in the earthquake will give glory to God. They will see the error of their way and repent.

After the earthquake, verse 14 says, *"The second woe is past; [and], behold, the third woe cometh quickly."* The third woe (the seventh trumpet) is the Great Tribulation.

Verse 15 says, *"The kingdoms of this world are become [the kingdoms] of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever;"* Christ is reclaiming what man lost in Eden; namely, dominion over the earth. At present the kingdoms of the world are under Satan's control. When Satan offered Christ all the kingdoms of the world in Matthew 4, he was making a legitimate offer. The kingdoms of this world are at present his to give. Satan is indeed *"the god of this world."* The Bible says, *"the whole world lieth in wickedness."* The prince of darkness rules. This world is not the kingdom of Christ. Jesus said, *"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."*

There are spiritual forces at work "backstage" that we cannot see. Satan heads an unseen empire of demonic spirits that keeps the world under his power. Satan is at this time the prince of the power of the air, and he has assigned evil spirits to the kingdoms of the world to keep them in darkness. However, at the midpoint of the tribulation, Satan and his host, will be dethroned. This is what the war in heaven is all about in chapter 12. When Satan is cast to earth he will lose his spiritual power over it.

Verses 16 and 17 record the song of thanksgiving offered by the twenty-four elders. They are thankful that Christ is about to destroy Satan and rule on the earth.

Verse 18 is important. It says that the nations were angry. Why? Because His wrath is come. This refers to the great tribulation. God's wrath will now be poured out upon those *"who destroy the earth."* This no doubt refers to the destruction caused by war.

Verse 18 also teaches that this is also a time of judgment of the saved: the prophets, saints, and them that fear His name. While God is pouring out His judgment upon the earth, the saints will be judged in heaven.

Verse 19 teaches that the saints will see the temple of God, and the ark of his testament. The ark of the covenant is at this time in heaven, not Ethiopia, or some well guarded cave in some African desert.

REVELATION CHAPTER TWELVE

KEY THOUGHT: Satan Persecutes the Jews

KEY WORD: Dragon! The word occurs 8 times in this chapter

KEY VERSE: *Therefore rejoice, [ye] heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.* (Revelation 12:12)

OUTLINE:

God Protects Israel, 1 - 6

Satan Persecutes Israel, 7 - 17

We learn why Satan hates the Jews in this chapter - they gave us the Savior. We also get a glimpse at the long and endless struggle between Satan and the Jews. This chapter records the most fascinating event of the midpoint of the tribulation: Satan, the prince and power of the air is cast down to the earth; after which, he seeks to destroy the Jews, but cannot because of God's protective hand. The first 5 verses are an historic account of the birth of Christ and Satan's attempt to destroy Him. The rest of the chapter is prophetic; it gives an account of Satan's relentless attack of the Jews after he is cast down to the earth during the tribulation.

VERSE BY VERSE

In this chapter we are introduced to four persons: a woman, Satan, Jesus, and Michael the archangel. Verse 1 introduces the woman: "*And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.*" Notice that this woman has twelve stars upon her head. These twelve stars are the twelve tribes of Israel. Verse 5 makes it clear that this woman represents the nation of Israel. In Genesis 37 Jacob understood the sun, moon, and the twelve stars to represent the Israel.

Verse 2 takes us back to the time of Christ's birth. This woman is in labor and about to give birth to the son of God. Just prior to the birth of Christ, Israel suffered much from her enemies.

The second person is introduced in verse 3: "*And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.*" Verse 9 clarifies the fact that this great red dragon is Satan.

The seven heads and ten horns and the seven crowns represent the Roman. Satan used Rome to legally murder every male child under two years of age in an effort to kill the King of kings.

Verse 4 is mind boggling. "*And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.*" Satan gathered one-third of the angelic host - probably his entire kingdom - and cast them to earth in order to kill the baby Jesus the moment He was born.

Verse five introduces the third person in this chapter: Jesus Christ. "*And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and [to] his throne.*" Satan failed in his attempt to destroy Christ at his birth in Bethlehem. He has sought to kill Jesus from that moment on, and thought he did at Calvary, but He rose from the dead, and is now in Heaven.

After giving us a brief history lesson as to Satan's hatred of the woman and her child, John brings us back to the tribulation period with verse 6. Notice that the woman (Israel) flees into the wilderness where she hides for 1,260 days, exactly three and one half years of 30 day months. (The Jewish month had 30 days) This three and one half years again identifies the time as being

the midpoint of the tribulation. From the midpoint of the tribulation to the end, Satan will seek to destroy the Jews, but God's hand of protection will be upon them.

Just a thought. I have always entertained the thought that the woman is literally Mary and typically Israel. Perhaps Mary fled to the wilderness (Egypt) where she hid from Herod for 1,260 days. Perhaps this prophecy has double fulfillment.

Verse 7 introduces the fourth person with the words, *"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels."* While warfare takes place on earth, spiritual warfare takes place in the heavens. This is not the third Heaven - the abode of God - but rather the first heaven, or atmospheric heaven, the present abode and power (kingdom) of Satan. Satan is the prince and power of the air. (See Ephesians 2:2)

Satan will be thrown out of heaven, the first heaven, during the midpoint of the tribulation. Verses 8 & 9 say: *"And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."*

After Satan is cast out of heaven, John heard a loud voice saying, *"Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night"* - Revelation 12:10.

Verse 12 warns those on earth to beware, because *"the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."* He knows that he has only 42 months.

Verses 13 - 17 tell of the devil's relentless attack against the Jews during this time. God, however, protects them.

Verse 14 says, *"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."* At the time Satan is cast down to the earth, the woman (Israel) is given two wings of a great eagle to fly into the wilderness. These wings enable Israel to "outrun" Satan's wrath.

Notice the phrase for a time, and times, and half a time. The word *"time"* means one year; the word *"times"* means two years; and the phrase *"half a time"* means half a year. Adding these together we arrive at 3 and one half years. Israel will be under divine protection the entire second half of the tribulation.

Verse 15 leads us to believe that Satan will continue his fight against Israel even though they are protected. Each time Satan launches an attack against her, God miraculously protects her.

Verse 17 says, *"And the dragon was wrath with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."* One hundred and forty-four thousand Jews will be protected by God. This remnant may very well be other Jews not of the 144,000.

REVELATION CHAPTER THIRTEEN

KEY THOUGHT: Satan on Earth

KEY WORD: Beast! This word occurs 16 times in this chapter.

KEY VERSE: And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Revelation 13:8)

OUTLINE:

In the previous chapter, Satan was cast out of heaven. This chapter outlines his activities now that he is confined to earth. He will literally enter into the body of the antichrist, and cause everyone on earth to worship him. He will employ the aid of a false prophet who will deceive many by reason of the many miracles which he is able to do. He will cause all those who worship him to receive a mark on the right hand or forehead. All those who do not take the mark will be killed if caught.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says: *“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.”* There have been many explanations as to what this beast is, and what the seven heads and ten horns represent. Listed below are several verses that speak of this beast.

THE BEAST

Understanding the “beast” can be difficult. For simplicities’ sake we will define it as follows: The antichrist and his kingdom.

The characteristics of the beast are indeed strange. First, the dragon (Satan) and the beast look alike (compare 12:3 & 13:1); second, the beast is ungodly; third, the beast is mongrel (13:2); fourth, the beast is wild (13:2); fifth, the beast cannot be conquered (13:4); sixth, the beast is worshipped (13:15); seventh, the beast will be cast alive into the lake of fire (19:20). It staggers the imagination to think that this beast will run wild for three and a half years before it is caught by Jesus Himself.

The fact that the beast is mongrel (it is part lion, part bear, and part leopard) indicates that it is a mixture of all the great empires of the past. It is no coincidence that Daniel saw four beasts arise out of the sea thousands of years ago. The first was like a lion; the second was like a bear; the third was like a leopard; and the fourth was dreadful and terrible. Daniel 7:17 says that these four beasts *“are four kings which shall arise out of the earth.”* In describing this fourth beast, Daniel says that it had ten horns. Daniel 7:24 says that these ten horns are ten kings that shall arise out of the earth. History teaches us that four great empires did indeed arise out of the earth. Daniel 2:37 tells us that the first great empire was Babylon. The second great empire was the Persian empire. (Dan. 5:28) The third great kingdom was Greece. (See Dan. 8:1-8 & Dan. 8:20-21) Although the Bible does not say what the fourth great kingdom is, history makes it quite clear that it is Rome.

Verse 2 also says that the *“dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.”* The personal pronouns, him and his, refer to the antichrist. Satan himself controls this great kingdom (the beast) through the antichrist.

Verse 3: *“And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.”* The antichrist is the head that is mortally wounded. Some have supposed that the antichrist will have a fatal head wound. This is not true. The antichrist is the seventh head. In other words, he is the head of the Revived Roman Empire. He will be assassinated; but to the world’s amazement, his deadly wound will be healed. (See 13:12&14)

Verse 4: *“And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who [is] like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?”*

After the antichrist is healed, Satan will enter into him. Notice also the verse says that they worship the dragon (Satan), and the beast: the antichrist. The two are inseparably linked; the antichrist and his kingdom are seen as one, just as Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom were seen as one in Daniel 2:38.

Verse 5 says: *“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty [and] two months.”* He will no doubt be a great orator; he will possess the power of persuasion. He will speak great things.

Verse 6 confirms the fact that he will use this power to speak against God. He will be free to preach his false doctrine for forty-two months. This again places us right at the middle of the tribulation. (See verse 5)

In verse 7 we find him making war with Christians. He will overcome them and kill them, and by the midpoint of the tribulation his power will reach to *“all kindreds, tongues, and nations.”*

Verse 8 says: *“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”* Only born again Christians will not submit to this false religion. Everyone else on earth will worship the beast. There will only be two religions in the world during the Great Tribulation: those who worship Christ and those who worship antichrist. There will be no Muslims, Buddhists, etc. You will either worship Christ or antichrist.

Verse 10 seems to teach that people will report to the government any who they suspect being Christian. Friend will turn against friend; neighbor against neighbor; brother against brother; sister against sister; son against father; and daughter against mother.

THE FALSE PROPHET

From verse 11 to the end of the chapter we read about the false prophet. He is a man who promotes the worship of the antichrist. This false prophet is seen coming up out of the earth. The antichrist will is political in nature; the false prophet is religious in nature. Both will work together to bring about a one world political and religious system.

Verse 12 says, *“And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.”* Just as the first beast is a government power which the antichrist heads, this beast is a religious power which the false prophet heads. Notice that he possesses the same amount of power as the first beast (antichrist); and he forces everyone on earth to worship the first beast *“whose deadly wound was healed.”* This would be the antichrist.

Verses 13 says that *“he doeth great wonders. . . in the sight of men.”* He will make fire come down from the sky, and perform many mighty miracles.

Verse 14 says that he will convince *“them that dwell on the earth”* to make an image of the beast. After convincing men that antichrist is God, he will convince them to make an image of him, and *“cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed,”* verse 15. Just as Nebuchadnezzar did thousands of years ago, the false prophet will do in the tribulation.

Verse 15 also says that the false prophet has power to *“give life unto the image of the beast.”* Many believe that the image of the beast is a giant computer system. This is a doubters interpretation. We must avoid interpreting the Bible based on our understanding of what we think is possible. There is nothing miraculous or convincing about a computer, no matter how

advanced the technology. There is no life in circuitry. A more literal interpretation might be that an evil spirit or spirits enter into the image thereby bringing it to life.

Furthermore, some think that image to the beast is now in existence. But this cannot be because it plainly says that the image of the beast will not even be built until the midpoint of the tribulation. (See verse 14) The Bible says that the false prophet has power to do great wonders among men, and one of these great wonders will be to bring life to the image of the beast. We must not allow our finite mind to limit the power of God, or the power of Satan for that matter. I would rather be wrong with too much trust in a literal interpretation than right with doubt. Why not take it for granted that God meant what He said? One thing is sure, people on earth will be convinced that the antichrist is God in the flesh and they will willingly worship the image.

Verse 16 teaches us that the false prophet is the one who institutes the mark of the beast, not the antichrist. *“And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads.”* Verse 16 says the mark will be received in the right hand or forehead. It also says that everyone will be forced to take it.

Verse 17 says that no man can buy or sell except those with the mark. Notice carefully that *three* marks are listed here: the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Apparently, the mark is one thing, the name of the beast another, and the number of his name still another. It appears you will have one of these three. All citizens of the world government will either have a mark in the right hand or forehead; or the name of the antichrist written in their right hand or forehead; or the number 666 inscribed in their right hand or forehead. The false prophet will institute this program in order to weed out nonconformist. Without this mark you will not be allowed to buy or sell anything, legally.

A question was asked, “Will all unsaved people receive the mark and will all saved people refrain from taking the mark?” In other words, is it possible for a person to not take the mark and still not be a Christian. I believe all unsaved people will receive the mark because the Bible says that everybody on earth will worship him (antichrist) whose names are not in the Book of Life. (See Rev 3:8) By applying the same verse in reverse we conclude that all those who do not take the mark will all be saved.

Verse 18 concludes the chapter with these words: *“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore [and] six.”* Many have tried to determine who the antichrist is by assigning certain numbers to the letters of the alphabet. They add up the letters of the names of world leaders and those names that add up to 666 are potential candidates. This is no doubt what the Scriptures teach, however, it is not possible to know the identity of the antichrist before the rapture of the church. (See 2 Thess. 3:2) Although it can be fun, it is a waste of time.

REVELATION CHAPTER FOURTEEN

KEY THOUGHT: Don't Take the Mark!

KEY WORD: Voice

KEY PHRASE: Another angel

KEY VERSE: Here is the patience of the saints: here [are] they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. (Revelation 14:12)

OUTLINE:

The 144,000, 1 - 7

We are still at the midpoint of the tribulation. Notice the words *“from henceforth”* in verse 13. It means from here (the mid point of the tribulation) on (to the end of the tribulation). This time period is properly called the “Great Tribulation” by Christ Himself.

Verses 1 through 3 speak of 144,000 people. Scholars have debated the identity of these 144,000 for centuries. Are they the same 144,000 mentioned in chapter 7, or not? Probability definitely says yes. The probability of two different sets of exactly 144,000 mentioned within a seven year time period and just a few chapters apart with both having writing in their foreheads, is highly unlikely. A question, however, that must be answered is: How is it that these 144,000 are in heaven, whereas the 144,000 mentioned in chapter 7, are one earth? The answer: they will be caught up to heaven at the midpoint of the tribulation. Verse 3 says that they were *“redeemed from the earth.”*

Verse 1 says, *“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty [and] four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.”* These 144,000 have God’s name written in their foreheads. This is the seal that they are given at the beginning of the tribulation. (See Rev. 7:3)

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE 144,000

In verses 2 and 3 we are given a list of their characteristics:

- They all sing a new song before the throne of God that no man could learn but they themselves
- They are all male virgins
- They are Christians
- They are the first fruits unto God
- They are without fault before God.

I believe that the 144,000 are the *“many”* saints who died in the Old Testament, but rose from the dead, *“and came out of the graves after his resurrection (the resurrection of Christ), and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.”* (See Matthew 27:52 & 53) Their characteristics certainly sound like resurrected saints. These would certainly qualify as first fruits, and would explain their virginity, and their sinlessness. Suffice it to say that they are now in heaven. They are taken to heaven before the Great Tribulation begins.

From verse 6 to the end of the chapter we are introduced to six angels. These six angels play an important role in end time events. Of these six angels, five speak while one remains silent. The first angel preaches the everlasting gospel to all that are still alive on earth. Here is a fulfillment of prophesy. *“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come”* - Matthew 24:14.

Verse 7 records his message. *“Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”* Notice the words, *“for the hour of his judgment is come.”* This refers to the second half of the tribulation. The second half of the tribulation is God’s judgment being upon earth.

Verse 8 says, *“And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”* Babylon, a great city, will be destroyed during the tribulation period. We will look more into this in chapters 17 and 18.

In verses 9 through 11 we read the words of the third angel. *“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive [his] mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.”* Let it be made clear that all those who worship the beast will receive the mark. There will be no middle ground.

The consequences of taking the mark are given in verses 10 and 11. First, they will suffer the torments of the second half of the tribulation. Notice verse 10 says that they shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture. The second half of the tribulation is referred to as the wrath of God. (See 14:19; 15:1; & 16:1) In addition to suffering in the great tribulation those who take the mark will be cast into hell. The moment you receive the mark, you sentence yourself to eternal damnation. People who die without Christ will be tormented with fire and brimstone day and night forever, and ever.

Verses 12 and 13 differentiate between those who take the mark and those who do not. The saints will patiently endure this terrible time of pain and suffering.

Verse 13: *“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed [are] the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”* Christians who die are pronounced blessed. Why? Because the suffering from henceforth will be so intense that death will be a welcome mode of deliverance.

In verses 14 to 20 we get a glimpse of the battle of Armageddon. This section is prophetic in context. In other words, the context places us at the midpoint of the tribulation; and it is at this point that the vision is given. The actual battle is not fought until the end of the tribulation. (See 19:15) The final three and one half years of the tribulation is a war between Christ and antichrist and ends with the battle of Armageddon. This section speaks of events leading up to the battle. For three and one half years (from the midpoint of the tribulation on) angels are found filling the great winepress of the wrath of God. Notice two angels with sickles are commanded to reap a harvest. This is a harvest of evil, ungodly men. At the end of the tribulation, the great winepress of God’s wrath will be full, and at that time Christ will come back to earth and tread down the winepress. This is the battle of Armageddon. This victory will mark the end of the tribulation. The winepress is the valley of Meggedo, the future sight of the battle of Armageddon. During the second half of the tribulation, angels will gather the nations of the world into this valley; and at the right time, Christ will return, and with the weight of omnipotence, “squash” all those in the valley. The blood of this slaughter will reach to the horse’s bridle by the space of 1,600 furlongs or 200 miles.

REVELATION CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THEME: The seven last plagues

KEY WORD: Plagues

KEY VERSE: “And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God,” Revelation 15:1.

OUTLINE:

Martyred Saints, 1 - 4

This chapter, containing only eight verses, it is the smallest chapter in Revelation. Its main purpose is to introduce the seven vial judgments yet to come. It is the Preamble to the Great Tribulation. The plagues during this time will be more severe than anything the world has ever experienced. The next chapter records the devastation caused by these plagues. Chapters 15 and 16 go together. Both chapters are prophetic in context.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says: *“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.”* Here we are introduced to seven angels having the last seven plagues. These seven plagues may be last, but they are certainly not least. Words fail to convey the devastation caused by them. John shifts his attention in verse 2 to *“a sea of glass mingled with fire.”* The words *“as it were”* assure us that this is not a literal sea. Standing on this sea are countless souls who were martyred by the antichrist because they would not take the mark. John notices that they all have harps and they are singing. This confirms the fact that people will be saved during the Great Tribulation.

Verses 3 and 4 record their song: *“And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.”* Notice that they sing the song of Moses. This song was sung by the Israelites after God had delivered the Jews from Egyptian bondage. In a nutshell, the song of Moses is a song of deliverance. Actually, the antichrist will be doing these believers a favor in killing them.

Verse 6 says that seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven last plagues.

Verse 7 tells us that one of the four *“beasts”* give the seven angels seven golden vials that are filled with the wrath of God. (These beasts are not to be confused with the antichrist. The Scriptures make it clear that these four beasts are angelic creatures)

Verse 8 says that no man was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues were fulfilled. No man would want to.

REVELATION CHAPTER SIXTEEN

KEY THOUGHT: God's wrath poured out upon the earth

KEY WORD: Vial

KEY VERSE: *And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth,* Revelation 16:1.

OUTLINE

The First Vial Poured upon the Earth, 1 - 2

The Second Vial Poured upon the Sea, 3

The Third Vial Poured upon the Rivers, 4 - 7

The Fourth Vial Poured upon the Sun, 8 - 9

The Fifth Vial Poured upon the Seat of the Antichrist, 10 - 11

The Sixth Vial Poured upon the Euphrates, 12 - 16

The Seventh Vial Poured into the Air, 7 - 21

We find seven vials full of the wrath of God poured out in this chapter. The pouring out of these vials will cause great pain and suffering to those living on earth. You will find that several of these plagues are identical to the plagues Moses pronounced against the Egyptians - sores, river turned to blood, darkness, and death. You will notice that several of these plagues resemble the plagues of Egypt back in Exodus.

VERSE BY VERSE

As the earth enters the second half of the tribulation seven angels are commanded to go and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. (See Rev. 16:1) In chapter 14, Christ declared that the harvest of the earth was ripe. This means that the earth is ripe for judgment by reason of wickedness. The entire second half of the tribulation is the harvest spoken of in chapter 14. Just as grapes are gathered and “squashed” in a winepress, so the second half of the tribulation is the gathering of unsaved people and “squashing” them in the winepress of judgment. The entire second half of the tribulation is the gathering, or harvest. The “squashing” is the seventh vial, or the battle of Armageddon.

Verse 2 says, *“And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and [upon] them which worshipped his image.”* Only those having the mark of the beast will suffer this plague.

The second and third vial judgments are poured out upon the waters - one on the sea (ocean), and the other on the rivers (fresh water). Since 71 % of the world is covered by water, this will be a very terrible plague. The world will literally be bathed in blood. When the second angel pours out his vial, every living soul in the sea will die (16:2). Notice carefully that these vials are indeed God’s judgment. (See 16:5 & 16:7) We learn why God judges the earth in this way in verse 6: *“For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.”* Water will be quite scarce at this time. People will have to either make it, extract it, or have it shipped in from the arctic if ice and snow are still there.

The fourth vial is poured out upon the sun, *“and power was given to him (the angel) to scorch men with fire.”* The hottest temperature ever recorded on earth was at Azizia, Libya, in 1922 when the mercury climbed to 136 degrees. This will be a mild compared with what is to come.

The next vial will be one of darkness poured upon the antichrist and his kingdom. (See 16:10&11) The pain brought about by this plague will be excruciating. Notice it says that *“they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.”*

The sixth vial judgment is recorded in verses 12 - 16. It is poured out upon the Euphrates river. Several things happen as a result. (1) The river dries up; (2) the kings of the east prepare to cross it; and (3) three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouths of Satan, the beast, and the false prophet. These evil spirits will go throughout the world *“to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”* They gather them together at Armageddon (16:16), the great winepress of God’s wrath.

The seventh vial judgment is recorded in verses 17 - 21. It is poured into the air. A voice from heaven is heard saying, *“It is done.”* The tribulation is ends here. It ends with a great, worldwide earthquake and a hail storm. The weight of the hail is a talent, or 130 pounds. The hail kills all those in winepress, or the valley of Armageddon.

REVELATION CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

KEY THOUGHT: The Judgment of the Whore

KEY WORD: Whore

KEY VERSE: “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters,” Revelation 17:1.

OUTLINE:

The Whore, 1 - 7

The Beast on which the Whore Sits, 8 - 18

This chapter is parenthetical. It explains some of the types and symbols used in Revelation.

VERSE BY VERSE

After Babylon is destroyed, “*one of the seven angels*” which had the seven vials says to John: “*Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters*” - 17:1. This whore is mystery Babylon. See verse 5. In the Rice Reference Bible John Rice said, “this whore is the great religious adulteress, the official state religion of the Antichrist.” This false religious system will be very similar to the ancient Babylonian system.

The whore sits upon many waters (17:1). The many waters are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. See verse 15. She has great authority.

Verse 2 says, “*With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*” Adultery is compared to idolatry in the Bible. This woman pictures the idolatrous, false religion of the antichrist. The New Testament compares the true church to the virgin bride of Christ. This cultic church, however, is compared to a harlot. John Walvoord, in his book, The Revelation of Jesus Christ, says on page 244:

The symbolism of spiritual adultery is not ordinarily used of heathen nations who know not God, but always of people who outwardly carry the name of God while actually worshipping and serving other gods. The concept of spiritual adultery is frequently used in describing the apostasy of Israel. . . . In the New Testament the church is viewed as a virgin destined to be joined to her husband in the future (2 Cor. 11:2), but she is warned against spiritual adultery (James 4:4).

Verse 3 says, “*So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*” The beast is the same beast of chapter 13. It is the kingdom of the antichrist. Here we learn that the beast is red. This probably represents the blood the beast has shed.

Verse 4 says that the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold, etc. This speaks of her wealth. Notice that she has a cup full of abominations. This refers to her ungodliness.

Verse 5 says, “*And upon her forehead [was] a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*” She is the mother of harlots, or false religions. All idolatry can be traced back to Babylon. Christianity is the only religion that can trace its roots back to God.

Verse 6 makes it clear that this idolatrous, false religion, will hate the truth. “*She is drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.*”

In verse 7 the angel says that he will reveal the mystery of the woman and the beast.

Verse 8 says, *“The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder; whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.”* The beast that was and is not and yet is, is the antichrist. Remember he is killed and resurrected during the tribulation.

Verse 9 teaches that the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. This is Rome, the city of seven hills.

Verse 10 suggests that the 7 mountains also represent seven kings who ruled the Roman Empire. *“And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, [and] the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.”* At the time John wrote Revelation, five Roman Emperors had died. The sixth, Domitian, was currently on the throne. The seventh is the antichrist. When he comes he will *“continue a short space.”*

Verse 11 says, *“And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.”* This verse suggests that the antichrist is the seventh head who dies at the midpoint of the tribulation and is resurrected as Satan incarnate.

Verses 12 & 13 says, *“And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.”* Perhaps this is a coup orchestrated by the antichrist. Be that as it may, these ten kings give their power to the antichrist within an hour. These ten kings unite with the antichrist to create a political monster. The seven heads represent seven kings that rule in succession; these ten horns represent kings that rule simultaneously.

Verse 14 says: *“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him [are] called, and chosen, and faithful.”*

According to verse 15, the waters on which the woman sits are multitudes of people. This woman is also found sitting on the beast. See verse 3. From this we gather that she is the official state religion of the antichrist during the first half of the tribulation.

Verse 16: *“And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.”* At the midpoint of the tribulation, the antichrist will declare himself the savior of the world, and the false prophet will cause everybody to worship him. At that time the ten kings will destroy her.

According to verse 18, she is the *“great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.”* This would be the capital city of the world. (See Rev. 17:18)

REVELATION CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THEME: Political Babylon Destroyed

KEY WORD: Babylon; Fornication

KEY VERSE: And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast [it] into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all, Revelation 18:21

OUTLINE

Babylon's Destruction Prophesied, 1 - 19

Babylon's Destruction Pictured, 20 - 24

This chapter details the destruction of the city. Some have supposed that this city will be built on the ruins of ancient Babylon. It is doubtful. Seeing that she (the city) rides the beast, lends support to the belief that she is part of the old Roman Empire. It is more likely that Rome, the city of seven hills, will be the capital city.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says, *“And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.”*

Verse 2 tells us that this angel declares Babylon fallen, i.e., totally given over to evil. It is *“become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”* The reason why it says Babylon is fallen twice (*“Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen,”*) is to declare that both religious and political Babylon have both fallen. Chapter 17 speaks of religious Babylon. This chapter speaks of political Babylon. Babylon will become a world trade center.

Verse 3 says, *“For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.”* This has reference to the whore spoken of in chapter 17. Political Babylon and Religious Babylon work together during the first half of the tribulation.

Verses 4 - 18 talk about Babylon's greatness and sudden destruction. Verse 17 says that in one hour this city is totally destroyed.

Verse 19 says, *“Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.”* It will be a glorious day of rejoicing when this city is destroyed. All the saints in heaven rejoice. (See verse 20) Notice that the city will be destroyed in one hour.

Verse 21 says, *“And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast [it] into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.”* The city will remain perpetually desolate from then on.

Verse 23 teaches us that he will employ the use of sorceries to deceive the nations.

Verse 24 says *“And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.”* She will use her wealth to destroy any who stand in her way.

REVELATION CHAPTER NINETEEN

KEY THOUGHT: The Return of Christ!

KEY WORD: Alleluia!

KEY PHRASE: The Marriage of the Lamb!

KEY VERSE: And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him [was] called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war, Revelation 19:11.

OUTLINE

Saints Rejoice in Babylon's End, 1 - 10

Saints Return with Christ, 11 - 21

The tribulation is over. Christ returns to earth to set up His Kingdom. He defeats the antichrist in the battle of Armageddon. The antichrist and the false prophet are both cast alive into the lake of fire.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says, *“And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God.”* After the tribulation much people are heard praising God. Why? The great whore (Babylon) has been judged. (See verses 2 - 6)

Verse 2 says that the rejoicing is due to the fact that the great whore has been judged..

Verse 7 says, *“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”* Before the tribulation begins, Christ will appear in the clouds and call His bride out of this world to live with Him forever. This is the marriage of Christ to His bride, the church. After the marriage, there will be a reception. This is the marriage supper referred to in verse 7. It will be a time of celebration. After the reception Jesus will bring His bride to earth for a 1,000 year honeymoon, during which time we will rule and reign with Him. Notice the bride’s wedding gown. It is made of fine linen, clean and white. White stands for purity. The church of Jesus Christ has been made pure through the blood of Christ.

Beginning with verse 11 we read of the return of Christ to earth to set up His Kingdom.

After the marriage supper, John sees heaven opened and Jesus sitting on a white horse clothed with a vesture dipped in blood. The armies (Christians who have been raptured, or were killed during the tribulation) follow Him on white horses. He will come to earth and set up His Kingdom.

Verse 15: *“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”* The idea of Jesus swinging a sword in the valley of Meggedo with His horse swimming in blood is simply not true. The Battle of Armageddon is fought just before the end of the tribulation. Jesus comes back after the tribulation. The seventh vial is the destruction of the armies of the antichrist in the valley of Meggedo. Verse 13 says that He is *“clothed with a vesture dipped in blood.”* This is the blood of the enemy. Isaiah 63:1-3 makes this clear.

When the Battle of Armageddon is over, untold millions will lie dead in the valley. An angel will command all scavenger birds to feast on the flesh of the dead. *“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all [men, both] free and bond, both small and great”* - Revelation 19:17-18.

Verse 20 says, *“And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”* The antichrist and the false prophet will live through the battle but will be captured and cast alive into the lake of fire.

In verse 21 we read of the remnant that are not killed during the Great Tribulation will be killed after Jesus returns. These too will become food for the birds.

REVELATION CHAPTER TWENTY

THEME: The One thousand year reign of Christ

KEY PHRASE: A Thousand Years

KEY VERSE: Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years, Revelation 20:6.

OUTLINE

The Millennial Kingdom, 1 - 6

The Last Rebellion, 7 - 10

The Great White Throne Judgment, 11 - 15

One of the first things Jesus will do is lay hold of the devil and cast him into the bottomless pit. He will remain in the bottomless pit for the entire 1,000 year reign. At the end of the thousand years, Satan will be set free. He will waste no time deceiving the nations of the world one last time. He will lay siege to the city of Jerusalem, and again he will be defeated. After his defeat he will be cast into the lake of fire. Also in this chapter we read of the final judgment of the unsaved dead.

VERSE BY VERSE

An angel comes down from heaven with the *“key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.”* This mighty angel lays hold of Satan, binds him with the chain, sets a seal on him, and casts him into the bottomless pit. This is probably Michael, the archangel. He is the only one we know of in Scripture whose power exceeds Satan’s. (See Rev. 13:7)

According to verse 3 he will remain in this prison for 1,000 years. Afterward, he will be *“loosed a little season.”* In the meantime, John focuses on “thrones” in verse 4.

These thrones are reserved for those who were *“beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received [his] mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years”* - Revelation 20:4. Those martyred in the tribulation will reign with the resurrected and raptured saints. However, *“the rest of the dead lived not again”* until after the 1,000 year reign of Christ. The rest of the dead are unbelievers. All believers of all ages have been resurrected by this time. The only people not resurrected are the unsaved dead. They will not be resurrected until the end of the 1,000 year reign of Christ. See verse 5.

Verse 6 says *“Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”* There are only two resurrections - the resurrection of the saved and the resurrection of the lost. (See Acts 24:15; Dan. 12:1; John 5:28-29) The first resurrection takes place in intervals. For example, Christ rose first, then the “many” after the resurrection of Christ, then the millions just prior to the rapture, then the tribulation saints, and finally the remainder of Old Testament saints.

The resurrection of all the unsaved dead will occur after the 1,000 year reign of Christ. All the unsaved dead will be raised just prior to the Great White Throne Judgment.

Verse 6 says, *“Blessed and holy [is] he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”* If you are born once you will die twice. If you are born twice you will only die once, if the Lord tarries. All who are born again will have part in the first resurrection.

Don't think it odd that only six verses are dedicated the 1,000 year reign of Christ. The Book of Revelation is not primarily about the reign of Christ; it is about the return of Christ. Suffice it to say that the reign of Christ will be time of peace and prosperity. Satan will be in the bottomless pit and Christ will rule the world in righteousness.

After the 1,000 years, however, Satan will be set free. After 1,000 years in the bottomless pit you would think Satan would have a change of heart. You would think that he would quit fighting the Son of God. He does not. The moment he is set free he will begin to *"deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom [is] as the sand of the sea"* - Revelation 20:8. He will lead this great army against Jerusalem and against Christ one last time. But fire will come down from heaven and destroy the entire army, and the devil will be cast *"into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet [are], and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever"* - Rev. 20:10.

Verse 8 has got to be one of the most mind boggling verses in the entire Bible. For 1,000 years people will live in peace. For 1,000 years Christ will rule the world. For 1,000 years there will be no devil. For 1,000 years there will be no hunger, no war, no rape, no alcohol, no drugs, no abortion, no pornography, no homosexuality, no child abuse, and no filth on television. Yet Satan will turn the people of the world against the Giver of this paradise in a very short time. How quickly we forget our blessings! How easily we are deceived! How foolish can we be? Why would God even allow Satan to be loosed at all? Any answer would be speculation. However, I believe it is so *"that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God"* - Romans 3:19. God lets Satan loose to show that even under Millennial conditions man will still not trust Christ. When the final chapter of human history is written, man will have no excuse for rejecting Christ.

Beginning in verse 11 we read of the Great White Throne Judgment. This judgment will be somewhere in out in space. Why? Because earth and heaven will flee from it. This Judgment takes place after the Millennium. At that time the remaining dead are raised and judged. Bear in mind that all people resurrected after the Millennium are part of the second resurrection; and will suffer the second death which is the lake of fire. (See verse 14).

Verse 12 tells us that among the several books by which these unbelievers are judged will be the book of life. The degree of punishment in the lake of fire will be determined by what is recorded in the books (plural). However, the one book (singular) that determines whether or not you will be saved from hell is the book of life. Not one person judged at this time will find his name in the pages of this book.

Verse 14 says, *"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."* If your name is not found written in the book of life you shall have your *"part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death"* - Revelation 21:8.

REVELATION CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

KEY THOUGHT: Eternity

KEY WORD: New

KEY VERSE: *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea,* Revelation 21:1.

OUTLINE

Eternity, 1 - 8

Eternity begins in this chapter. It speaks of a new heaven, earth and Jerusalem. The new Jerusalem is the future home of Christians. Chapter 20 tells us what will become of the lost (they will be cast into the lake of fire), and this chapter tells what will become of the saved.

VERSE BY VERSE

Verse 1 says that the first heaven and the first earth have passed away. Jesus Himself said that this would happen. *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”* - Matthew 24:35. Peter gives some insight as to what will happen. He tells us that *“the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. [Seeing] then [that] all these things shall be dissolved, what manner [of persons] ought ye to be in [all] holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat”* - 2 Peter 3:10-12? This heaven is not the home of God, but the atmospheric heaven. (See Psalm 8:3) The universe and everything in it will one day melt with fervent heat. Man will not destroy the earth with nuclear weapons; God will destroy it.

In verse 2 John see the holy city, the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. What is the New Jerusalem? It is the place Christ has prepared for us - *“I go to prepare a place for your.”* Just as an engaged man prepares a home for his bride to be; Christ is also preparing a home for us.

Verse 3 assures us that God Himself will live in this city. Life in this city will be wonderful. There will be no *“death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain”* - verse 4. Why? The former things will passed away, and all things will be made new. (See verse 5) Verses 6 to nine tell us how to escape the Great White Throne judgment, and inherit this home for all eternity. It begins with a thirst for God. Do you want forgiveness of sin? Do you want to go to heaven when you die? You can! Jesus promises to give freely the water of life to those who are thirsty.

Verse 7 says, *“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”* How do you overcome? By the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. *“And they overcame. . . by the blood of the Lamb”* - Revelation 12:11. The choice is your. Trust in Christ and your sins will be forgiven, but if you reject Jesus you will die in your sins; and those who die in their sins *“shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”* - Revelation 21:8.

From verses 9 to the end of the chapter we are given a detailed description of the new Jerusalem. The context makes it clear that we are talking about a literal city. It has a wall great and high, verse 12. There are twelve gates with each of the twelve tribes of Israel inscribed on them, verse 12. The city is foursquare with three gates on each side with an angel posted at each (See verses 12, 13, 16). The city has twelve foundations with the names of the twelve apostles inscribed in them, verse 14. The length, width, and height of the city are equal and measures 12,000 furlongs (1,500 miles, or 2,250,000 square miles), verse 16. The walls are 144 cubits thick (200'), verse 17. Some have supposed that the city is pyramid shaped. Although a pyramid would certainly fit the criteria, it does not seem fit the context. It appears as if John is describing a cube.

Verse 14 says that the city has twelve foundations. This is a twelve story building. It is much easier to see the family of God fitting into a twelve story house easier than a one story house.

There would certainly be enough living space to accommodate the family. Each floor is 2,250,000 square miles. Multiplied by 12 floors equals 27 million miles of floor space.

Verse 21 tells us that the 12 gates are made of pearl, and the streets of the city are pure gold. What a wonderful place this will be. Bear in mind, this is not heaven. This city comes down from God out of heaven.

Verse 22 says that there will not be a temple within the walls of this city. Why? because Jesus Christ will live in it and He is the Temple. The source of light is the glory of God, verse 23. Apparently the city illuminates light as well because the *“the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it”* - Revelation 21:24. Many Bible teachers believe that this city will be suspended in space above the new earth, and will afford light to the inhabitants of the earth, and very possibly the entire universe.

Verse 25 tells us that the gate of the city will never be shut. People can come and go freely. However, no unsaved person can ever hope to enter the city. The only people who will inhabit this city are those whose names *“are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”*

REVELATION CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THEME: Christ Coming for His Church

KEY PHRASE: I come quickly

KEY VERSE: He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. (Revelation 22:20)

OUTLINE:

The New Earth, 1 - 7

The Rapture of the Church, 8 - 16

The Final Invitation, 17 - 21

This is the final chapter of the Bible. It contains some promises and some warnings. In this chapter we learn more about the blessings of eternity. This chapter also speaks of the rapture (not to be confused with the return).

VERSE BY VERSE

At this time the earth will be much different. The old world will be destroyed and a new one made. (See 21:1) We know practically nothing about this new earth. It appears as if the New Jerusalem, which comes down from God out of heaven sets down on the New Earth. Referring to the New Jerusalem the Bible says, *“Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and he will dwell with them. . .”* - Rev. 21:3. Out of the throne that is situated within the New Jerusalem is a fountain of living water. *“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb”* - Revelation 22:1.

Verse 2 speaks of two trees on either side of the river that bear twelve manner of fruit. These trees yield fruit every month. And the leaves are for the healing of the nations. Notice carefully that although there will be no night in eternity (21:25), there will be months. Notice also that nations will continue to exist.

Verse 3 says that there will be *“no more curse.”* If you will remember the ground was cursed because of Adam and Eve’s sin. In eternity the ground will once again blossom as it did in Eden. There will be no pain, suffering, sin, or death; and the animal kingdom will once again become domesticated.

Verses 4 & 5 say, *“And they shall see his face; and his name [shall be] in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”* Who are they who will reign, and who will they reign? It has been suggested that perhaps God intends that His kingdom ever grow. If this is the case and He intends to use people accomplish this, then we may conclude that those born during the millennium will enter into eternity in their natural bodies. These will have the capability to reproduce just as Adam did in Eden. As the kingdom grows so will our responsibility as rulers.

Verse 6 says that Revelation will begin to unfold shortly. This means that the events recorded in Revelation would shortly begin to take place. The prophecies regarding the church age would shortly begin to come to pass. It cannot mean that the entire book of Revelation would shortly come to pass because the very words of this chapter cannot be fulfilled for at least 1,007 years from this present moment. Remember the book of Revelation is a prophecy that began when Jesus appeared to John. After John receives this information he falls down and begins to worship the angel who gave it to him. The angel rebukes him with the words *“worship God”* in verse 9. The angel then tells John not to seal (hide) the revelation because the time was at hand.

Verse 11 says, *“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”* This reveals the permanence of eternity. The unjust will always be unjust. The filthy will always be filthy. The saved will always be saved. And the righteous will always be righteous.

Three times in this chapter Jesus assures us that He is coming quickly. All three references have to do with Christ coming for His church before the tribulation begins. At that time, the dead in Christ will rise first and we which are alive and remain will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord. (See 1 Cor. 15:51-53) This becomes clear from the context of this chapter. First, verse 10 says, *“for the time is at hand.”* The time is always right for the rapture. A careful reading of 1 Cor. 15:51-53 reveals that Paul believed that Christ was going to return in his lifetime. That is because the Bible says that Jesus would come again in the last days, and the Bible clearly teaches that from the time of Pentecost we have been in the last days. Indeed the time is at hand.

Second, the verses say that He will come quickly. As we have seen the return of Christ to earth will not be quick. It will be carefully planned and executed.

Third, He says that His reward is with Him. This will be a time of rewarding. The return is a time of judgment.

Verse 17 gives a final invitation: *“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”* Here is a gospel invitation. The Spirit and the bride (church) invite you to come and take of the water of life freely. All the blessings mentioned in this book can be yours if only you will come to Christ. Trust Him today!

Verses 18 & 19 pronounce a curse upon any who would dare edit God’s word. All these new versions do just that.

Verse 20 assures us that when Jesus comes, He will come quickly. John prays these words: *“Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”* This should be the prayer of every believer. *“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ [be] with you all. Amen”* - Revelation 22:21.

Glossary

- A. **Antichrist**, in Revelation, the person who claims to be the Lord Jesus Christ
- B. **Apocalypse**, a revelation
- C. **Beast**, the antichrist and/or his kingdom
- D. **Bottomless pit**, thought by many to be hell. It is in the earth. Satan will be cast into this pit for 1,000 years
- E. **Hell**, a place of fire where all the unsaved throughout the ages go to await the day of judgment
- F. **Horsemen**, Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, Horsemen seen by John after the breaking of the first 4 seals from the little book.
- G. **Interpretation, literal**, opposite of figurative. Interpreting the Bible literally, not allegorically or figuratively
- H. **John**, Apostle and writer of Revelation
- I. **Millennium**, a future period of one-thousand years when Jesus Christ will rule the world from His capital in Jerusalem
- J. **New Earth**, literally a new earth. This earth along with the universe will melt (be destroyed) with fervent heat.
- K. **New Heaven**, a new universe.
- L. **New Jerusalem**, a city prepared by Christ for believers
- M. **Rapture**, when Jesus will appear in the sky and call every Christian out of the world. This event could happen at any moment
- N. **Revelation**, a revealing. Also refers to the second coming of Christ.
- O. **Tribulation**, a future period of 7 years in which the world's people will experience pain and suffering worse than any time throughout history.
- P. **Satan**, A spiritual being whose purpose is to oppose God
- Q. **Second coming of Christ**, when Christ comes back to earth at the end of the tribulation to rule and reign on earth. In the book of Revelation it is referred as the revelation of Christ
- R. **Seraphim**, angelic persons. These "angels" serve God around the throne.
- S. **Witnesses, Two**, To men with miraculous power who will preach during the Tribulation and seek to expose the Antichrist. They will be killed, but will rise from the dead three days later.

*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. **And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you:** whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not - 2 Peter 2:1-3.*

One mark of a false prophet is covetousness. I have seen it often. Every time there is a mid-east crisis, there is a new book that climbs the best seller list telling us that it was all predicted thousands of years ago in the Bible.

These false prophets would have us believe that because of recent archeological finds and space age technology we are now able to unlock the mysteries of Revelation. Hogwash! If it was written 2,000 years ago, it could be understood 2,000 years ago.

We have become infatuated with the "theologian", the "Greek", and the Ph.D., and in reality the vast majority have done nothing more than destroy our faith in the Word of God. We have been brainwashed into thinking that we need these false prophets to interpret the Word for us.

The Bible was meant to be taken literally. We need childlike faith. We need to approach the Scriptures with childlike faith. One thing about a child is that they take everything you say literally. Let us learn from the children.