

Revelation - Revelation Summary & Chapter 21 & 22

Revelation Summary & All Things New

Revelation Summary

The theme of the book of Revelation is Jesus is coming again soon and when He comes it will be sudden and quick to bring an end to all evil. (Rev 1:7; 22:12). Christ through His angel delivers the entire book of Revelation to John, the Apostle, in a series of visions. John is projected forward in the history of the world to witness Jesus ushering in the events that unfold the end of redemptive history and the eternal state that will follow. In keeping with His characteristic roles throughout the Bible, Jesus appears in many different forms and roles in the Book of Revelation.

The Glorified Christ - Message to the Churches

Early one Sunday morning, John is worshipping God and Jesus appears to him in all His glory. So overwhelmed with Jesus's majesty John could not even stand. Jesus did yet another incredible thing; He touched John and said, "Do not be afraid." What an incredible picture of the cross. We could not stand before God without our Friend, Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who died to save us from our sins so that we could have new life here on this earth and spend eternity with God.



No doubt John used the best descriptions he could come up with considering human words could only partially describe the gloried Jesus that stood before him (Rev 1:13-16). Christ was clothed in a long robe typically worn by royalty, prophets and high priests. He had a golden sash across His chest like the ones worn by the high priests in the Old Testament. His head and hair were white as snow, depicting the Ancient of Days, God the Father. His eyes were like a flame of fire penetrating to the very depths of His church.



His feet burnished glowing bronze, symbolizing His authority while His voice was like the sound of many waters as Ezekiel described the eternal God. He was standing in the middle of seven golden lamp stands symbolizing the churches as the lights of the world. They were golden because gold is the most precious metal and the church is God's most beautiful entity on earth. Seven is the number of completeness. In his mouth was a two-edged sword denoting judgment against enemies from inside the church. Jesus's face shone brilliantly depicting the glory of God.

Jesus dictates a letter for John to give to each of the seven churches. Jesus commends all the churches except for Sardis and Laodicea for their good deeds including service, preserving through persecution, slavery and even death due to their Christian faith. Jesus gave a series of promises to the true believers including that they would be kept

from the Tribulation Period and would have eternal life with Him and God in the new heavens and new earth.

Jesus rebuked Ephesus for having lost their love of Christ, three churches for allowing false teaching, and the church at Laodicea for being lukewarm or useless. Christ was outside this apostate church which strongly implies that there were few believers there or no believers at all.

Jesus also gave the churches a solution to keep their faith. They were to have a fresh devotion to Christ, do not fear, hold fast Biblical truths and Biblical moral standards, keep His Word, open the door and receive Christ as Lord and Savior.

These churches' issues illustrate conditions that were common in local churches at that time as well as throughout later history. They are written not only to the Churches but also to the members of the Churches, to us as individual believers.

The Throne of God

Throughout the series of visions, John sees an incredible and spectacular display of the throne and glory of God. The throne appears to be standing because it is not a physical structure but symbolic of the temple in heaven.



John sees jasper a clear stone indicating purity that will be in the foundation of the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:19-20) and carnelian a fiery blood red ruby representing Christ's blood sacrificed for the Church and God's blazing wrath about to be poured out on the rebellious world.

Jasper and carnelian are also the first and last of the 12 stones on the breastplate of the high priest garments representing all 12 tribes of Israel before the throne of God. God's covenant relationship with Israel will remain intact. There is also a green perfect circle around the throne representing eternal life.



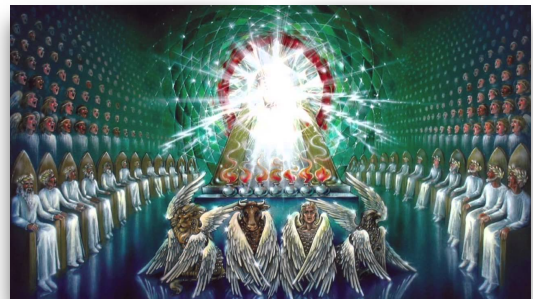
Jesus is represented in several forms including the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, the Lamb now standing as if slain before and having 7 eyes and 7 horns which are the 7 spirits of God (Rev 5:5-6).

The Holy Spirit is represented as the 7 lamps of fire burning before the throne which are the seven Spirits of God. In Heaven, John witnesses God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit

Heavenly Hymns

Around the throne of God there are 24 elders seated on 24 thrones, 4 living creatures (angels serving God also seen in the books of Ezekiel and Isaiah), a number of angels too large to count and the rest of creation.

Periodically the 4 living creatures give special glory and honor and thanks to God, the 24 elders join them in praise of recognizing God as the sovereign Creator of the universe. Casting their crowns before Him they testify had it not been for God's grace, salvation and goodness they could not have victory over sin and death; everything they had was from Him. Then for the first time since sin entered the world the angels are singing and then unable to contain their joy over their upcoming redemption all created things proclaim the blessing and praise of God and the Lamb, their honor, glory and dominion forever.

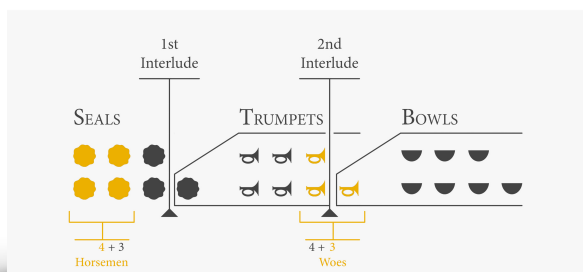


The Slain Lamb is Standing - Christ Regains His Rightful Inheritance of Earth

Christ, the slain lamb with 7 horns (which speaks of His omnipotence), 7 eyes (which speaks of His omniscience) and 7 spirits (speaks of His omnipresence) is standing and reaches out to take the scroll from God's right hand that is the title deed to the earth.



Adam and Eve turned over the dominance of the earth that God gave them to Satan (2 Pet 2:19). Christ is the only One worthy to regain His rightful inheritance and break the seven seals to redeem the world from Satan.



The seven seals on the title deed of the earth represent specific divine judgments that will be poured out sequentially on the earth. The opening of the seals occurs after the Church is raptured during the Tribulation Period (Rev 3:10).

This begins what will be a dramatic change in the course of history. Jesus will regain His rightful inheritance by the divine judgements about to be poured out on the earth. The judgements will extinguish all evil on the earth and then Jesus will return. The ultimate goal of redemption is about to be seen; paradise will be regained, Eden restored. Around the throne of God, another round of worship begins:

“And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”” (Revelation 5:9–10, NASB95)

The Lion from the Tribe of Judah - Christ Finishes the Redemption of Mankind & the Fallen Earth - Divine Judgement of Sin



Jesus, the only One worthy to open the title deed to the Earth and finish the redemption of mankind and the fallen earth, begins to break open the seals of divine wrath that signal the terrible judgements of God on the world at the end of the age, climaxing in the second coming of Jesus.

Seal Judgments

Praise ceases as Jesus begins to open the first six seals of judgements. The first four seals include horses and riders (the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse).

The first rider is on a white horse and brings about false peace when he promises a golden age of peace and prosperity. In gratitude, the world will honor him and elevate him to the position of supreme leadership. The Antichrist will make a treaty with Israel, posing as their protector and defender. Soon afterwards, however, his desire for dominance will provoke rebellion. The Tribulation period will begin with a deceptive peace accompanied by a counterfeit spirituality and false religion (1 Thes 5:3). His promises and the peace will be short lived.



The second rider on a red horse is granted by God to take away peace with world wide war. Among his victims will be many of God's people (Dan 6: 9; Matthew 24: 9). Antichrist's setting up of the abomination of desolation will touch off a massive conflict (Dan 11: 31, 36–45; 12:11; Matt 24:15). Antichrist's attempts to crush his enemies will last throughout the remainder of the tribulation.

The third seal releases a black horse bringing famine and poverty that results from warfare as food supplies are destroyed. Desolation and despair will flood the world. The fourth seal releases an ashen horse with a rider called Death. Hades followed him and

they were given authority to kill one fourth of those on the earth by sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts.

The fifth seal is God's divine judgment on those who have persecuted His people. The whole world will be worshipping Antichrist & those who don't will be considered blasphemers, persecuted and killed. Those who come to faith in Christ during the Tribulation period will face the greatest persecution the world has ever known (Matt 24:21). John sees the martyred souls under the altar, they cry out to God in a loud voice, "How long until you judge and avenge out blood?" They are given rest until it is time for God to avenge their deaths.

The sixth seal is the greatest physical destruction ever known on earth and begins with an earthquake that shakes the entire globe resulting in worldwide panic. Rather than repenting before God the peoples of the earth flee from God in frenzied fear. They will cry out to the rocks and mountains to fall on them; they would rather die than face the wrath of holy God.



The 144,000

One group of 144,000 Jews (12 from each of the 12 tribes) will be sealed symbolizing God's protection and ownership during the remaining divine judgments. They will be the most effective missionaries the world has ever seen; they will speak prophecies, see visions, and participate in miracles during the Tribulation (Joel 2:28-32).

The Great Multitude

The 144,000 are successful in their missionary work as John sees a "great multitude which no one could number, from all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb" (Rev 7:9). These are the ones who receive Jesus as Lord and Savior during the Tribulation Period. They have been martyred and are now standing triumphantly before the throne of God and serving Him. More people, both Jews and Gentiles, will come to know Christ during the Tribulation period than any other period in time.



When Jesus breaks open the seventh seal there is silence in heaven for thirty minutes in reverence to the looming judgments coming from the seven trumpets. An angel approaches the altar and mingles the prayers of the martyred saints with incense. The time has finally come to answer those desperate pleas for God's intervention.

Trumpet Judgments



God poured out His wrath as each of the seven angels sounded their trumpet. There was devastation on the earth, the sea, the waters, and the heavens. One-third of the earth's vegetation is burned, one-third of sea life is destroyed, one-third of the fresh water becomes bitter and poisonous and then one-third of the heavens become dark.

Though not directly aimed at human beings, it will indirectly affect food supplies, the global economy, and health on a massive scale. Economic chaos will result. The earth's weather patterns and the seas' tides will be severely disrupted, leading to violent, unpredictable storms and tides and the further destruction of crops, and loss of animal and human lives. Rioting, looting and crime will exacerbate the horrors experienced around the globe. The impact on human life can not be estimated.

The fifth and sixth trumpet judgments produced horrific demonic destruction of people. Satan is permanently cast down to the earth (Rev 9:1-2) and given the keys to the abyss to release the most vilest, most malicious and powerful demons onto the earth. For the first time in history, all those who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ will come under demonic possession and affliction. As the sixth trumpet sounds a total of over half of the world's population was killed (three billion using today's population count).

The Two Witnesses

Two witnesses will prophesy for exactly three-and-one half years in Jerusalem, which has become so wicked and evil in the Tribulation it is described as "Sodom and Egypt." They will preach the Gospel and pour out divine judgments upon the earth including stopping the rain for three-and-one-half years. They will be greatly hated and feared.



People will search for ways to destroy them but will not be able to until their mission is complete at the end of the Great Tribulation. God lifts their protection and they are killed by Antichrist, the beast, who is empowered by Satan. The entire world will celebrate at their deaths but it will be short lived as God brings them back to life, commands them with a loud voice from heaven to "Come up here" and then they ascend into heaven.

Sadly, many survivors will close their ears to God's message of mercy and grace rejecting the preaching of the 144,000 missionaries and the two witnesses, choosing instead to accept the wrath that will continue to increase in severity. God will use an intensifying series of judgments to capture the world's attention for the purpose of redemption.

The seventh angel blew the seventh trumpet and John hears great voices in heaven expressing unrestrained joy that the power of Satan is to be forever broken and Christ is

to reign supreme forever and ever. Some time will pass on earth before that actually happens.



Believers are promised unbroken fellowship with God forever. This fellowship is symbolized by the opening of the temple of God which is in heaven revealing the ark of His covenant. The covenant God has promised to men is now available in its fullness. This would have been unthinkable in the Old Testament temple when only the high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year (Heb 9:7). The message of the seventh trumpet is that Jesus Christ is the sovereign King.

War In Heaven

War rages in heaven between Satan and his evil angels and Michael and his angels. Michael and his angels prevail and Satan and his evil host are cast down to earth. Although not stated when this occurs perhaps it is when the Church is raptured prior to the Tribulation period or at least no later than the midpoint of the Tribulation.

A warning is given to the inhabitants of the earth that Satan has great wrath because he has only a short period of time left. Enraged by his ejection from heaven, Satan pursues and persecutes the Jews. With God's help the Jews will flee to the mountains where God will provide for His people for three and one-half years. Zechariah indicates that two-thirds of Israel in the land will perish (Zech 13:8). Satan will also step up his attack on those who name the name of Jesus as Lord and Savior.



Satan's Earthly Kingdom

Satan will try to prevent Jesus from setting up His earthly kingdom by setting up his own kingdom under Antichrist. Together with the False Prophet, they will embody the sum total of all the world empires that have opposed God and His people throughout history.



With the horrific events of the Tribulation going on people will be devoid of hope and will flock to him like desperate sheep, ready to do whatever he says. The whole world will be amazed and follow after the beast. Their fascination with Antichrist will quickly become worship. Antichrist will sit in the temple of God and declare that he is god. He will make war with the Tribulation saints on the earth. There will be a

worldwide slaughter of God's people like has never occurred in all of history (Rev 6:9-11; 7:9-17; 11:7; 17:6; Dan 7:25).

The false prophet will lead a one world religion (apostate religion) and later command the people of the earth to worship Antichrist. The world will engage in the most shocking, blatant idolatry every seen. He will cause the peoples to receive the mark of the beast or Antichrist, 666 on their right hand or forehead. No one will be able to buy or sell without it. Antichrist will control religion and the economy.

Tribulation Announcements

John sees three angels flying in mid-heaven preaching the everlasting gospel, judgment and then doom to those who do not accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The three angels deliver God's last call to repentance before the final judgments fall and Jesus returns.

Bowls of Wrath - God's Final Judgement

John sees seven angels coming out of the Holy of Holies with seven plagues, the final and worst judgments of God. Their contents are dumped all at once unleashing God's final judgment on the earth in rapid succession. The bowl judgements occur within a short period of time toward the close of the Great Tribulation.



God's final judgements are devastating to the entire earth and its inhabitants. All those who take the mark of the beast will have horrible malignant sores, everything in the sea dies and the fresh water becomes blood, the sun scorches men with fire, and the earth becomes dark. No water will be safe to drink and no rain will fall. It will seem that the atmosphere is on fire. This will cause unthinkable hardship and suffering.

Until this point, only the Antichrist has been described as blaspheming God (Rev 13:1, 5-6), but now the world adopts his evil character. Neither grace nor wrath will move their wicked hearts to repentance (Rev 9:20-21; 16:11). Sadly, this is the last reference to their unwillingness to repent.

The first five plagues were God's final offer and humanity's final opportunity for repentance. There will be no more. The bowls of wrath reveal that the minds, hearts, and wills of those who took the mark have been sealed in their sinful condition.

The sixth bowl dries up the Euphrates river preparing the way for the kings from the east to cross into Armageddon to wage war against the Lamb. The seventh bowl is poured out and a great earthquake like never seen before renovates and reconfigures the earth in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom.

The great city Babylon is now inhabited by 240 million formerly bound demons that were released at the sixth trumpet (Rev 9:13-16), the demons released from the abyss at the 5th trumpet (Rev 9:1-11), those cast from heaven with Satan (Rev 12:4,9) and those

previously on the earth. They were successful in inspiring extreme human wickedness, from sexual immorality to unbridled luxury.

John witnesses the destruction of the false religion symbolized as Babylon, the great prostitute clothed in purple and scarlet. She represents an apostate worldwide religion. At approximately the midpoint of the Tribulation, Antichrist will destroy the prostitute. He no longer wants a one world religion; he wants all to worship him. This will be the downfall of the apostate world church.

At the end of the Tribulation Period, God calls his people out of the city, just as His people were urged to leave Babylon in ancient days (Jer 51:46). Babylon's judgement is announced as a double portion because she has glorified herself and willfully sinned against God. Her judgement will come in one day and will result in Babylon's complete devastation and then she will be burned up with fire. The great city will be found no more (Rev 18:21) and will never rise again, as predicted by the Old Testament prophets (Isa 13:19-22; 14:22-23; Jer 50:13, 39: 51:37).

The Fourfold Hallelujah - Victory for the Lamb

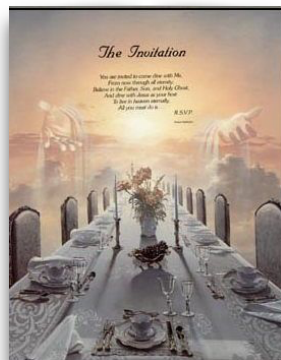
Heaven's response to the annihilation of Babylon which represents the destruction of everything that is evil and demonic in the present world system is, "Hallelujah." So loud it sounds like roaring waters and thunder it is cried out four times.

Full salvation has come, justice has arrived, rebellion is ended, and God is in control. The evil world system has been destroyed and God's kingdom has come in its fullness. For the Lord our God, the Almighty reigns.



Marriage of the Lamb

The great multitude continues to rejoice and announces that the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready wearing fine, bright and clean linen. Having been presented glorified and spotless before God's throne, her righteous acts may be part of the reward given at the judgment seat of Christ.



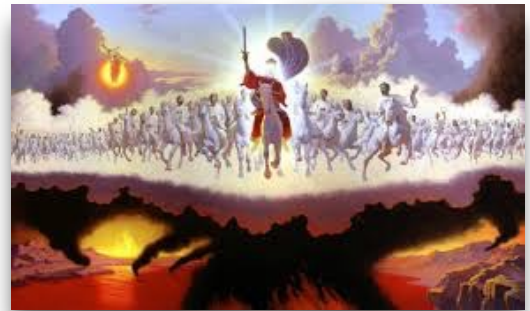
The blessing is given to those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb, the final step of marriage in the biblical world. Since the bride does not receive an invitation to her own wedding, the guests are not the Church. The guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb are the redeemed of all the ages who were saved before or after the church age. The Old Testament saints will be there as guests as will all the Tribulation saints, glorified and still alive on earth and entering the Millennial Kingdom.

At Jesus' Last Supper on this earth He said to His disciples, "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom (Matt 26:29). With the whole church glorified and united in the kingdom of God, Christ will take His seat with the saints and enjoy that long-anticipated face-to-face fellowship with those He loves.

The Second Coming of Christ

This time heaven opens not to let John in, but to let Jesus out. The time has come at last for the full, glorious revelation of Christ. Jesus is about to receive the kingdom that the Father promised Him.

The first time Jesus came to earth He appeared in obscurity. This time John sees Jesus in all His splendid glory and majesty: He is riding a white victory horse, His eyes are a flame of fire that will burn up all that is false, He wears many crowns because He is sovereign, His robe is dipped in blood representing divine judgment upon evil people, and a sharp sword is flying from His mouth.



As Christ descended in the clouds, John quickly sees that Christ was not alone. The armies in heaven dressed in fine white clean linen were following Jesus on white horses. They are probably the Church and holy angels.



Valley of Armageddon

All the armies of the world join forces to battle against the King of kings and Lord of lords at Armageddon. The beast and false prophet are thrown alive into the lake of fire and the rest were killed with Christ's sword which came from His mouth. The saints will come not to fight with Jesus, but to reign with Him. Just as He spoke the world into being, He will speak the evil out of the world. There will be no war at all, just a word spoken from Christ. Then the vultures descend and cover the scene.

The brief but catastrophic day of the Lord will result in an unprecedented slaughter, with uncounted millions of dead bodies (14:20). Even after the birds have eaten, it will still take seven months to bury the bodies (Eze 39:12). This present age reveals the grace of God and suspended judgment. The age to come, while continuing to be a revelation of the grace of God, will give conclusive evidence that God will bring every evil work into judgment and that those who spurn His grace must experience His wrath.

Millennial Reign of Christ



Six times in Revelation 20 it is stated that there will be a literal thousand years in which Christ will reign on earth. In John's vision he sees only the fact and duration of the millennial kingdom. The character of Christ's reign on earth is fully described in many Old Testament passages such as Psalm 72, Isa 2:2-4; 11:4-9 and many others.

From these Scriptures we learn that Christ's dominion is from sea to sea, Jerusalem will be the capital, Israel is regathered from the various parts of the earth

and brought back to her ancient land, Israel will be exalted and Gentiles will be blessed, the earth shall be full of the knowledge and glory of the Lord, there will be no war, there will be peace, justice, tranquility, prosperity, physical health and well being for all.

God's people will sit on thrones reigning with Christ. Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss and released at the end of the thousand years. Even though the initial inhabitants of the Millennial Kingdom will be redeemed, they will still possess a sinful nature and will pass that sin nature on to their children. Each generation born during the Millennial Kingdom will be in need of salvation. Despite the personal rule of Christ on earth, despite the most moral society the world will ever know, many will love their sin and reject Christ (Rom 8:7).

Satan will once again deceive the nations. Those who are not saved will be fertile soil for Satan to sow his seeds of rebellion. They will be as unmoved by the peace, joy and righteousness of the Millennium as earlier sinners were by the devastating judgments of the Tribulation (Rev 9:20-21;16:9,11,21).

Vast numbers will join Satan in his final rebellion against God. The rebel forces will come up on the plain surrounding Jerusalem. Like Armageddon a thousand years earlier (Rev 19:11-21), there will be no battle. Fire comes down from Heaven and destroys God's enemies. They are instantly exterminated. Satan is thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet have been for one thousand years. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever (Rev 20:10).

The Great White Throne Judgement

We now move to the most serious, sobering and tragic passage in the entire Bible. John describes a terrifying scene before him. Christ is seated on His throne of judgement and all the accused, the unsaved of all generations, are standing before Him. The verdict Jesus hands down from this throne will be absolutely just.



All the unsaved dead will be raised from the sea, the earth and Hades. They are given resurrection bodies suited for eternal punishment. They are summoned individually for their final sentence based on the book of life and the other books which are probably the divine records of their works.

The book of life will determine where they will spend eternity; their deeds will determine their degree of punishment in hell. All whose names are not recorded in the book of life were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death. Just as the new heaven and new earth are an eternal existence so is the lake of fire eternal for its inhabitants.