

# The Book of Revelation - Notes

## Introduction

### Goals

- Perform an inductive study of Revelation
- Learn proper methods of interpretation
- Consider valid applications for today

### Introduction

- Author: John, the apostle
- Audience: The bond-servants of Jesus Christ
- Date: c.a. 95 A.D.
- Genre: apocalyptic prophecy, letter/narrative
- Outline
- Major Themes
- Principles of Interpretation

### Genre

- Apocalyptic literature reveals hidden secrets through heavenly beings using esoteric symbols (e.g., Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Daniel)
- The focus of prophecy is revealing God's will for people rather than revealing the future
- Revelation is a prophetic letter and a story of the battle between good and evil

### Outline

- Introduction (1:1-20)
- The Seven Churches (2:1-3:22)
- The Seven Seals (4:1-8:5)
- The Seven Trumpets (8:6-11:19)
- The Woman & Dragon (12:1-17)
- The Two Beasts (13:1-18)
- The Great Harvest (14:1-20)
- The Seven Bowls (15:1-16:21)
- Babylon & The Beast (17:1-19:5)
- The Millennium (19:6-20:15)
- The New Jerusalem (21:1-22:5)
- Conclusion (22:6-22:21)

### Major Themes

- The sovereignty of God Almighty
  - The futility of Satan's rebellion
  - The need to repent and obey God
- Dr. Grant R. Osborne, Revelation Verse by Verse

### Four methods of interpretation

- Historicist: Covers the first century to the 2nd Coming
- Preterist: Fulfilled during the Roman Empire
- Idealist: Symbolic depiction of spiritual warfare, not literal
- Futurist: Mainly describes future events, the 2nd Coming

- Historicist: Covers the first century to the 2nd Coming

Pros: Revelation begins with a letter to first century churches and ends with the Second Coming

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Cons: There is no way to connect the letter to the seven churches with Church history

- Preterist: Fulfilled during the Roman Empire

Pros: Revelation begins with a letter specifically addressed to seven churches in the first century

Cons: Revelation ends with the Second Coming, which has not yet happened

- Idealist: Symbolic depiction of spiritual warfare, not literal

Pros: This approach is more devotional & practical, rather than wasting time on wild speculation

Cons: The letter to the seven churches deals with real people, practical matters & historical events; Jesus told John about “the things which must soon take place” (Rev 1:1 NASB)

- Futurist: Mainly describes future events, the 2nd Coming

Pros: Revelation predicts global catastrophes and the Second Coming, which have not yet happened

Cons: The letter to seven churches appears to be symbolic; there were more than seven churches at the time, the number seven is highly symbolic, and the letter appears to progress to the end time

### Conclusion

Each method is useful, but Futurist seems best. The letter to the seven churches has timeless truths for all ages, but it may also be sequential eras of Church history

### Principles of Interpretation

Prediction addiction is a spiritual pathology where people set specific dates for certain events based on questionable interpretations of prophecy

The purpose of Revelation is to encourage Christians to remain faithful, not to give us a specific a time table for end time events

### Principles of Interpretation

God gives understanding to those who obey Him

Ps 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever.

Dan 12:10 Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.

### Principles of Interpretation

Commentaries are a blessing and a curse; carefully separate the wheat from the chaff  
Scripture is the best commentary on Scripture, so let the Bible interpret the Bible whenever possible

Revelation contains up to 700 allusions to the Old Testament; understanding the Old Testament is the key to interpreting Revelation correctly

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### Principles of Interpretation

The Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha are not inspired, and they should not be used to interpret inspired Scripture

They only provide Jewish speculation from the intertestamental period about Old Testament prophecies and end time events

### Principles of Interpretation

Daniel provides the five key time periods:

Dan 9:24 - 70 heptads to finish God's plan, one left

Dan 9:27 - 7 year covenant, broken in the middle

Dan 12:7 - 1260 days of Beast authority, tribulation

Dan 12:11 - 1290 days abomination of desolation

Dan 12:12 - 1335 days consummation blessing

### Principles of Interpretation

Revelation uses literal & figurative language; visions are not always accurate descriptions of reality

Literal (adj) adhering to fact or the primary meaning of a term or expression ([www.Merriam-Webster.com](http://www.Merriam-Webster.com))

Figurative (adj) something that is not interpreted literally, but instead uses a symbol or a likeness ([www.yourdictionary.com](http://www.yourdictionary.com))

### The Book of Revelation

"When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic and fundamental truths, indicate clearly otherwise."

—Dr. David L. Cooper (1886-1965),  
founder of The Biblical Research Society

The shorter and more famous version of this saying is: "When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense, lest it result in nonsense."

### Principles of Interpretation

There are several detours in narrative of Revelation, visions that do not follow the sequential, chronological order of the rest of the book:

- Rev 7:1-17
- Rev 10:1 - 11:14
- Rev 12:1 - 14:20
- Rev 17-18

## Chapter 1

Rev 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, 2 who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. 3 Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.

### 1. This is the revelation (singular) of Jesus Christ

It is the Book of Revelation, not Revelations. It is a unified message from the Father, through Jesus Christ, to an angelic messenger, to the apostle John, and finally to God's servants (all Christians in all ages)

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets.

### 2. This concerned "things which must soon take place" (1:1)

The letter to the seven congregations (in Rev 2-3) addressed current problems and warned about impending judgment and tribulation; the other events were going to take much longer... This delay in fulfillment is typical of many Old Testament prophecies (e.g., Mal 3:1)

2Pet 3:8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.

### 3. The Book of Revelation is Scripture

Rev 1:1-2 says "all that John saw" = the word of God = the testimony of Jesus Christ  
God inspired the apostles to write and canonize the New Testament; they knew that they were writing authoritative Scripture (cf. Luke 10:7, 1Tim 5:18, 1Th 2:13, 2Pet 3:15-16). By 100 AD, most church leaders generally knew which books were genuine and authoritative, and they quoted from them extensively; they had an early canon by ~180 AD.

### 4. There is a blessing for those who read and heed (1:3)

This is the first of seven blessings within the Book of Revelation (14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6-7, 22:14). God will judge everyone according to their deeds (Rev 20:12) because faith without works is dead (James 2:17). John urges his readers to act "for the time is near" (1:3). Life is unpredictable and short compared to eternity; everyone will eventually face Judgment Day, so now is the time to act.

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood— 6 and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father—to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. God is eternal

The greeting “from Him who is and who was and who is to come” describes God’s eternity – present, past and future. The Holman Christian Standard Bible renders this more literally as “the One who is, who was, and who is coming.” Revelation 21-22 ends with the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven and a voice saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them...”

### 2. Jesus is “the firstborn of the dead” (1:5)

God raised a few people back to mortal, physical life prior to the resurrection of Jesus; they grew old and eventually died again, but Jesus is the first human being to be raised from the dead with an eternal, spiritual body making Him the firstborn of many brethren who will also become like Him (cf. Rom 8:29, 1Cor 15). A firstborn son was the head of the clan under a patriarch; Jesus is our elder brother, the clan leader of God’s people

### 3. Christians will be “a kingdom, priests to His God”

Christians will inherit an eternal kingdom (1Cor 15:50-53)

Dan 7:17 ‘These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings who will arise from the earth. 18 ‘But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.’

The job of a priest is to represent God to the people; the resurrected saints will rule over physical people during the Millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ (20:4)

Rev 1:7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen. 8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

### 1. His “coming with the clouds” is an OT allusion

Dan 7:13 “I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. 14 “And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

Acts 1:9 And after He [Jesus] had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. 11 They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 2. The Second Coming will be personal, visible

Some claim that Jesus came secretly, invisibly in 1914, but John said that every eye will see Him

Luke 17:22 Then He said to the disciples, "The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. 23 People will tell you, 'Look, there He is!' or 'Look, here He is!' Do not go out or chase after them. 24 For as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other, so will be the Son of Man in His day.

### 3. The Lord God is Alpha and the Omega

These are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet

This means there is only one God, no other

Isa 44:6 Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.'

This connection is important later...

Rev 1:9 I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, 11 saying, "Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea."

#### 1. John also suffered persecution

According to early church history, Emperor Domitian exiled John to the island of Patmos near the end of his reign. All Christians, even apostles, will suffer persecution

Jesus had said, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33)

#### 2. John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day"

There are two possible interpretations:

- He saw the Day of the Lord by the Holy Spirit (16:14)
- He fell into a trance on the Sabbath day

The first option is grammatically possible, however, the opening chapters of Revelation dealt with the current state of the seven congregations in Asia Minor, not the Day of the Lord

Prophets would often fall into a trace when the Holy Spirit gave them a vision (cf. Num 24:4, Dan 8:18, Act 11:4-5)

The Sabbath is the only day that Scripture identifies as God's special day (e.g., Lev 23:1-3)

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Apostate Christians in Rome changed the Sabbath to Sunday around 135 AD and started calling Sunday “the Lord’s Day” after John wrote Revelation. It isn’t valid to use later sources to define John’s meaning.

### 3. John is told to write a “book” (papyrus scroll)

He is to send this message to seven specific congregations in Asia Minor, modern Turkey  
The order of the seven congregations matches the route that a messenger would deliver the message; this is sequential, not random. Patmos is close to Ephesus, the first city on the list; tradition says John ministered in Ephesus after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Rev 1:12 Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands; 13 and in the middle of the lampstands I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. 14 His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15 His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. 16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

### 1. John saw a heavenly being with a human form

Dan 10:5 I lifted up my eyes, and behold, there was a certain man dressed in linen, with a belt of fine gold from Uphaz around his waist. 6 His body was like beryl, his face like the brilliance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of polished bronze, and his voice like the sound of a multitude.

Ezekiel saw a similar vision of God (cf. Ezek 1:26-28)

### 2. John also saw several symbols

- Seven golden lampstands
- Seven stars in His right hand
- A sword came out of His mouth

Rev 1:17 When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, 18 and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. 19 “Therefore write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things. 20 “As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

### 1. This heavenly being is the Lord God

He said, “I am the first and the last” (1:17)

Isa 44:6 Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.'

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Rev 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God...

2. This heavenly being is also the glorified Jesus  
He said, "I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore" (1:18)

Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament, not the Father

John 6:46 Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

Rev 1:12-18 confirms the doctrine of the Trinity

3. The seven stars are seven "angels"  
Rev 1:20 "the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches"

Angel (Greek, *angelos*) = messenger, human or spirit.

In Revelation, a star usually symbolizes a spirit, but not always (cf. 12:1, Gen 37:9)

Gen 37:9 Now he [Joseph] had still another dream, and related it to his brothers, and said, "Lo, I have had still another dream; and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.

4. The seven lampstands are the seven congregations  
Rev 1:20 "the seven lampstands are the seven churches"

Church (Greek, *ekklesia*) = an assembly, congregation.

The seven lampstands may or may not be part of a menorah

The term is not specific, so no one should be dogmatic, but it is a legitimate possibility

4. The seven lampstands are the seven congregations  
Matt 5:14 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.



## Chapter 2

Rev 2:1 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: 2 ‘I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; 3 and you have perseverance and have endured for My name’s sake, and have not grown weary.

Rev 2:4 ‘But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 ‘Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent. 6 ‘Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.’

1. The “angel” is a human messenger  
John is told, “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write”

This same phrase appears in the next six messages

The term “angel” simply means a messenger

Jesus could easily give a message to a spiritual being without telling John to write it down, therefore, this message was more likely intended for a human being, who will read it to the congregation on behalf of Jesus and John

2. Jesus gave Ephesus a mixed review

Jesus commended Ephesus for their faithful service and dedication to the truth; they clearly loved God. He rebuked them for leaving their first love and threatened to remove their congregation from His presence (serious!). They had faithful hands and heads, but not hearts.

Evidently, they had stopped loving one another.

Jesus had predicted a loss of love in the last days

Matt 24:12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold (NKJV).

By the late first century, John had to urge Christians in Asia Minor to love one another (cf. 1John 3:10-24, 4:7-21, 2John 5)

1John 3:10 By this the children of God are distinguished from the children of the devil: Anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

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### 3. Ephesus hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans

“There has been much speculation concerning the identity of the Nicolaitans, but the Scriptures do not specify who they were. They apparently were a sect wrong in practice and in doctrine” Bible Knowledge Commentary, s.v. Rev 2:5-6.

Epistles from this period and this region strongly condemn the false doctrines and practices of Proto-Gnosticism (cf. Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, 1Tim 6:20-21, 1John, 2John and Jude) This was an evil mixture of neo-Platonism and the Bible

### 4. The Holy Spirit concludes with an exhortation

Each message ends with the same exhortation: ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches...’

While each congregation received a unique message intended specifically for them, everyone should pay attention to these seven messages (i.e., the lessons are universal, timeless).

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit communicated this revelation equally; this reflects a Trinitarian mindset

### 5. Everyone who overcomes receives a promise

John explained “...I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one... and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith” (1John 2:13, 5:4)

The first promise: “I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God” (2:7)

The tree of life symbolizes the gift of eternal life.

God drove Adam and Eve out of Eden lest they “take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” (Gen 3:22)

Rev 2:8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says this: 9 ‘I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 ‘Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death.’

### 1. Jesus gave Smyrna a positive review

He commended Smyrna for their faithfulness, warned them of coming persecution and encouraged them to stay strong.

Although they were physically poor, they had treasure in heaven, so they were spiritually rich (Matt 6:19-21).

## 2. The synagogue of Satan persecuted Smyrna

Many in the first century were Jews in name only; they rejected Jesus and His message

Paul explained, "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God" (Rom 2:28-29)

Jesus told the Pharisees, "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father..." (John 8:44).

He also said, "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?" (Matt 23:33).

Many synagogues split because of the gospel, and unbelieving Jews brought intense persecution on the church.

## 3. Those who overcome receive a second promise

The second promise: "He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death" (2:11)

This refers to the destruction of the wicked in the lake of fire described in Revelation 20

Rev 2:12 "And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: The One who has the sharp two-edged sword says this: 13 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 14 'But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality.

Rev 2:15 'So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16 'Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth. 17 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

### 1. Pergamum was an evil place

Jesus described Pergamum as Satan's throne, the place where Satan dwells

It was a major center for the worship of Athena, Asclepius, Dionysus, and Zeus

"Asclepius was a god of medicine in ancient Greek religion and mythology... The rod of Asclepius, a snake-entwined staff, remains a symbol of medicine today."

Wikipedia s.v. Asclepius

## 2. Jesus gave Pergamum a mixed review

Jesus commended them for faithfulness during persecution. But, He rebuked them for tolerating those “who eat things sacrificed to idols and commit acts of immorality.”

In the Roman world, cities had trade guilds that worshipped a patron deity (cf. Acts 19:21ff); Christians who refused to join this system might be unable to buy or sell in the market place.

There would have been a strong temptation to compromise or tolerate the evil culture around them.

## 3. Jesus doesn't tolerate sin

He sternly warned Pergamum to “repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth” (2:16). This sword symbolizes divine punishment (cf. Rev 19:15); the next message (to Thyatira) illustrates this power

## 4. Those who overcome receive a third promise

The third promise: “To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it” (2:17). John described Jesus as the bread of life, the true manna that came down out of heaven (John 6). In the biblical world, naming someone or something is an assertion of lordship; God renamed Abram and Jacob to give them a new identity.

Rev 2:18 “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: The Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like burnished bronze, says this: 19 ‘I know your deeds, and your love and faith and service and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first. 20 ‘But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and leads My bond-servants astray so that they commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 ‘I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality.

Rev 2:22 ‘Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. 23 ‘And I will kill her children with pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds. 24 ‘But I say to you, the rest who are in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they call them—I place no other burden on you. 25 ‘Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come.

Rev 2:26 ‘He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; 27 AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star. 29 ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. The phrase "Son of God" is a title of divinity

There are many places where the phrase "son of God" is NOT a title of divinity (e.g., Gen 6:2, Job 38:7, Ps 82:6, Luke 3:38), but there are a few, like this one, where it is (based on the context).

John 3:18 He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Matt 28:18 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit

### 2. Jesus gave Thyatira a mixed review

He is aware of their deeds, love, faith, service & perseverance; He has been watching them (2:19). Ephesus tested false apostles, but Thyatira tolerated a false prophetess who taught them to commit acts of immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

God expects His people to test those who claim to have direct revelation from Him (cf. Deut 13, 18, Isa 8:20, 1John 4:1) and to expel those who fail to have: (1) holy character, (2) sound doctrine, and (3) authentication by miraculous signs

### 3. Jesus threatened to punish them

Because of her immorality and idolatry, He promised to throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent; He would also kill her children (disciples?) with pestilence. Jesus never tolerates sin among His people

1Cor 11:27 Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord... 30 For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep (i.e., they died)

### 4. Those who overcome receive a fourth promise

The fourth promise: He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; 27 AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES (cf. Ps 2:9)

From the time of Adam & Eve, God has allowed humans to do as they please, but during the millennial kingdom, Jesus will not overlook any disobedience or rebellion

How do we exercise authority in the church or family today?

### Chapter 3

Rev 3:1 To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. 2 'Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. 3 'So remember what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you.

Rev 3:4 'But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. 5 'He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. 6 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.'

#### 1. Jesus has the seven Spirits of God

There is only one Holy Spirit of God

Eph 4:4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all....

But, Jesus displays the seven attributes of the Holy Spirit

Isa 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

#### 2. Jesus gave Sardis a negative review

Sardis is alive in name only; they are comatose, terminal

They have forgotten what they heard, deeds are incomplete

Many have soiled garments, unrighteous deeds (cf. Rev 19:8)

They are in spiritual decline, but they can wake up

The remedy: remember, obey and repent

#### 3. Those who overcome receive a fifth promise

The fifth promise: He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels (3:5)

White garments represent the righteous deeds of Christians (19:8)

The one who doesn't overcome will have his name erased from the book of life; Christians can lose salvation (Heb 6:4-6)

Matt 10:33 But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father in heaven.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 3:7 “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says this: 8 ‘I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. 9 ‘Behold, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you.

Rev 3:10 ‘Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. 11 ‘I am coming quickly; hold fast what you have, so that no one will take your crown. 12 ‘He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name. 13 ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’

### 1. Jesus possesses the key of David

Jesus is a descendant of King David, heir to his throne

“The key of David” seems to refer to Isaiah 22:22, where the key of the house of David was given to Eliakim who then had access to all the wealth of the king.... The reference here, however, seems to be to spiritual treasures.

- Bible Knowledge Commentary, s.v. Revelation 3:7

A key unlocks a door; Jesus opens a door for Philadelphia because they have little power, can't do it themselves

### 2. Jesus gave Philadelphia a positive review

He knows their deeds; they are faithful, loyal

They have little power; He opens a door for them

He loves them; they have persevered

Because they are faithful, He will deliver them from “the hour of testing” that is coming on every habitation (global?)

This is similar to other promises (Ps 5:12, 34:19, 1Cor 10:13)

Is it possible to escape the Great Tribulation? Yes!

### 3. Those who overcome receive a sixth promise

The sixth promise: I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, and My new name.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

1Pet 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Writing a name on someone or something denotes ownership or dedication, which corresponds with receiving the mark of the Beast (cf. Is 44:5; Rev 13:17; 14:1)

Rev 3:14 “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this: 15 ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. 16 ‘So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. 17 ‘Because you say, “I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,” and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked

Rev 3:18 I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. 19 ‘Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 20 ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 21 ‘He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 22 ‘He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’”

### 1. Jesus is the archē of the creation of God

Rev 3:14 Καὶ τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῆς ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ ἐκκλησίας γράψον·  
Τάδε λέγει ὁ Ἀμήν, ὁ μάρτυς ὁ πιστὸς καὶ ἀληθινός, ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς  
κτίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ·

The Greek term archē is hard to translate:

- NIV: the ruler of God's creation
- HCSB: the Originator of God's creation

The Holy Spirit may have intended both meanings since Jesus created (John 1:3) and rules all things (cf. Rev 1:5, 3:14)

### 2. Jesus gave Laodicea a negative review

Laodicea was tepid, neither cold nor hot (i.e., worthless)

Jesus promised to spit them out (reject them)

Laodicea was self-satisfied and self-righteous

Jesus rebuked them and demanded zealous repentance

Gold refined by fire = faith refined by trial (1Pet 1:6-7)

White garments = righteous deeds of the saints (Rev 19:8)

Eye salve for spiritual blindness = repentance, faith (Eph 4:18)



## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 3. Those who overcome receive a seventh promise

The seventh promise: He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne (3:21).

Jesus overcame the temptations of the world, the flesh and the Devil; He calls on His people to do likewise

Those who do will share His authority over the nations (cf. 2:26)

Most of these congregations were failures; salvation isn't guaranteed (Matt 7:13)

- Ephesus: Negative review, needed love
- Smyrna: Positive review
- Pergamum: Negative review, needed truth
- Thyatira: Negative review, needed faithfulness
- Sardis: Negative review, needed zeal
- Philadelphia: Positive review
- Laodicea: Negative review, needed repentance

Is there chronological sequence here?

- Ephesus: Jesus threatened to remove their lampstand (ended?)
- Smyrna: He urged them to be faithful unto death (died out?)
- Pergamum: He would wage war against them (ended?)
- Thyatira: They must hold on until He comes (very long wait?)
- Sardis: He will come upon them like a thief (long wait?)
- Philadelphia: He will come quickly, keep them from global tribulation
- Laodicea: He is knocking at the door, need gold refined in fire

## Chapter 4

Rev 4:1 After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." 2 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. 3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance.

### 1. John now sees a completely new vision

Like other prophets, John saw a series of different visions over a period of time each with unique symbols and meanings.

The first vision addressed the state of the seven churches.

Here, John sees a depiction of God's throne in heaven.

We can't assume that this is an accurate depiction of reality!

### 2. The visions appear to be sequential

John heard a voice say, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things." This implies that the visions are in a chronological sequence.

Why would God discuss the state of only seven churches in the first century and then jump forward 2000 years to the Second Coming without discussing events in between?

Do the seven churches represent seven sequential ages?

### 3. John's vision is similar other OT visions

Isaiah 6:1 God is seated on His throne (4:2)

Ezek 1:4 Flashes of lightning from the throne (4:5)

Ezek 1:28 A rainbow around the throne (4:3)

Rev 4:4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads. 5 Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

### 1. John sees 24 elders around the throne

The text does not identify these "elders" (a term of dignity)

They sit on thrones near God = they have great authority

They are clothed in white = righteous deeds (19:8)

They have golden crowns (Greek, stephanos)

"The crowns were similar to those given victors in Greek games (stephanos), in contrast with the crown of a sovereign ruler (diadēma, "diadem")." Bible Knowledge Commentary s.v. Rev 4:4

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 2. John sees the seven Spirits of God

Rev 4:5b And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God

This is a symbol of the sevenfold Holy Spirit (cf. 1:4, 3:1, 5:6)

This is similar to the seven branched menorah in the Temple

This is also similar to the tongues of fire that appeared on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)

Christians are able to be a light to the world by indwelling of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1:20)

Rev 4:6 and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind. 7 The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face like that of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. 8 And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME."

Rev 4:9 And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

### 1. John sees four living creatures

This is also similar to earlier Old Testament visions

Ezek 1:5 Four living creatures around the throne (4:6)

Ezek 1:10 Faces like a man, lion, ox and eagle (4:5)

Isaiah 6:2 Seraphim covered with six wings (4:8)

Isaiah 1:3 Crying, "Holy, holy holy is the Lord" (4:8)

They are covered with eyes = they see everything

### 2. This vision reveals God's attributes

He is worthy of glory and honor and thanks (4:9)

He is eternal; He lives forever and ever (4:9)

He is worthy of worship (4:10)

He is worthy of glory and honor and power (4:11)

He has created all things because of His will (4:11)

Conclusion: God has the authority to rule His Creation and judge all people as revealed here

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### Chapter 5

A voice told John to write the following things in a book:

The things you have seen (1:19)

Revelation 1: Vision of the seven lampstands

The things that are (1:19)

Revelation 2: Message to the first four churches

Revelation 3: Message to the last three churches

The things that will happen after this (1:19)

Revelation 4: John sees God's throne in heaven

Revelation 5: John sees a scroll with seven seals

Revelation 4-5 is a transition from John's time to the future, from the earthly to the heavenly. It introduces the main theme of the book, God's plan for the future written on a sealed scroll.

Rev 5:1 I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals. 2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?" 3 And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. 4 Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; 5 and one of the elders said to me, "Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals."

#### 1. John sees a book with seven seals

This is a papyrus or parchment scroll, not a modern book with bound pages and hard covers.

It is the message from God to Jesus then to John (1:1)

It is sealed with seven seals, symbolizing the full revelation of God's message (1:1-3)

They also represent 7 judgments

#### 2. Only one Person can open the book

He is the Lion from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David (5:5)

Both descriptions refer to Jesus Christ

A lion is strong and powerful, the king of the beasts (royalty)

The pre-incarnate Jesus created Adam, so He is the source or root of David's family (Col 1:16)

Jesus is also a descendent of David through His human mother (cf. Isa 11:1, 10, Rev 22:16)

Rev 5:6 And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. 7 And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. 8 When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. John sees a strange, symbolic Lamb

The Lamb appears to be slain but is standing; Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29); Jesus was dead but has come to life again (2:8)

The Lamb has seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth (5:6)

The number seven is associated with completion and perfection; animals use their horns as weapons, so horns became a symbol of strength and power in ancient Israel (1Kgs 22:11)  
So, Jesus has complete strength, perfect power

The seven eyes are the seven Spirits of God (5:6)

Jesus has the seven attributes of the Spirit (Isa 11:2)

Seven eyes imply that Jesus is all-seeing (cf. Zech. 3:9; 4:10)

2Chr 16:9 For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His...

1Cor 2:10b The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God

### 2. John sees a representation of the Trinity

God the Father is on the throne of heaven (4:10-11)

God the Son appears as the slain Lamb (5:5)

God the Holy Spirit appears as seven burning lamps (4:5)

John's salutation is also very Trinitarian:

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace, from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness....

### 3. Incense represents the prayers of the saints

The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders hold golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints (5:8)

The prayers of righteous people ascend to God like a cloud of fragrant incense (cf. 8:3)

Ps 141:2 May my prayer be counted as incense before You; the lifting up of my hands as the evening offering.

Rev 5:9 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. 10 "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. Christians will be kings and priests

Rev 5:10a You have made them [Christians] to be a kingdom and priests to our God

Christians are citizens of God's kingdom now (Php 3:20)

Christians offer sacrifices of praise, intercessory prayers

Resurrected Christians will inherit an eternal kingdom, the Kingdom of God (cf. Dan 7:18, 1Cor 15:50-53)

A priest is God's representative to the people; resurrected Christians will show humanity what God is like

### 2. Christians will rule on the earth

Rev 5:10b and they [Christians] will reign upon the earth

Matt 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matt 5:5 Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

Heaven is not the reward of the saved

The Earth is where the action is, focus of God's plan

Rev 5:11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." 13 And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." 14 And the four living creatures kept saying, "Amen." And the elders fell down and worshiped.

### 1. There are lots of angels

Rev 5:11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them [i.e., the angels] was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands

The Bible doesn't give us an exact number of all these heavenly servants, but myriads of myriads would imply tens or possibly hundreds of millions

The Bible calls God the Lord of hosts, which is a large army

### 2. The Kingdom of God is not a democracy

Every created thing cries out, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever" (5:13)

There is one supreme power in the universe

Do we give God praise, honor, glory and obedience today?

## Chapter 6

Revelation 6 covers six of the seven seals

- The First Seal = the White Horse
- The Second Seal = the Red Horse
- The Third Seal = the Black Horse
- The Fourth Seal = the Pale Horse
- The Fifth Seal = Martyrdom
- The Sixth Seal = Supernatural Signs

Revelation 6 deals with the signs of the Second Coming

It matches the Olivet Prophecy of Matt 24, Mark 13 & Luke 21

Rev 6:1 Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come." 2 I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

### 1. The First Seal = the White Horse, a Counterfeit Savior

This rider sits on a white horse; he has a bow and a crown (Greek, *stephanos*), and he goes forth conquering. Many people confuse this counterfeit savior with Jesus because he comes on a white horse and conquers. But, in Revelation 19:11-16, Jesus has a sword and many diadems (Greek, *diadéma*) on His head. The former is a crown of victory; the latter is a royal crown. This counterfeit messiah is victorious in a religious crusade

This is consistent with first sign in the Olivet Prophecy

Matt 24:3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" 4 And Jesus answered and said to them, "See to it that no one misleads you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many.

1Thes 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. 8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

Dan 9:27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

A European leader will establish a 7 year treaty with many people (the final heptad of the 70 Weeks prophecy) then break it after ~3.5 years, ending Jewish sacrifices (cf. Dan 9:26)

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 6:3 When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, "Come." 4 And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.

### 2. The Second Seal = the Red Horse, War

Red is the color of blood; this rider has a great sword, and he causes men to slay one another

This is the second sign listed in the Olivet Prophecy

Matt 24:6 You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom...

Dan 11:40 "At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through.

Earlier in Daniel 11, the king of the South was the Ptolemaic dynasty located in Egypt; the king of the North was the Seleucid dynasty that ruled over Syria until the Roman Empire defeated and replaced this kingdom in 64 BC

Dan 11:41 "He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many countries will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.

The Beautiful Land is a reference to Israel, the Holy Land  
The ancient territory of Edom, Moab and Ammon is Jordan

Dan 11:42 "Then he will stretch out his hand against other countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. 43 "But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians [Cushites] will follow at his heels. Egypt, Libya and Sudan have large deposits of oil and natural gas; Egypt and Ethiopia control the Red Sea shipping lanes that pass through the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aden

Rev 6:5 When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, "Come." I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. 6 And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine."

### 3. The Third Seal = the Black Horse, Famine

This rider has a pair of scales to measure out small quantities of food in exchange for a denarius, the wage for a day of work. He is not to "damage" (act unjustly with) the oil & the wine (perhaps, cheating customers by diluting these).

This is the next sign in the Olivet Prophecy

Matt 24:7b ...and in various places there will be famines....



Rev 6:7 When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come." 8 I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

#### 4. The Fourth Seal = the Pale Horse, Death

NIV, ESV translate the Greek term *hippos chlōros* as a pale horse, while the NET, NLT call this a pale green horse; this is the zombie horse of the apocalypse. The rider is Death personified; Hades is a Greek term for the grave. They kill a quarter of the earth at one time with war (red horse), famine (black horse), pestilence (pale green horse) and wild beasts.

God sends these 4 horsemen as judgments on a sinful world

Rev 6:9 When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; 10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" 11 And there was given to each of them a white robe; and they were told that they should rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.

#### 5. The Fifth Seal = Martyrdom

This seal is also the next event predicted in the Olivet Prophecy

Matt 24:9 Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. 10 At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.

Clearly, Jesus will NOT remove these Christians from the earth in a secret Rapture prior to the Tribulation; they will suffer hatred, persecution and martyrdom

This is a vision; the images are symbolic, not literal. An altar is a symbol of sacrifice; the ashes and bones of animal sacrifices accumulated at the bottom, underneath the grating. The souls of those who died for the truth are under the altar to show that they are currently in the grave. Symbolically, they cry out for justice just as Abel's blood cried out for justice after Cain killed his brother (cf. Gen 4:10).

The Bible clearly says that the dead are unconscious in grave

Eccl 9:5a The living at least know they will die, but the dead know nothing. (NLT)

Eccl 9:10 Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave, there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom. (NLT)

Pss 115:17 The dead do not praise the LORD, Nor do any who go down into silence

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

The Bible compares death to sleep or rest (Dan 12:2, 1Thes 4:15)

The martyrs are told to rest a little while longer (6:11)

Dan 12:13 But as for you [Daniel], go your way to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise again for your allotted portion at the end of the age.

Rev 14:13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

Dan 7:23 Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. 24 As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. 25 He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

Rev 6:12 I looked when He broke the sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood; 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind. 14 The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

Rev 6:15 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; 16 and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

### 6. The Sixth Seal = Supernatural Signs

Jesus also predicted these events in the Olivet Prophecy

Matt 24:7b ...and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

Luke 21:10 Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, 11 and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven.

The world will know that Jesus is coming but refuse to repent

## Chapter 7

Key End Time events listed in Daniel and Revelation:

- 10 kings arise in Europe, then a counterfeit messiah
- He makes a 7 year treaty, Jewish sacrifices resume
- The king of the South attacks him; he counter-attacks
- He occupies Israel, conquers 3 kings - Egypt, Libya, Sudan
- War, famine & plague kill 25% of humanity
- He ends Jewish sacrifices after three and a half years
- He persecutes God's people for three and a half years
- God sends supernatural signs that the end is near

Revelation 6 describes the first six seals in rapid succession

Revelation 7 slows down the action to provide some details

Revelation 6 ends with the people of the earth, the mighty and the weak alike, hiding in caves because of the supernatural signs, crying out to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (6:12-16)

Revelation 7 answers the question: "Who is able to stand?"

Rev 7:1 After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, so that no wind would blow on the earth or on the sea or on any tree. 2 And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, 3 saying, "Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads."

1. John sees four powerful angels

They are standing at the four main compass points

They have power to harm the earth, the sea & trees

They are restraining the forces of powerful storms

They are waiting for the sealing of God's servants

2. Another angel comes with a seal

He marks the foreheads of God's servants with the name of the Lamb and name of His Father (cf. 14:1). This denotes God's ownership and protection just as He saved the firstborn in Egypt by the blood of the Passover lamb or Rahab and her family by the scarlet cord in the window when the walls of Jericho collapsed.

This is similar to the mark given to God's people in Ezekiel 9

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Ezek 9:1 Then He cried out in my hearing with a loud voice saying, “Draw near, O executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand.” 2 Behold, six men came from the direction of the upper gate which faces north, each with his shattering weapon in his hand; and among them was a certain man clothed in linen with a writing case at his loins. And they went in and stood beside the bronze altar. 3 Then the glory of the God of Israel went up from the cherub on which it had been, to the threshold of the temple. And He called to the man clothed in linen at whose loins was the writing case.

Ezek 9:4 The LORD said to him, “Go through the midst of the city, even through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which are being committed in its midst.” 5 But to the others He said in my hearing, “Go through the city after him and strike; do not let your eye have pity and do not spare.”

God spared His servants from His punishment of Jerusalem  
Do we mourn over sin, cry out for God’s kingdom to come?

Rev 7:4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: 5 from the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, 6 from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, 7 from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, 8 from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed.

1. The angel seals 144,000 Israelites

The angel seals 12,000 from 12 tribes of Israel. In verse 8, the tribe of Joseph refers to Joseph’s chief son Ephraim in addition to the tribe of Manasseh in verse 6 (cf. Num 1:10)

They are sealed to protect them from God’s wrath; they are on the earth where the four angels are destroying

This passage is speaking of literal Israelites; there is no basis to claim that this is a symbolic reference to the Church

2. The tribe of Dan is missing

For some reason, God decided not to include Dan  
God fore-ordained this outcome by His sovereignty

The Patriarch Jacob gave this prophecy about Dan:

Gen 49:17 Dan shall be a serpent in the way, A horned snake in the path, That bites the horse’s heels, So that his rider falls backward. 18 For Your salvation I wait, O LORD.

Dan is listed among the tribes during the Millennium in Ezek 48:6

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 3. This represents a major turning point

Rom 11:25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.”

At this point, the fullness of the Gentiles is complete, and the salvation of all Israel during the Millennium is at hand. The 144,000 are the first fruits of this End Time harvest.

Rev 7:9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; 10 and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, “Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.”

1. John sees a great multitude of Gentile Christians  
They represent every nation, tribe and language group  
They are clothed in white symbolizing righteousness  
They worship God and the Lamb; they are believers

They appear to represent the fullness of the Gentiles that Paul predicted in Rom 11:25

They illustrate how many people will be saved during the Great Tribulation: 144,000 Israelites and a great multitude of Gentiles

2. They are holding palm branches in their hands  
God commanded the Israelites to use palm branches during the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles

Lev 23:40 Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.

Israelites wave palm branches during the festival as a symbol of rejoicing just as Americans wave flags on July 4th

That is why people waved palm branches when Jesus rode into Jerusalem before His crucifixion; they expected a messianic king

John 12:13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!” (ESV)

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 7:13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?" 14 I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 "For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them. 16 "They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

1. This vision is associated with the Feast of Tabernacles

God told Israel to gather palm branches and live in tabernacles for 7 days during the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:39-44)

God will require Gentile nations to keep the Feast of Tabernacles after the Great Tribulation (Zech 14:16-17)

The great multitude are Gentile Christians standing before God's throne with palm branches in their hands (7:9)

God will spread His tabernacle (Gk skene) over them (7:15)

2. The great multitude are probably sealed

John doesn't explicitly say that the angel also seals the great multitude, but the context seems to imply it (7:3)

They are clearly Christians because they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb (a metaphor of redemption)

If there are Israelite Christians on the earth at the end of the Great Tribulation, there should also be some Gentile Christians, and if the angel sealed the former, he should seal the latter

They would both need protection from the coming wrath of God

3. The great multitude are not martyrs

Some scholars suggest that the great multitude are martyrs who died during the great tribulation, but John saw the martyrs under the altar, not standing before the throne (6:9-11)

The elder also told John that "these are the ones who come out of the great tribulation" (7:14) using a Greek present middle participle, which implies that they survived the great tribulation and are coming out of it; the text doesn't say that they have died (past perfect) or that they were killed (past passive).

4. The great multitude are not dead saints in heaven

Some claim that the great multitude must have died earlier and gone to heaven because they are standing before God's throne, but this is based on the unbiblical Immortal Soul doctrine. Jesus clearly said, "No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man" (John 3:13)

Acts 2:34 "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, 35 UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'"

5. The great multitude are not post-Rapture saints

Others claim that the great multitude are Christians who go to heaven in a Pre-Tribulation or Mid-Tribulation Rapture

But, this can't be a Pre-Tribulation Rapture because the great multitude are coming out of the great tribulation

They haven't avoided it; they have gone through it

This can't be a Mid-Tribulation Rapture because the fifth and sixth seals are already past; the seventh seal deals with the end of the Great Tribulation when Jesus destroys the Anti-Christ

The Book of Revelation does favor a Post-Tribulation Rapture

But, there is no evidence so far in Revelation 1-7 that the last trumpet has blown and first resurrection has occurred; there is no mention of graves being opened or the dead rising to meet the Lord in the air (cf. 1Th 4:16-17, 1Cor 15:50-53)

Those events come later in the Book of Revelation after the opening of the seventh seal

6. The vision may be metaphoric or proleptic

It is possible that the great multitude are standing before the throne of God in a metaphoric or proleptic sense

Heb 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Eph 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus (NIV)

Washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb is metaphoric (7:14)

The vision of the great multitude is very similar to the description of the new heaven and the new earth at the end of Revelation

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

They are before God's throne and serve Him in His temple (7:15)

Rev 22:3b The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city (New Jerusalem), and his servants will serve him (NIV)

God will spread His tabernacle (Gk skene) over them (7:15b)

Rev 21:3a A great voice says: "Behold, the tabernacle (skene) of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them" (BLB)

They will no longer suffer from hunger, thirst or heat (7:16)

Rev 21:4b there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.

The Lamb will guide them to springs of the water of life (7:17)

Rev 21:6b I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost

God will wipe every tear from their eyes (7:17)

Rev 21:4a and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes

The vision of the great multitude may be a preview of the new heaven and the new earth that isn't in chronological order

The Book of Revelation is arranged in a very sequential order: seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls

But, there are very few references to time; some scholars believe that many of these events overlap in time

Many biblical prophecies appeared to be chronological but were fulfilled in a very different order (e.g., Daniel's 70 Weeks)

### Conclusion

The great multitude are probably Gentile Christians who survive the Great Tribulation and are sealed to protect them from the wrath of God and the Lamb

Revelation 6 ends with people crying out to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?" (6:12-16)

Rev 7 gives the answer: the 144,000 and the great multitude



## Chapter 8

Rev 8:1 When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. 5 Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.

### 1. The Lamb opens the seventh and last seal

Although the number seven usually symbolizes completion, the story doesn't end; instead, this seal leads to a new phase. The half hour of silence adds tension and drama to the narrative as the reader senses the calm before the coming storm. This pause might indicate that God is giving people a chance to avoid further punishment by repenting of their sins.

Seven angels receive seven trumpets, which are the next phase of judgment and punishment.

### 2. Another angel offers incense

In Rev 5:8, the incense in the golden bowls of the 24 elders symbolized the prayers of the saints. Here, incense is mixed with prayers of the saints like a blend of fragrant spices and frankincense (cf. Ex 34:34-36). The smoke of this incense goes up before God, symbolizing that the prayers of godly people reach God like a pleasant smell. This scene reminds us that evil has not prevailed; although some may not repent, there are others who fear and worship God.

### 3. This vision is connected with the Day of Atonement

One day each year, on Yom Kippur, the High Priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies under a cloud of incense

Lev 16:12 He [Aaron] shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon the altar before the LORD and two handfuls of finely ground sweet incense, and bring it inside the veil. 13 He shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the ark of the testimony, otherwise he will die.

### 4. The angel casts fire to the earth

The angel filled his censer with hot coals from the altar and threw them to the "earth" (Gk, *gein*). The Greek term could refer to the floor under the altar or (more likely) to this planet and the sinners on it. In literature, this is called foreshadowing; it is an omen of things to come when the first trumpet blows.

Rev 8:6 And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them. 7 The first sounded, and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. Trumpets are an important biblical symbol

In ancient times, Israelites used trumpets made of metal or animal horns for different events (Num 10:1-10, 2Kgs 9:13)

- To call the people to an assembly (The Rapture)
- To announce the start of a battle (Armageddon)
- To announce the start of holy days (Rosh Hashanah)
- To announce the coming of the king (Jesus Christ)

In Revelation, each of these has an End Time connotation

Israel marched around Jericho once a day for six days

Jesus broke six seals as He unrolled the scroll

Israel marched around Jericho 7 times on the last day

Jesus broke the 7th seal to reveal 7 trumpet plagues

The 7 priests blew their 7 trumpets to destroy Jericho

Seven angels blow 7 trumpets to destroy Satan's kingdom

Joshua established God's kingdom over Canaan

Yeshua (Jesus) will establish God's kingdom over the earth

### 2. The first trumpet burns up a third of the earth

This is similar to the plague of hail on Egypt

Ex 9:23 Moses stretched out his staff toward the sky, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire [lightning] ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail on the land of Egypt.

Instead of bringing rain, this trumpet plague burns up a third of the earth, which sounds more like a massive meteor shower. This would be consistent with image of the angel casting hot coals from the altar to the earth (8:5)

Rev 8:8 The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood, 9 and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.

#### 1. The second trumpet destroys a third of the sea

John sees something like a great mountain burning with fire being thrown into the sea. The passive verb indicates God's hand in this event.

This could be a large meteor entering the atmosphere; a meteor one kilometer wide would hit the earth with the force of 60,000 megatons of TNT (equal to a 9.4 magnitude earthquake) and produce an impact crater 20 kilometers wide (12 miles)

Three quarters of the earth's surface is covered with water. A large meteor impact would likely hit an ocean. This would destroy marine life on massive scale and produce tidal waves that would sink many ships. The atmosphere would be filled with smoke and falling debris as the sea boiled and churned.

2. This is similar to the plague of blood on Egypt

The Egyptians murdered the infant sons of the Israelites by casting them into the Nile. God punished the Egyptians for their sin by turning the Nile into blood so there was no water to drink. The Egyptians worshipped the Nile as a god, but the God of Israel proved His power over nature by cursing the Nile. The second trumpet plague also displays the power of the God of Israel over nature and the false gods of this world.

Rev 8:10 The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters. 11 The name of the star is called Wormwood; and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.

1. The third trumpet poisons a third of the fresh water

John sees a star fall from heaven like a burning torch. The text isn't clear if this "star" is a natural or supernatural object (i.e., an angel). This sounds like a comet, meteor or man-made object entering the atmosphere. Many people die from the contaminated water

2. The star is called Wormwood

"Wormwood is a bitter desert plant mentioned only here in the New Testament. It is mentioned seven times in the Old Testament where it represents sorrow and bitter judgment (Deut. 29:18; Prov. 5:4; Jer. 9:15; 23:15; Lam. 3:15, 19; Amos 5:7)"

Bible Knowledge Commentary, s.v. Rev 8:10-11

Wormwood is potentially poisonous (thujone). Missiles and satellites contain toxic compounds

Rev 8:12 The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way. 13 Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in mid-heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"

1. The fourth trumpet darkens a third of the heavens

God is systematically eliminating one third of the environment. This darkness may be caused by a massive amount of dust, soot and gas ejected into the lower atmosphere. A thick haze would obscure the horizon. This will have a devastating impact on plants and plankton at the bottom of the food chain. Temperatures would drop until CO2 levels rise. This plague is similar to the Exodus plague.

2. The last three trumpet plagues will be worse

Eagles don't speak, so this is either supernatural or symbolic. The next three plagues are so bad, they are called woes. The threefold repetition is a literary technique for emphasis. God is pleading with the world, trying to get people to listen. What would God need to do to get our attention?

## Chapter 9

Rev 9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. 2 He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Rev 9:4 They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 5 And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man. 6 And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them.

### 1. John sees a mysterious star with a key

This “star” had fallen (Greek perfect active participle) from heaven to the earth and he was given (past passive) the key of the pit of the Abyss. The term “star” is clearly symbolic for a supernatural being; the text implies that this is a demon or Satan (he had fallen). The passive voice of “was given” shows that he isn’t in control; someone is giving him the ability to open the pit (i.e., God). The key (definite) implies there is only one key to open the pit.

The “Abyss” (abussos) is the home of demons (cf. Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3; in Rom. 10:7 it is translated “deep”), Bible Knowledge Commentary, s.v. Rev 9:1-6.

2Pet 2:4 For if God didn't spare angels when they sinned, but cast them down to Tartarus, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved for judgment (WEB)

In Greek mythology, Tartarus was a place of punishment under the earth to which the Titans were sent (HELPS Word-studies)

### 2. The fifth trumpet brings demonic torment

The language appears to be highly symbolic, supernatural. The star opens the Abyss releasing smoke and “locusts.” Locusts usually devour plants; these sting like scorpions. Power “was given” to sting; they don’t control the action. They aren’t allowed to harm any plants or trees, which by now are recovering from the earlier fires of Revelation 8.

They are only allowed to sting those who aren’t sealed, which means God’s servants are protected (7:3). The “locusts” aren’t allowed to kill anyone; God is giving people a chance to avoid eternal damnation. They have power to torment people for five months; this implies that the 1260 days of the Great Tribulation are nearly over. Five months is the lifespan of a locust and the duration of the harvest from April – August (Osborne, Revelation, pg. 161-2).

The sting is like that of a scorpion, very painful but not lethal. A scorpion sting is several times as powerful as a wasp (Ibid).

The victims will long to die, but death will elude them (9:6). They may be temporarily paralyzed, unable to use their arms or legs to commit suicide while they suffer. Evidently, they recover before they starve to death only to be stung again and again during the 5 months.

Rev 9:7 The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 8 They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. 9 They had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle. 10 They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months. 11 They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon. 12 The first woe is past; behold, two woes are still coming after these things.

### 1. Locusts have a strong connection with the Old Testament

Ex 10:12 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up on the land of Egypt and eat every plant of the land, even all that the hail has left."

In Joel 1-2, a horde of locusts with teeth like lions strip the land; they look like war horses and sound like many chariots

Amos 4:9 "I struck your farms and vineyards with blight and mildew. Locusts devoured all your fig and olive trees. But still you would not return to me," says the LORD. (NLT)

### 2. The locusts from the Abyss have a hideous appearance

The 4 living creatures around the throne of God all possess a powerful yet majestic appearance (man, eagle, ox and lion). The locusts from the Abyss serve the powers of darkness and have a corresponding hideous, demonic appearance. They have the golden *stephanos* crown of victory, human faces, long hair (1Cor 11:14), lion teeth, iron breastplates and tails like scorpions. They are supernatural creatures, not modern weaponry.

### 3. The locusts from the Abyss have a king

John says that his Hebrew name is Abaddon and his Greek name is Apollyon; both mean the Destroyer. This may be a synonym for Satan or it may refer to a subordinate. John's use of Hebrew and Greek show that Jewish Christians still make up a large portion of the early church. It is also internal literary evidence that the Apostle John wrote the Book of Revelation.

Rev 9:13 Then the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, 14 one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." 15 And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind. 16 The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. The sixth trumpet plague releases four angels

John hears a voice from the four horns of the golden altar; this is a literary clue that the vision is symbolic, NOT literal.

The voice tells the sixth angel to “release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates” (9:14). Based on what happens next, the four angels (messengers) are probably supernatural beings; the fact that they are bound implies that they are demonic spirits located in the area of the ancient kingdom of Babylon.

### 2. The sixth trumpet plague also unleashes a huge army

The four angels were released (passive); God is in control. They had been prepared (passive) for this specific hour, day, month and year; God planned this thousands of years ago. They use armies (plural) numbering 200 million “horsemen.”

The four horsemen killed a quarter of humanity (6:8); the four angels will kill a third of those who remain. At least 50% of humanity will die within seven years.

Rev 9:17 And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: the riders had breastplates the color of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone. 18 A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths. 19 For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm.

### 1. John attempted to describe the horsemen

The riders have red, blue and yellow breastplates. The horses have heads like lions and tails like snakes; they have power in their mouths and tails to harm people, and they spew fire, smoke and brimstone from their mouths.

The text isn't clear if John was accurately describing a symbolic vision or if he was using figurative language to describe a literal army, so it would be foolish to waste time speculating about it. The main point of the vision is the impact it has on humanity.

### 2. The sixth trumpet plague kills many people

The sixth trumpet plague doesn't just torment people with pain; the fire, smoke and brimstone coming from the mouths of the “horses” kills a third of mankind (9:18).

God uses this plague to kill those who refuse to submit to His authority; He will not allow rebels to exist in His kingdom. Time is running out for people to repent.

Heb 3:15 As it is said, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion” (ESV).

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 9:20 The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; 21 and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.

### 1. People still refuse to repent

Even though God sends overwhelming proof of His existence and the truth of His message, most people don't want salvation. This excludes the 144,000 and the innumerable multitude, who have already been sealed to protect them.

Matt 7:13 Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

### 2. God lists their sins

Idolatry and false religion, which is demon worship

1Cor 10:19 What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? 20 No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons.

2Cor 11:13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

Most of Christianity today is recycled paganism, Satan worship

#### Murder

Over the past 100 years, the death rate from war and murder have been declining with one notable exception - abortion

#### Sorceries

This includes Satanism, witchcraft, astrology, good luck charms, amulets, séances, Ouija boards, channeling, New Age crystals, Feng shui, transcendental meditation, Kabbalah, etc.

#### Sexual Immorality

This includes adultery, fornication, prostitution, pornography, voyeurism, incest and perversion (cf. Lev 18, Gal 5:19-21)

#### Theft

This would include outright stealing, but also, embezzlement, swindling, fraud, bribery, kickbacks, kidnapping, human trafficking, extortion, blackmail, computer hacking, economic espionage, military invasion and international exploitation

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### Chapter 10

#### Outline of Revelation

- Message to the Seven Churches (Rev 1-3)
  - > Bridge: God's Throne, Sealed Scroll (Rev 4-5)
- The Lamb Opens Six Seals (Rev 6) – Tension Peaks
  - > Bridge: 144,000 & Innumerable Multitude (Rev 7)
- Seventh Seal, Six Trumpets (Rev 8-9) – Tension Peaks
  - > Bridge: Little Scroll,... (Rev 10)

Rev 10:1 I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire; 2 and he had in his hand a little book which was open. He placed his right foot on the sea and his left on the land; 3 and he cried out with a loud voice, as when a lion roars; and when he had cried out, the seven peals of thunder uttered their voices. 4 When the seven peals of thunder had spoken, I was about to write; and I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them."

#### 1. John sees a another powerful angel

This supernatural being has divine qualities

- Covered by a cloud (Ezek 1:4)
- Rainbow overhead (Ezek 1:28, Rev 4:3)
- Face like the sun (Rev 1:16)
- Feet like pillars of fire (Ezek 1:27, Rev 1:15)

John saw Jesus depicted this way in Rev 1, but he didn't identify this angel as Jesus

John also saw a small scroll open in his hand. Some think this is the sealed scroll, now open, but John says it is a small scroll (*biblaridion*) and he doesn't mention any broken seals.

The angel had his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land; the symbolism of this action becomes clear in verse 6

#### 2. John also heard seven thunders speaking

The number seven again suggests completion, finality; but, John wasn't allowed to write down what he heard

Years earlier, Paul had also seen a heavenly vision and heard words that he wasn't allowed to disclose (2Cor 12:1-4); Jesus also refused to discuss the End Times (Acts 1:7).

And, Daniel had to seal his vision until the End Time (Dan 12:9)

This would have revealed too much information too early



## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 10:5 Then the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his right hand to heaven, 6 and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE EARTH AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS IN IT, that there will be delay no longer, 7 but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets.

### 1. The angel swears a solemn oath

He “swore by Him who lives forever and ever, ‘WHO CREATED HEAVEN AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE EARTH AND THE THINGS IN IT, AND THE SEA AND THE THINGS IN IT’” (10:6)

This is an Old Testament allusion

Neh 9:6 "You alone are the LORD. You have made the heavens, the heaven of heavens with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them and the heavenly host bows down before You.

The act of placing one foot on the earth, the other on the sea, and his right hand in the air toward heaven matches the three realms that God created: heaven, earth & sea

In a court trial, witnesses place their left hand on the Bible and raise their right hand to heaven to swear by the Maker of both that they will tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth

Jesus also commented on this custom

Matt 5:33 “Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD.’ 34 “But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING.

### 2. The seventh trumpet will finish the mystery of God

The angel promised John that (1) there will no more delay

The angel also promised that (2) when the seventh angel blows his trumpet, “the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets” (10:7)

Everything that God has predicted through His prophets about the end of this age and the coming of the kingdom of God will come to pass when the seventh trumpet sounds

This is an important clue about the time of the Rapture

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 10:8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, "Go, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land." 9 So I went to the angel, telling him to give me the little book. And he said to me, "Take it and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."

10 I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and in my mouth it was sweet as honey; and when I had eaten it, my stomach was made bitter. 11 And they said to me, "You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings."

### 1. A voice tells John to take the little scroll

"The scroll seems to symbolize the Word of God and divine revelation in general, for John was told to deliver the Word faithfully" Bible Knowledge Commentary, s.v. Rev 10:8-11.

The act of taking the scroll from the angel means that God is commissioning John with a prophetic message to deliver to "many peoples and nations and tongues and kings"

### 2. The angel tells John to eat the little scroll

This is another Old Testament allusion

Ezek 3:1 Then He said to me, "Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel." 2 So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll. 3 He said to me, "Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you." Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth.

By eating the scroll, John is to internalize God's message

Jer 15:16 Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.

Ps 119:103 How sweet are Your words to my taste! Yes, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

The Word of God is sweet to His people, but delivering His message to the world brings persecution and loss

### Outline of Revelation

- Message to the Seven Churches (Rev 1-3)
  - > Bridge: God's Throne, Sealed Scroll (Rev 4-5)
- The Lamb Opens Six Seals (Rev 6) – Tension Peaks
  - > Bridge: 144,000 & Innumerable Multitude (Rev 7)
- Seventh Seal, Six Trumpets (Rev 8-9) – Tension Peaks
  - > Bridge: Little Scroll,... (Rev 10)

Revelation 11 will complete the bridge to the seventh trumpet

## Chapter 11

### Outline of Revelation

- Message to the Seven Churches (Rev 1-3)
- > Bridge: God's Throne, Sealed Scroll (Rev 4-5)
- The Lamb Opens Six Seals (Rev 6) – Tension Peaks
- > Bridge: 144,000 & Innumerable Multitude (Rev 7)
- Seventh Seal, Six Trumpets (Rev 8-9) – Tension Peaks
- > Bridge: Little Scroll, Two Witnesses (Rev 10, 11:1-14)
- Seventh Trumpet (Rev 11:15-19)

Rev 11:1 Then there was given me a measuring rod like a staff; and someone said, "Get up and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it. 2 "Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months. 3 "And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

#### 1. John must measure the temple and the worshippers

Rome destroyed Herod's Temple in 70 AD; but another will exist during the Great Tribulation, which the Antichrist will defile with the abomination of desolation (cf. Dan 9:27; 12:11)

1Th 2:3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it [the coming of our Lord] will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

#### 2. The nations will control Jerusalem for 42 months

Jesus called this period "the times of the Gentiles" (Lk 21:24)

- Dan 9:27 The Antichrist will make a 7 year treaty with many, break it after 3.5 years, stop the sacrifices and establish the abomination of desolation
- Dan 11:40-41 At the end time, the armies of the king of the North will occupy Israel (the beautiful land)
- Dan 7:25 The 4th beast (Rome) will persecute God's people for 3.5 years, then the saints will receive an eternal kingdom

#### 3. God will send two witnesses

Deut 19:15 You must not convict anyone of a crime on the testimony of only one witness. The facts of the case must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses (NLT)

They are clothed in sackcloth, which is a symbol of repentance; they will prophesy for 1260 days, which overlaps the 42 months that Jerusalem is oppressed by the Gentiles (cf. Dan 12:11-12)

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 11:4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. 5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire flows out of their mouth and devours their enemies; so if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this way. 6 These have the power to shut up the sky, so that rain will not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.

### 1. The two witnesses enlighten the world

John calls them “the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth” (11:4); this is another Old Testament allusion to Zech 4.

Zech 4:14 Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth.”

In these 2 visions, the olive trees provide the oil that fuels the lamps; the lamps provide light to a dark world (Matt 5:16)

### 2. The two witnesses have great power

They can kill people with fire like Elijah (2Kgs 1:9)

They can cause severe drought like Elijah (1 Kgs 17:1)

They can turn water into blood like Moses (Ex 7:20)

They can send any plague as often they desire

They could also use this power to protect any nation or group of people on earth from any military attack

Rev 11:7 When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them. 8 And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. 9 Those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. 10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

### 1. The beast makes his debut

This is the first mention of “the beast,” who quickly becomes the main antagonist in the rest of the book (cf. 13:1; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 17:3, 13; 19:20; 20:10);

Most importantly, John identifies his point of origin; the beast “comes up out of the abyss” (i.e., he is a demon).

The text doesn’t say when he emerges from the abyss; clearly, not all demons are in the abyss (Luke 8:30-31); it will soon become clear that the beast is an ancient foe

## 2. The beast will kill the two witnesses

This will occur at the end of their ministry, after the 1260 days. This will occur in the city where “their Lord was crucified,” which implies that they are Christians in Jerusalem. John compares Jerusalem to Sodom and Egypt, which is another Old Testament allusion (cf. Jer 23:14, Ezek 20:6-8). The text doesn’t say where the two witnesses start their ministry or where they go during the 1260 days; they have the power to go anywhere and speak to anyone they want

## 3. The world celebrates the death of the two witnesses

The world refuses to repent and surrender to God (9:20-21). This also proves that the two witnesses are very active in using their power on those who refused to repent. Throughout the Great Tribulation, the forces of Good and Evil proclaim two different messages to the world. Like the death of Jesus, the death of the two witnesses isn’t a defeat; God uses this event to demonstrate His superiority

Rev 11:11 But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. 12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “Come up here.” Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them. 13 And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. 14 The second woe is past; behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

## 1. God resurrects the two witnesses

They minister for 3.5 years, then they lay dead in the street for 3.5 days (a day for a year, as a witness). Next, God displays His power over death by resurrecting them. The text isn’t clear if this is the Rapture or if God merely restores their physical bodies like Lazarus and Dorcas (John 11, Act 9). The text says that they ascend into a cloud, nothing more. Given the proximity of this event with the seventh trumpet, it is highly likely that this is the first general resurrection.

## 2. There is a great earthquake

It will destroy a tenth of Jerusalem and kill 7,000 people  
This is consistent with the timeline of Second Coming

Zech 14:3 Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. 4 In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

Rev 11:15 Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.” 16 And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, 17 saying, “We give You thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who are and who were, because You have taken Your great power and have begun to reign.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. The seventh angel sounds his trumpet

This is the last trumpet listed in Revelation, which announces first general resurrection and the Second Coming

1Cor 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming

1Cor 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

This is the last trumpet listed in Revelation, which announces first general resurrection and the Second Coming

1Th 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will be the first to rise. 17 After that, we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord.

Remember that the two witnesses ascended into a cloud

Some wrongly claim that the seventh trumpet in Rev 11:15 can't be the first resurrection because an angel blows it, and 1Th 4:16 says that the resurrection occurs "with the trumpet of God." But, the Greek phrase "*en salpingi Theou*" is a Possessive Genitive, not an Agency Genitive; it denotes the owner or origin of the trumpet, not the musician blowing it. Also, God doesn't blow a trumpet anywhere in Revelation, so there is no support for this interpretation of 1Th 4:16

### 2. The seventh trumpet announces the kingdom of God

Loud voices declare, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ" (11:15). "The kingdom" is singular; there is one ruler over the world. The seventh trumpet marks the end of Satan's reign over the earth and the arrival of Jesus Christ to rule forever. This is further proof that the seventh trumpet signals the first general resurrection because the kingdom of God has begun, and these two events are linked together (1Cor 15:22-23).

Rev 11:18 "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." 19 And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. The nations were enraged

Most people will reject Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior; God response is clear: “and Your wrath came” (11:18). In the parable of the minas, Jesus predicted that some people would reject Him as their king (Luke 19:11-27). Jesus finished the parable saying, “But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence.”

### 2. The time of judgment and reward has arrived

The time came for the dead to be judged, which requires two resurrections (at the start and the end of the Millennium). It is also “the time to reward Your bond-servants” by inheriting the kingdom of God in resurrection bodies (1Cor15:50-53). The seventh trumpet announces the Second Coming and the first general resurrection. God will also “destroy those who destroy the earth” because humanity was supposed to cultivate and maintain this planet.

### 3. The temple of God in heaven was opened

John sees the temple of God in heaven open up to reveal the ark of covenant within the Holy of Holies

Heb 8:1 Here is the main point: We have a High Priest who sat down in the place of honor beside the throne of the majestic God in heaven. 2 There he ministers in the heavenly Tabernacle, the true place of worship that was built by the Lord and not by human hands. 3 And since every high priest is required to offer gifts and sacrifices, our High Priest must make an offering, too.

Heb 8:4 If he were here on earth, he would not even be a priest, since there already are priests who offer the gifts required by the law. 5 They serve in a system of worship that is only a copy, a shadow of the real one in heaven. For when Moses was getting ready to build the Tabernacle, God gave him this warning: “Be sure that you make everything according to the pattern I have shown you here on the mountain.” (NLT)

### 4. The key End Time events are now clear

The final heptad of Daniel’s 70 Weeks prophecy lasts 7 years. It starts when the Antichrist makes a 7 year treaty; 10 kings rule over Roman Europe and Temple sacrifices occur in Jerusalem; this pre-Tribulation period lasts for about 3.5 years.

The 1260, 1290 & 1335 days start when the Antichrist defiles the Temple (1260+30 days & 1290+45 days)

During the 1260 days, the Antichrist becomes the sole ruler of Europe, takes control of Israel and Egypt, and persecutes God’s people; the two witnesses oppose him

After the 1260 days, the two witnesses die, the seventh trumpet sounds, the first resurrection occurs, Jesus Christ returns and stands on the Mount of Olives

## Chapter 12

### Transition: The Woman and the Dragon (Rev 12)

Rev 12:1 A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; 2 and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. 4 And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.

Rev 12:5 And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. 6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

#### 1. This vision is figurative, not literal

It contains many biblical symbols and must be interpreted accordingly; context is key

Basic Principle: Let the Bible interpret the Bible

- The greatest weight goes to clues within the vision of Rev 12
- Next in priority are clues given within the Book of Revelation
- Then, clues or similarities found in other biblical passages
- Personal opinions have no value (2Pet 1:20-21)

#### 2. This vision contains two main characters

In this narrative, the celestial woman is the protagonist, and the red dragon is the antagonist; both are archetypes. The celestial woman is clothed with the sun, standing on the moon, and wearing a crown of 12 stars (i.e., heavenly). The 12 stars likely represent the 12 tribes of Israel (cf. 21:12). But, this vision is very different than Joseph's dream about the sun, moon and 11 stars, so Joseph's interpretation can't be used to identify the celestial woman (cf. Gen 37:9-11).

#### 3. The male child is Jesus Christ

The celestial woman gives birth to a male child destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron (Isa 9:6-7, Ps 2:9, Rev 19:15). The dragon tries to destroy the male child at His birth; Herod tried to kill Jesus by murdering the babies in Bethlehem. The male child is caught up to God's throne; Jesus ascended to heaven 40 days after His resurrection.

#### 4. Time is compressed in this vision

The birth and ascension of Jesus took place in the first century. The celestial woman flees to a wilderness and is nourished for 1260 days, which is during the Great Tribulation. This vision is a flashback leading up to the Great Tribulation.



## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, 8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Rev 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. 11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. 12 "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

### 1. The red dragon is Satan, the Devil

Satan was "the serpent of old" in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3). It was Satan who tried to destroy Jesus when He was born. The red dragon is the same color as the blood red horse of the second seal, which symbolizes war and killing (6:1-8). The 7 heads and 10 horns mimic the symbolic pattern of Gentile empires (cf. Dan 7, Rev 13:1-8); Satan is the real power behind the rulers of this world (cf. Eph 2:1-2). Satan deceives the entire world (cf. 2Cor 4:4, 11:13-15).

### 2. Satan gets kicked out of heaven

Satan has angelic followers who are now called demons. Since the dragon swept up a third of the stars of heaven with his tail, perhaps a third of the angels rebelled with him (12:4). Michel is an archangel who watches over Israel and leads an army of God's loyal angels (Dan 12:1, Jude 9). Michael and his angels wage war with Satan and his army and kick them out of heaven forever; God isn't a pacifist. Revelation is all about segregating good and evil forever.

Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. 14 But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. 15 And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood.

Rev 12:16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. 17 So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

### 1. The war in heaven occurs at the End Time

The war in heaven probably occurs shortly before the start of the Great Tribulation. After Satan is cast out of heaven, he is filled with wrath because he knows that his time is short (12:12).

He persecutes the celestial woman, who flees to the wilderness during the 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation.

## 2. The woman flees to an earthly refuge

She receives “the two wings of a great eagle,” which is a symbol of rapid travel (cf. Ex 19:4, Dan 7:4, 6). This isn’t the Rapture; she is nourished and protected on the earth during the 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation. This is very similar to Elijah, who inflicted a drought on Israel for 3.5 years, but God protected and nourished him with food and water during the famine (Jms 5:17, 1Kgs 17:1-16). It is also like God giving manna to Israel in the wilderness.

## 3. Satan tries to stop her

The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth in order to stop the woman from reaching safety. Revelation uses water as a symbol for many people (17:15). The dragon pouring water from his mouth may be a figurative way of saying that he commands an army to stop the woman. The earth helps the woman by swallowing the flood, which is similar to the Red Sea swallowing Pharaoh’s army or the earth swallowing Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Ex 14, Num 16:23-33).

## 4. The celestial woman has other children

When Satan sees that he can’t harm the woman, he goes after “the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.” Her children are Christians, which reveals her identity; the devil also has children who take after their father (cf. John 8:44). Clearly, God is going to protect some of His people on the earth during the Great Tribulation but not others.

## 5. The celestial woman is spiritual Israel, the Church

The woman isn’t Mary, the mother of Jesus, because

- The vision is symbolic, not literal – spanning many centuries
- Mary isn’t protected from a future, earthly Tribulation

The woman isn’t Israel because

- Israel doesn’t hold to the testimony of Jesus
- Israel won’t be protected from the Tribulation (Dan 11:41)

The text gives several clues that identify the woman

- She gives birth to a male child who will rule the world (Jesus)
- She escapes to the wilderness, protected for 1260 days
- She has other children who are faithful Christians
- The dragon will martyr these Christians (cf. Dan 7, Rev 6)

Two other symbolic women appear in Revelation: Babylon the Great and the Bride of the Lamb; both represent a group of people associated with a capital city

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

The Bible often uses a woman as a symbol to represent a group of people associated with a capital city

- Paul's analogy of Hagar, Sarah with Jerusalem (Gal 4:25-26)
- Paul betrothed Christians to Jesus, the Bridegroom (2Cor 11:2)
- Isaiah 47 describes Babylon as the daughter of Chaldea
- Ezekiel 16, 23 picture Jerusalem & Samaria as adulteresses
- Many passages refer to Jerusalem as the daughter of Zion

Paul said that Christians are children of Jerusalem above, an allegorical reference to the new covenant (Gal 4:21-26)

Rom 2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

Jesus warned His followers to flee to the mountains when they see the abomination of desolation (Matt 24:15-16).

Jesus promised Philadelphia that He would deliver them from the trial coming on the whole world (3:10). But, He will discipline Laodicea and advised them to buy gold refined by fire (i.e., character refined by trials). The 144,000 and the great multitude are sealed to protect them only from God's wrath, not the Great Tribulation (7:3, 14).

The best explanation is that the celestial woman is spiritual Israel, the Church

### Chapter 13

#### Outline of Revelation

- Seventh Trumpet (Rev 11:15-19)
- > Flashback: The Woman and the Dragon (Rev 12)
- > Flashback: The Sea Beast and the Land Beast (Rev 13)

Rev 13:1 And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names. 2 And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority. 3 I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast

Rev 13:4 they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" 5 There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

Rev 13:7 It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.

#### 1. The Sea Beast is the kingdom of Satan

It has 7 heads and 10 horns like the red dragon and receives power and a throne from the dragon (Satanic origin). It comes up out of the sea and has body parts from a leopard, a bear and a lion (cf. Dan 7:2-7). It is a combination of the 4 beasts of Daniel 7, which represents the 4 ancient Gentile kingdoms that oppressed Israel. It also matches the vision of Daniel 2, which predicted the coming of the same 4 Gentile kingdoms.

#### 2. The Sea Beast is a future Neo-Roman Empire

One head receives a fatal wound, which is healed (13:3). In Dan 2, the iron legs become feet of iron & clay, depicting the death & restoration of the Roman Empire. In 476 AD, Rome fell but came back to life with a blasphemous name as the "Holy Roman Empire". The 10 horns with 10 royal crowns represent the 10 kings of a future Neo-Roman Empire (cf. Dan 2:40-44, 7:23-25)

Dan 2:40 "Then there will be a fourth kingdom [Rome] as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces. 41 "In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay. 42 "As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle.

Dan 2:43 "And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery. 44 "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

Dan 7:23 "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast [Rome] will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. 24 'As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. 25 'He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

<b>Gentile Kingdoms</b>	<b>Daniel 2</b>	<b>Daniel 7</b>	<b>Rev 13</b>
Babylon Empire	Gold Head	Lion	1st Head
Medo-Persian	Silver Chest	Bear	2nd Head
Greco-Macedonian	Bronze Waist	Leopard	3rd-6th Heads
Roman Empire	Iron Legs	Iron Beast	7th Head
Holy Roman Empire	Iron/Clay Feet		Revived Head
Neo-Roman Empire	10 Toes	10 Horns	10 Horns
Antichrist		11th Horn	

The European Union (EU) includes most of the old Roman Empire with some new nations, which fits Daniel 2:40-44, 7:23-25. Some claim that the Sea Beast can't be the EU because the 10 horns represent 10 kings, but the EU has 27 nations. But, the Sea Beast could be a subset of these 27 nations, or several nations may drop out of the EU in the future, or the 10 kings might rule over 10 groups of nations, so this objection is without merit

Some think the Sea Beast will be a union of 10 Arab Muslim nations, but this goes against other prophecies. Dan 2 shows that the iron legs (Rome) and the feet of iron and clay (Holy Roman Empire) are similar, European nations. Dan 11:40-43 says that, at the End Time, the king of the North (i.e., the Antichrist) will attack the king of the South and occupy Egypt, Libya and Sudan. So, the Sea Beast won't be a group of Arab Muslim countries.

### 3. The Sea Beast is victorious for 42 months

People will worship the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?"

Dan 7:24 'As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three [of those] kings.

Dan 11:40-43 says that, at the End Time, he will fight the king of the South and occupy Israel, Egypt, Libya, & Sudan. Rev 6 implies that he will kill 25% of humanity in this war.

### 4. The Sea Beast will persecute God's people

Dan 7:25 He will defy the Most High and oppress the holy people of the Most High. He will try to change their sacred festivals and laws, and they will be placed under his control for a time, times, and half a time (NLT).

He will abolish God's Sabbaths and mandate Sunday worship. This occurs during the second half of Daniel's 70th heptad. It is the fifth seal of Rev 6, when the red dragon makes war on the children of the celestial woman (cf. 12:14, 17).

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Rev 13:11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb and he spoke as a dragon. 12 He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed. 13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life.

Rev 13:15 And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. 16 And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, 17 and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

1. The Land Beast is a satanic religious leader

The Sea Beast is a political and military leader, but the Land Beast is a false prophet (16:13, 19:20). He looks like a lamb (i.e., Jesus), but this is a disguise (13:1).

Matt 7:15 Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

He has satanic power to perform great, supernatural signs

2Th 2:9 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders (ESV)

He deceives people into worshipping the Sea Beast. Kings in the Ancient Near East routinely claimed to be gods and demanded worship (cf. Isa 14:12-14, Dan 6:6-7, 2Th 2:4). The imperial cult worshipped the Roman emperor as lord, savior and son of god; Domitian demanded worship as "Lord and God." Domitian exiled John to Patmos; Rome martyred Christians because they refused to worship the genius of Caesar.

He deceives people into making an image of the Sea Beast and worshipping this idol under pain of death (just like Rome). He even makes the image appear to speak.

"It was popularly believed in the first century that the gods did inhabit their idols, and rituals existed to call forth the spark of the divine in them. The Roman world was enamored with magicians and rituals" (Osborne, Revelation, p. 233).

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Such deception was not unknown in the ancient world. Heron of Alexandria (c. 10 AD - 70 AD) designed several devices to simulate temple miracles, including one that made a trumpet play when the temple door opened, a coin-operated holy water dispenser, and a device for opening temple doors using heat and water power (explorable.com, s.v. Heron of Alexandria).

### 2. The Land Beast imposes the mark of the Beast

He forces everyone to receive a mark (e.g., a tattoo or brand) on their hand or forehead with the name of the Sea Beast, or the number of his name, to identify them as his followers.

“In Roman practice religious tattoos were often worn to indicate a person’s patron god. It signified both the rejection of former loyalties and absolute acceptance of the new allegiance” (Osborne, Revelation, p. 234).

This is a final rejection of Jesus Christ, an unpardonable sin

The hand denotes actions and deeds, while the forehead denotes thoughts and plans; so the Beast is marking his authority over all aspects of life (cf. Ex 13:9, 16, Deut 6:8).

After the Flood, God told Noah, “I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth” (Gen 9:6 NIV).

Ex 31:13 (NIV) Say to the Israelites, 'You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy.'

He imposes economic sanctions on those who refuse to accept this mark, so it must be visible to others. The “number of his name” refers to the ancient practice of using the letters of the alphabet to represent numbers. Most people are familiar with Roman numerals; Greeks and Hebrews had an equivalent system. This may provide an early clue for the identity of the Sea Beast, but no one can be sure until it is too late (Mk 13:14, 2Th 2:3).

The number 7 appears throughout the Bible and denotes the completion of the Creator’s work (e.g., the Sabbath day). The number 6 is one less than perfection and is associated with the creation of humanity and the six days of human labor. So, the number 777 would be associated with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, while 666 would represent the false trinity of Satan, the Beast and the false prophet (cf. 20:10).

## Chapter 14

Rev 12-13 summarize events prior to the seventh trumpet

Rev 12-13 introduce the 3 main antagonists to be judged

Rev 14-15 set the stage for their judgment

Rev 16-19 deal with the 7 last plagues, judgment of evil

At this point, there are three groups of people on the earth

- Those who received resurrection bodies at the 7th trumpet
- Those who have rejected the mark of the Beast
- Those who have accepted the mark of the Beast

Rev 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. 3 And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.

Rev 14:4 These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb. 5 And no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless.

### 1. The Lamb is on Mount Zion

The seventh trumpet announced the first general resurrection and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Christ meets the saints in the clouds and descends to the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem (cf. 1Th 4:16-17, Zech 14:1-4). Now, the Lamb is standing on Mount Zion; He has entered Jerusalem from the east through the Kidron Valley. Mount Zion is the location of David's palace and throne.

### 2. The 144,000 belong to God and the Lamb

In Rev 7, angels sealed the 144,000 on their foreheads. In Rev 14, they have the name of the Lamb and His Father's name on their foreheads. This is a sign of their covenant with God (2Cor 1:21-22), which protected them from God's wrath during the Tribulation. This contrasts with the mark of the Beast, which is the name of the Beast or the number of his name (13:16-18).

### 3. The 144,000 are with Jesus on Mount Zion

Even though they are on the earth, they are singing "before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders." This is similar to the great multitude, who were on the earth but also standing before the throne and the Lamb (cf. 7:9-17). Visions are not precise descriptions of reality; time & space can appear to be highly compressed. They follow Jesus wherever He goes; they are His royal court, senior administrative staff in His kingdom.



#### 4. The 144,000 are righteous

They are a first fruits offering to God and Christ (Pentecost). No lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless. They have not been defiled with women; they are chaste. It isn't clear if this is meant literally or figuratively; in the OT, God often referred to idolatry as spiritual adultery. Either way, God is pleased with them; they are good and faithful servants, an example for us.

Rev 14:6 And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; 7 and he said with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters." 8 And another angel, a second one, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality."

Rev 14:9 Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

#### 1. The first angel's message

God sends three angels to give people one last warning to repent before the 7 last plagues (cf. Matt 24:14). The first angel commands people to fear and worship God; this implies that they must reject the Beast and his mark. Everyone must choose because time has run out, and "the hour of His judgment has come." Sooner or later, everyone must choose between God and Satan; failure to repent is tantamount to rebellion against God.

#### 2. The second angel's message

The second angel says, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality." This is the first mention of Babylon the great, and her role in this story will be explained in greater detail in Rev 16-18. The repetition of "fallen, fallen" is used for emphasis. Babylon is guilty of promoting rampant immorality; this could be literal (fornication) or figurative (i.e., idolatry) or both.

#### 3. The third angel's message

The third angel says that anyone who worships the Beast and accepts his mark will receive the cup of God's undiluted wrath and be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Lamb and His angels. This refers to the 7 bowl plagues in Rev 16, which includes scorching heat and heavy meteorite bombardment.

Rev 16:19b God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath (NIV).

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The third angel also says that anyone who worships the Beast and accepts his mark will have no rest day and night and that the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. Some people confuse this passage with the pagan, unbiblical concept of an eternal, ever-burning hell. But, the third angel's message is a warning about the 7 bowl plagues, which only last for a limited time (~30 days). This is probably the time between the 1260 & 1290 days.

The reference to fire, brimstone and smoke going up forever is an OT allusion to God's curse on the land of Edom.

Isa 34:9 Its streams will be turned into pitch, And its loose earth into brimstone, And its land will become burning pitch. 10 It will not be quenched night or day; Its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever.

This is poetic hyperbole; Edom was destroyed, the fire eventually burned out, and the result was permanent, not the smoke

Rev 14:12 Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. 13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

Rev 14:14 Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and sitting on the cloud was one like a son of man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. 15 And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe." 16 Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth was reaped.

Rev 14:17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle. 18 Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe." 19 So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. 20 And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.

### 1. Death is deliverance for Christians

John 16:33 I have spoken these things to you so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation. But take courage; I have overcome the world."

Paul said, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22). Once this physical life is over, Christians will have no more tribulation and will receive a reward for their labor when they rise in the resurrection

## 2. The first harvest occurs

John sees someone “like a son of man” with a golden stephanos crown of victory on his head and a sickle in his hand sitting on a white cloud. Then, an angel orders this person to reap because “the harvest of the earth is ripe” (literally, dry). John doesn’t identify this person as Jesus; he is wearing a victor’s crown, rather than a royal crown, and he takes orders from an angel, so this can’t be the King of kings.

The Bible contains several analogies about harvesting crops; some are positive (souls are saved), others are not (hell). Unlike the next harvest, there are no positive or negative clues here except that the harvest is “ripe” (literally, dry). This might be a grain harvest because grain changes from moist green stalks to dry white stalks when ripe (John 4:35). Jesus said the angels would gather the grain (saints) into His barn (kingdom) and burn up the (wicked) tares in fire (Matt 13:36-43).

## 3. The second harvest occurs

John sees another set of angels conduct a second harvest, but this time, they clearly gather grapes for destruction. They crush the wicked in the winepress of God’s wrath until blood flows chest high for a distance of 200 miles. The symbolism of the winepress of God’s wrath is similar to a couple of Old Testament passages.

Joel 3:11 Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, and gather yourselves there. Bring down, O LORD, Your mighty ones. 12 Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. 13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. 14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

Isa 63:1 Who is this who comes from Edom, with garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, this One who is majestic in His apparel, marching in the greatness of His strength? “It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” 2 Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? 3 “I have trodden the wine trough alone, and from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger and trampled them in My wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, and I stained all My raiment.

## Outline of Revelation

- Seventh Trumpet (Rev 11:15-19)
- > Flashback: The Celestial Woman and the Dragon (Rev 12)
- > Flashback: The Sea Beast and the Land Beast (Rev 13)
- > Prologue: The Harvest of the Earth (Rev 14)

In Rev 14, there are three groups of people on the earth

- Those who received resurrection bodies at the 7th trumpet (on Mount Zion)
- Those who have rejected the mark of the Beast (the grain harvest who survive)
- Those who have accepted the mark of the Beast (grapes doomed for destruction)

## Chapter 15

Rev 15:1 Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished. 2 And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.

Rev 15:3 And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! 4 Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED."

### 1. Seven angels with the 7 last plagues

This is the last cycle of 7 in the Book of Revelation: (1) God's message to 7 churches, (2) A scroll with 7 seals, (3) 7 trumpet plagues, & (4) 7 last plagues. The number 7 denotes a completion, fulfillment of God's work. The 7 last plagues crush all rebellion against God's authority.

### 2. God's sevenfold pattern of judgment

God uses the least amount of pain possible to deal with sin. The longer a sinner persists in rebellion, the worse it gets.

Heb 12:5 (NKJV) And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."

Lev 26:14-17 God promised to punish Israel if they sinned

Lev 26:18 And if in spite of this you will not listen to me, then I will discipline you again sevenfold for your sins... 21 Then if you walk contrary to me and will not listen to me, I will continue striking you, sevenfold for your sins... 23 And if by this discipline you are not turned to me but walk contrary to me, 24 then I also will walk contrary to you, and I myself will strike you sevenfold for your sins. (ESV)

### 3. Victorious saints standing before God's throne

John sees "those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name" (cf. 12:11). The Devil has been waging war on God's people since Eden, but after the seventh trumpet sounds, the saints are victorious and the Beast is destroyed. This revelation would encourage all Christians from John's time until the end of the Great Tribulation; even though evil appears to be winning now, God's people ultimately prevail.

They are holding harps, worshipping God, and standing on something "like a sea of glass mixed with fire" (metaphor).

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Rev 4:6 and before the throne there was something like a sea of glass, like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.

1Chr 15:16 David also ordered the Levite leaders to appoint a choir of Levites who were singers and musicians to sing joyful songs to the accompaniment of harps, lyres, and cymbals. (NLT)

### 4. Victorious saints sing the song of Moses

This is found in Deut 32, not Exodus 15

Ex 15:1 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: "I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted. The horse and rider He has thrown into the sea.

The text says that Moses sang this song after the Red Sea crossing, not that he was the author of it. The subject matter doesn't fit the occasion; there are no chariots thrown into the sea in the Book of Revelation.

The Greek uses the definite article in "the song of Moses" showing that this is the unique song authored by Moses. The song of Moses is a prophecy that Israel will fail to obey God and evil will befall them in the latter days, then God will save them and punish their enemies (Deut 31:14-30). The theme and content of this song fits the situation of Israel at the end of the Great Tribulation better than Exodus 15.

Deut 32:39 Look now; I myself am he! There is no other god but me! I am the one who kills and gives life; I am the one who wounds and heals; no one can be rescued from my powerful hand! 40 Now I raise my hand to heaven and declare, "As surely as I live, 41 when I sharpen my flashing sword and begin to carry out justice, I will take revenge on my enemies and repay those who reject me. 42 I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword will devour flesh—the blood of the slaughtered and the captives, and the heads of the enemy leaders."

Deut 32:43 Rejoice with him, you heavens, and let all of God's angels worship him. Rejoice with his people, you Gentiles, and let all the angels be strengthened in him. For he will avenge the blood of his children; he will take revenge against his enemies. He will repay those who hate him and cleanse his people's land. (NLT)

The song of Moses reaches its ultimate fulfillment through the seven last plagues and the establishment of God's kingdom

### 5. Victorious saints sing the song of the Lamb

This song includes important OT references & prophecies

Rev 15:4b ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED

Ps 86:9 All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And they shall glorify Your name.

Ps 98:2 The LORD has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.

Isa 66:23 And it shall be from new moon to new moon and from sabbath to sabbath, all mankind will come to bow down before Me," says the LORD.

Zech 14:16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 17 And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them.

Rev 15:5 After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, 6 and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes. 7 Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. 8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

#### 1. The seven golden bowls full of God's wrath

God depicted the first set of judgments as a scroll with seven seals. He depicted the next set as 7 trumpet blasts. The final set uses a liquid analogy, the plagues are "poured out." Here, seven angels receive "seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God".

This matches the earlier comment that the Beast's followers "will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger" (14:10a). Wine was usually diluted with water; God's cup is full strength, no mercy. Wine was usually consumed from a cup, but God's wrath is so great that His cup fills 7 golden bowls.

#### 2. Smoke filled the sanctuary

John sees the Holy of Holies in the heavenly tabernacle open up, and smoke from the glory of God and from His power fills the sanctuary; no one is able to enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels are finished (15:8). This is another OT allusion.

Ex 40:34 Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. 35 Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

After Solomon built the Temple and brought the ark inside:

1 Kgs 8:10 It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the LORD, 11 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

## Chapter 16

Rev 16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God." 2 So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth; and it became a loathsome and malignant sore on the people who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image. 3 The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became blood like that of a dead man; and every living thing in the sea died.

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Rev 16:4 Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of waters; and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, because You judged these things; 6 for they poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink. They deserve it." 7 And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."

### 1. The first bowl: loathsome and malignant sores

This is similar to the boils that afflicted Job (Job 2:7). This only afflicts the followers of the Beast; those that heed the message of the three angels are spared.

Ex 15:26 And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer."

### 2. The second bowl: the sea turns to blood

As a result, every living creature in salt water dies. A significant source of food is gone; famine gets worse. Rotting flesh breeds disease, fouls water desalinization. The stench from this catastrophe will be terrible. "Scientists believe that phytoplankton contribute between 50 to 85 percent of the oxygen in Earth's atmosphere" (How much do oceans add to world's oxygen?, EarthSky.org, June 8, 2015). CO2 levels rise, triggering run-away global warming.

### 3. The third bowl: fresh water becomes blood

Every living thing in fresh water dies; humans and animals will start to die of thirst in a short period of time. This is similar to Moses turning the Nile to blood (Ex 7:14-25), the second trumpet (8:8-9) and the 2 witnesses (11:6). God punished the Egyptians for the murder of the Israelite boys who were cast into the Nile. The followers of the Beast have "poured out the blood of saints and prophets," so God gives them blood to drink.

Rev 16:8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire. 9 Men were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory. 10 Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened; and they gnawed their tongues because of pain, 11 and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they did not repent of their deeds.

Rev 16:12 The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way would be prepared for the kings from the east. 13 And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs; 14 for they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. 15 ("Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame.") 16 And they gathered them together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.

#### 1. The fourth bowl: scorching heat

This is an amplification of the first trumpet, which burned up all the grass and a third of the trees (8:7). People will hide in caves while the cities above burn; famine and dehydration will increase exponentially. They will be tormented day and night without rest by fire and brimstone (14:10-11); this foreshadows the lake of fire.

Outcome: Men blaspheme God and they do not repent.

#### 2. The fifth bowl: darkness

The kingdom of the Beast is plunged into darkness like Egypt during the Exodus (Ex 10:21-29); this is literal darkness, not metaphoric darkness, spiritual blindness. If God hardened their hearts so they can't repent, there would be no reason to send angels to warn them; it would also imply that God is a sadistic monster who tortures people for fun. People start to go insane; they gnaw their own tongues.

Outcome: Men blaspheme God, and they do not repent.

#### 3. The sixth bowl: the Euphrates River dries up

This removes a major obstacle for the kings of the east to gather their armies for "the war of the great day of God." The Beast only has power for 1260 days, then it all falls apart.

Dan 11:44 But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he [the Antichrist] will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many. 45 He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

The Antichrist will establish his headquarters on the high ground between Jerusalem, the Sea of Galilee, and the Mediterranean. The kings of the East cross the Euphrates River and enter Israel from Syria, likely along the northern coastal plain. They gather to fight against an invader from outer space, Jesus Christ; this is a war against God for control of planet earth. Rev 16:16 And they gathered them [the kings] together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon.



“‘Armageddon’ comes from the Greek *Harmagedon*, which transliterates the Hebrew words for Mount (har) of Megiddo. That mountain is near the city of Megiddo and the plain of Esdraelon, the scene of many Old Testament battles” Bible Knowledge Commentary, s.v. Rev 16:13-16.

The gathering of the kings from the east isn’t the invasion of Israel by Gog and Magog predicted in Ezek 38-39. That rebellion occurs at the end of the Millennium (20:7).

Ezek 38:8 After a long time you will be summoned. In the latter years you will enter a land that has recovered from war, whose people were gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate. They had been brought out from the nations, and all now dwell securely.

Ezek 38:11 You will say, ‘I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will come against a tranquil people who dwell securely, all of them living without walls or bars or gates’

This description of the land of Israel fits the situation at the end of the Millennium, not during the Great Tribulation

#### 4. An exhortation from Jesus Christ

He warned, “Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so that he will not walk about naked and men will not see his shame” (16:15). This is a well known metaphor to be vigilant & morally upright; Christians will know the Second Coming is near, but the wicked will be unaware (Luke 12:37-39, 1Thes 5:2-4, Rev 3:18). But, no one knows when death will occur, and after that, the judgment (Heb 9:27); we must always be ready to face Jesus.

Rev 16:17 Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, “It is done.” 18 And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath.

Rev 16:20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. 21 And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.

#### 1. The seventh bowl: a great earthquake

This will be the greatest earthquake in human history. Every island sinks beneath the waves and mountains crumble; great tectonic plates shift altering the earth’s surface.

Isa 40:4 Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley; 5 Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Isa 2:2 Now it will come about that In the last days the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it.

Zech 14:10 All the land from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem will be turned into a plain, but Jerusalem will be raised up and will remain in her place, from the Benjamin Gate to the site of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the royal winepresses.

Rev 16:19 says that “the great city was split into three parts.” The second half of this verse identifies which city John is talking about: “Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath.” Rev 17-18 will cover the destruction of Babylon in greater detail.

The “great city” doesn’t refer to Jerusalem because (1) that isn’t the context of Rev 16:19 and (2) Jesus Christ and 144,000 are on Mount Zion in Jerusalem to liberate it (cf. Zech 12:1-9)

### 2. The seventh bowl: a plague of hail

God will also send large hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, down from heaven upon men (16:21). It isn’t clear if these “hailstones” are composed of ice or rock; God is able to send either one and has done so in the past. In Gen 19:24, God rained fire & brimstone on Sodom & Gomorrah. In Ex 9:23-24, God sent thunder, lightning and hail (ice) to flatten Egypt before the Exodus; Rev 16:18 mentions thunder, lightning.

Based on the weight, it is unlikely to be ice from a thunderstorm. The Greek term (chalaza) only occurs 4 times in the NT, all of them in Revelation (8:7, 11:19, 16:21 twice); in Rev 8:7, it clearly refers to a meteor bombardment. The third angel promised that the followers of the Beast would be tormented with fire and brimstone (14:10). Hail would counteract the earlier plagues by cooling the earth and providing ice cold water to drink, rather than blood.

The great earthquake will probably trigger volcanic explosions that could easily send 100 pound rocks through the air. Everyone living on an island will drown, cities in the mountains will be buried, and cities in coastal plains will be bombarded and set on fire or washed away in a tsunami. The death toll will be catastrophic, but some still survive.  
Outcome: Men blaspheme God, and they do not repent.

### 3. The end of the world is near

The ecosystem of the whole planet has collapsed; the human race is about to end, but it won’t.

Matt 24:21 For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. 22 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened (NIV).

God will preserve a remnant of humanity to repopulate the earth, including the children of the victorious saints (cf. Mt 24:15-19, Rev 12:14).

## Chapter 17

Rev 17:1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed acts of immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality." 3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.

Rev 17:4 The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality, 5 and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery, "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." 6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly. 7 And the angel said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.

Rev 17:8 "The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come. 9 "Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits, 10 and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while.

Rev 17:11 "The beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction. 12 "The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. 13 "These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast. 14 "These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful."

Rev 17:15 And he said to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues. 16 "And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire. 17 "For God has put it in their hearts to execute His purpose by having a common purpose, and by giving their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled. 18 "The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth."

### 1. John sees a great harlot and a scarlet beast

Both are symbols designed to hide their true identity from non-Christians; the key is to let the Bible interpret the Bible. In many OT prophecies, a harlot is a symbol for an immoral city.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Isa 1:21 See how the faithful city [Zion] has become a harlot! She once was full of justice; righteousness resided within her, but now only murderers!

In the Book of Daniel, a beast is a symbol for a Gentile empire, a horn is a king, and a mountain is a kingdom (cf. Dan 2, 7)

2. Key features that identify the great harlot  
She sits on (rules over) many waters (nations)  
She commits immorality with kings (political)  
She intoxicates people with her immorality (misleads)  
She rides the scarlet beast (i.e., controls it)  
She is wearing expensive clothing, jewelry (wealthy)  
She holds a gold cup full of her intoxicating sinfulness  
She is drunk with the blood of Christian martyrs (persecution)  
She has a name written on her forehead, characteristics  
She is Babylon the Great (an ancient & ungodly city)  
She has daughters (vassal cities) who are also harlots (evil)  
She is also the mother (source) of earthly abominations  
She sits on (rules) 7 mountains, 7 kings (kingdoms)  
She is the great city that reigns over the kings of the earth

Nimrod founded Babel (confusion) after the Flood, when he became the world's first tyrant (Gen 10-11); our current anti-God civilization began at the Tower of Babel. The Euphrates River ran through the center on Babylon; it truly sat on many waters, ruled over vassal kings and traded with many peoples. The Ishtar Gate of Babylon, built during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II in the 6th century BC, is made of colored, glazed, and molded bricks depicting a dragon (representing the god Marduk) and bull (representing the god Adad).

Around 700 BC, before the Babylonian exile, Isaiah predicted:

Isa 13:17 Behold, I am going to stir up the Medes against them, who will not value silver or take pleasure in gold. 18 And their bows will mow down the young men, they will not even have compassion on the fruit of the womb, nor will their eye pity children. 19 And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. 20 It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation; nor will the Arab pitch his tent there, nor will shepherds make their flocks lie down there.

Isa 13:21 But desert creatures will lie down there, and their houses will be full of owls; ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there. 22 Hyenas will howl in their fortified towers and jackals in their luxurious palaces. Her fateful time also will soon come and her days will not be prolonged.

NOTE: this list includes many unclean birds and animals

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After the Medes conquered Babylon in 539 BC, the city slowly declined over the next 650 years and collapsed by the early second century AD, never to be rebuilt. Thus, it can't be the city discussed in Rev 17-18; it is a metaphor.

Rev 17:18 The woman whom you saw is (Gk present tense) the great city, which reigns (Gk present active participle) over the kings of the earth.

The harlot is also drunk with the blood of Christian martyrs. The only great city in John's day that was reigning over kings and persecuting Christians was Rome; Babylon is code for Rome. Rome was build on 7 hills and sits on the Tiber River. Rome is the new capital of the anti-God civilization that started in ancient Babel; it is a reincarnation of Babylon.

### 3. Key features that identify the scarlet beast

It is full of blasphemous names (deeply evil)

It is scarlet, the color of blood, like the red horse (6:4)

It has 7 heads and 10 horns, like the red dragon (satanic)

It was and is not (ceases) and will come (again)

It comes up out of the abyss (demonic origin)

The 7 heads are 7 mountains, kingdoms (cf. Dan 2:34-45)

Five kingdoms have fallen, one is, and one has not yet come

The beast is part of the 7 kingdoms but is also an eighth

The 10 horns are 10 future, contemporary kings

They receive authority with the beast for a short time

They wage war against the Lamb and lose (Armageddon)

They also hate the great harlot and will destroy her

This beast is similar to, yet different than, the land beast (13). Daniel saw different animal symbols that depicted the Persian and Greco-Macedonian Empires (cf. Dan 7-8). The bear in Dan 7 was a ram in Dan 8, and the leopard in Dan 7 was a goat in Dan 8, but the meaning was the same.

The visions of Dan 2, Dan 7, Rev 13 and Rev 17 match the same pattern of Gentile kingdoms that precede the kingdom of God. This provides a basis for decoding the symbols of Rev 17.

Dan 2	Dan 7	Rev 13	Rev 17
Gold	Lion	1 Head	Harlot
Silver	Bear	1 Head	1 Head
Bronze	Leopard	4 Heads	4 Heads
Iron	Beast	1 Head	1 Head
Iron/Clay	---	---	1 Head
10 Toes	10 Horns	10 Horns	10 Horns

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Babylon is now the great harlot

The 5 fallen kingdoms are Persia and the 4 Greco-Macedonian successors

The current kingdom is Rome

The one to come is the Holy Roman Empire

The 10 horns are the 10 kings that support the Anti-Christ

However, Rev 17 doesn't provide any definite guidance about the five fallen kingdoms, so other options are possible:

1. Babylonian Empire (Golden Head),
2. Persian Empire (Silver Chest),
3. Greco-Macedonian (Bronze Belly),
4. Seleucid Empire (Bronze Thigh),
5. Ptolemaic Empire (Bronze Thigh)

Each of these 5 kingdoms conquered Jerusalem, Holy Land.

In Dan 2, the iron legs became the feet of iron and clay. In Rev 13, one head (Rome) was wounded and revived. The Roman Empire fell but came back to life as the Holy Roman Empire (it was and is not & will come).

At the request of the Papacy, the Holy Roman Empire and allied feudal states established a short lived Kingdom of Jerusalem. The Holy Roman Empire will reappear one last time (10 kings) with a similar goal in mind, but the Anti-Christ will hijack it.

Thus, the Anti-Christ is of the 7 but is also an 8<sup>th</sup>.

Dan 2:40-43 says that this revived, Holy Roman Empire will be partly strong and partly weak; iron mixed with clay. Iron means Rome; it is European, not Middle Eastern.

It will be a mixture of different peoples that don't stick together; there will be tension and friction in this alliance. This friction may explain the hatred of the 10 kings against the great harlot; they resent her over-bearing control. The great harlot may also be competing with the Anti-Christ for the worship and loyalty of the people (Church vs. State).

4. The beast is a demonic king

The beast is a powerful demon who comes up out of the abyss and wages war against the 2 witnesses (cf. 9:1-11, 11:7). He possesses the body of the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction (cf. 2Th 2:1-12, Rev 16:13, Mark 5:9). People also refer to him as the Anti-Christ, a false messiah and the ruler of Satan's kingdom on earth.

## Chapter 18

Rev 18:1 After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. 2 And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. 3 “For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality.”

### 1. An angel announces the fate of Babylon

Although Babylon is a metaphor for Rome, this vision uses the language of Isa 13, Isa 21, & Jer 50-51 to describe her fall

Isa 21:9 “Now behold, here comes a troop of riders, horsemen in pairs.” And one said, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon; and all the images of her gods are shattered on the ground.”

Jer 51:41 How Babylon is fallen— great Babylon, praised throughout the earth! Now she has become an object of horror among the nations (NLT).

### 2. Babylon becomes a prison

She has become “a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit.” Jesus told His disciples that wandering demons haunt desolate places searching for rest (Matt 12:43, Luke 11:24)

2Pet 2:4 For if God didn't spare angels when they sinned, but cast them down to **Tartarus**, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved for judgment (WEB)

Tartarus is a Greek name for the underworld, especially the abode of the damned; in Greek mythology, Tartarus was a deep abyss where Zeus and the Olympians imprisoned the Titans.

In Contra Apion 2.34, Josephus says that the oldest of the gods are “all chained in Tartarus” (ἐν τῷ ταρτάρῳ δεδεμένους). So, Tartarus is a place of preliminary detention for the demons pending their final judgment (cf. Matt 25:41)

When Jesus cast many demons out of a man, “they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss” (Luke 8:31 ESV). In Rev 9, a fallen star with a key unlocked the abyss and released a great plague of demonic locusts on the earth.

In Rev 20, a great angel will lock Satan in the abyss for 1000 years; evidently, God will place the demons back in detention.

For 1000 years, they will sulk and wail among the charred ruins of their former capital as they await eternal damnation.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 3. Babylon becomes a wasteland

Rev 18:2b (ESV) She has become... a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast.

Clearly, God has not abolished the Torah; He still considers animals to be clean or unclean (cf. Matt 5:17-20).

Jer 50:39 "Therefore the desert creatures will live there along with the jackals; the ostriches also will live in it, and it will never again be inhabited or dwelt in from generation to generation.

Isa 13:19 And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. 20 It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation; nor will the Arab pitch his tent there, nor will shepherds make their flocks lie down there. 21 But desert creatures will lie down there, and their houses will be full of owls; ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there. 22 Hyenas will howl in their fortified towers and jackals in their luxurious palaces. Her fateful time also will soon come and her days will not be prolonged.

### 4. The angel lists Babylon's crimes

She made all nations drunk (confused, deceived) with the wine of her immorality (spiritual). Her reach is worldwide; sin is addictive & deceitful (Heb 3:13). She committed immorality with earth's kings (political). She made merchants rich through her sensuality (economic). Wealth isn't sinful, but the misuse of wealth is. We should use wealth for godly purposes (Luke 16:11).

Rev 18:4 I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; 5 for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. 6 "Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her. 7 "To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, 'I SIT AS A QUEEN AND I AM NOT A WIDOW, and will never see mourning.' 8 "For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.

### 1. A warning for God's people today

Rev 18:4 I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues

The command comes "from heaven" (i.e., from God). It is addressed to "my people" (i.e., God's people). The command is "to come out of her" (i.e., separate). The reason is to avoid her sins & her punishment.

Although we live in the world, we shouldn't live like the world



## The Book of Revelation - Notes

John 17:14 (NIV) I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. 15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

Babylon's sins are spiritual, political and economic, so we must boycott her spiritually, politically and economically. Satan has his churches and his ministers (2Cor 11:13-15).

2Cor 6:14 Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?.

2Cor 6:17 "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.

Satan has his political and military systems

2Cor 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ

Satan has his economic systems (Blue Laws, BDS Movement). Christians should financially support God's ministers, who teach obedience to God's commandments. Christians should boycott companies, products & investments that promote sin if a better alternative exists. Check out [2ndvote.com](http://2ndvote.com) or [timothyplan.com](http://timothyplan.com) for ideas.

2. Her end comes quickly

Rev 18:8 "For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.

The phrase "in one day" may be literal or figurative; it is quick. The 7 last plagues will likely occur between the 1260 and 1290 days; they will bring famine, pestilence, raging fires, and death. As society collapses, the 10 kings will loot the city and flee, just like the Nazis did in Berlin at the end of WWII.

Rev 18:9 "And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning, 10 standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' 11 "And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more— 12 cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of citron wood and every article of ivory and every article made from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble, 13 and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume

and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargoes of horses and chariots and slaves and human lives. 14 "The fruit you long for has gone from you, and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you and men will no longer find them. 15 "The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, 16 saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls; 17 for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!' And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance, 18 and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What city is like the great city?' 19 "And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!' 20 "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her." 21 Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer. 22 "And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer; 23 and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery. 24 "And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth."

### 1. The world is sad but not repentant

The kings & merchants mourn over the destruction of Babylon, because they have lost their source of power and wealth. Even as the world comes to an end, people are only concerned about themselves; they refuse to repent. But, God's people are told to rejoice over her; God's judgment brings an end to her unrighteousness and persecution. God punishes her for all the innocent blood she has shed.

### 2. The final blow comes in one hour

The kings of the earth lament her destruction, saying, "Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come" (18:10). The merchants & sailors also say her end comes in one hour. Rev 16:19 says that when the seventh angel pours out his bowl, the great city was split into three parts by a great earthquake, and God gave Babylon the great the cup of His fierce wrath. Thus, God destroys the capital of the anti-God world empire.

### 3. Babylon's destruction is permanent

A strong angel throws a stone like a great millstone into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer" (18:21). The act of throwing the stone is a pantomime, a technique of conveying emotions or actions through gestures. This passage connects Babylon with "the great city" that is torn into 3 parts in Rev 16:19 and shows that her destruction is fast and final; no one will ever rebuild this city or live there again.

## Chapter 19

Rev 19:1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; 2 BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." 3 And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER."

Rev 19:4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" 5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great." 6 Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns."

### 1. Heaven sings Hallelujah!

Hallelujah is a Hebrew phrase that means "praise Yah" which is the shortened form of Yahweh. The Greek transliteration is *hallelouia*, which is the source of the English term "alleluia." This term only occurs 4 times in the New Testament, all of them here in Rev 19:1-6, emphasizing the joy of God's people. The use of several different Hebrew terms in Revelation is clear evidence that the Apostle John wrote this book.

### 2. Her smoke rises up forever

Rev 19:3b John hears heavenly voices saying, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER." This is an allusion to a fulfilled OT prophecy about Edom.

Isa 34:10 It will not be quenched night or day; its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will be desolate; none will pass through it forever and ever.

Smoke can't literally raise forever; this is a colorful metaphor to show that God has permanently destroyed the great harlot

### 3. The Lord our God reigns

Rev 19:6b John again hears heavenly voices saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns."

Luke 4:5 And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. 6 And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish."

The great earthquake at the conclusion of the 7 last plagues marks the end Satan's rule over the earth.

At this point, only one pocket of resistance still remains...

Rev 19:7 “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” 10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

### 1. Marriage of the Lamb

There are 3 symbolic women in Revelation: the celestial woman, the great harlot and the bride of the Lamb. Each vision is a self contained unit with its own meaning. OT prophecy uses the image of a woman to portray a group of people associated with a capital city (cf. Ezek 16, 23). The bride of the Lamb represents transformed Christians who inherit the kingdom of God and dwell in the New Jerusalem. This symbolism unfolds over these last four chapters.

There many NT marriage metaphors for Christ and the Church (e.g., Matt 22:1-14, John 3:28-30, 2Cor 11:2, Eph 5:21-32). The fine linen of the bride = the righteous acts of the saints. Clean linen is white, a color associated with purity (cf. 3:4-5). Thus, nakedness = a lack of righteousness (cf. 3:18, 16:15). At Mount Sinai, Israel entered into a marriage covenant. Now, Jesus celebrates a new covenant with spiritual Israel.

Jer 31:31 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. 33 “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law [torah] within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

### 2. Marriage supper of the Lamb

The angel said to John, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb”

Dan 12:11 “From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. 12 “How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days!

Armageddon and the marriage supper are separated by 45 days

Luke 13:28 “In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out. 29 “And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God.

Luke 12:37 (ESV) Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them.

Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. 13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

Rev 19:15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. 16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." 17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God, 18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great."

#### 1. Jesus re-appears on a white horse

He was last seen on Mount Zion with the 144,000 (14:1) after the blowing of the 7th trumpet which marked the Second Coming and the first resurrection at the end of the 1260 days.

Zech 12:7 "The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah. 8 "In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. 9 "And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 10 "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

While Jesus liberates Jerusalem, the 7 angels pour out the wrath of God on the world in His presence for 30 days (14:10). Then, He joins His angelic cavalry to deal with the beast.

#### 2. The Lamb is now a warrior

Jesus isn't a cute & cuddly lamb; He rules with a rod of iron, and in righteousness, He judges and wages war. His cavalry is pure white, the color of purity, holiness; this is a powerful contrast to the 200 million horsemen (cf. 9:13-19). But, His robe is stained with the blood of His enemies because He treads the wine press of God's fierce wrath (19:15). This is another allusion to a fulfilled OT prophecy about Edom.

Isa 63:1 (NIV) Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? Who is this, robed in splendor, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, proclaiming victory, mighty to save." 2 Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress? 3 "I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing.

Rev 19:15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations. The sword from His mouth symbolizes divine punishment; at His command, He unleashes divine power against His foes.

Joel 3:15 The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness. 16 The LORD roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth tremble. But the LORD is a refuge for His people and a stronghold to the sons of Israel.

### 3. The Lamb is now a king

A diadem is a type of crown, specifically an ornamental headband worn by monarchs and others as a badge of royalty (wikipedia.org, s.v. diadem). The red dragon wore 7 diadems (12:3) and the land beast wore 10 (13:1); Christ wears many diadems, replacing them as King of kings on earth (19:12). His robe is also embroidered with His new title: "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." This title may also be inscribed on a sword that He wears at His thigh.

### 4. The angels talk smack

Before an epic battle, armies will trash talk the enemy.

Goliath cursed David by his gods and said, "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field." But, David replied, "This day the LORD will deliver you up into my hands, and I will strike you down and remove your head from you. And I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (1Sam 17:43ff).

As the battle of Armageddon is about to begin, John sees an angel standing in the sun crying out with a loud voice to the birds, saying, "Come! Gather together for the great banquet God has prepared. Come and eat the flesh of kings, generals, and strong warriors; of horses and their riders; and of all humanity, both free and slave, small and great" (19:17-18 TLV)

Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. The Battle of Armageddon

Satan and his demons have already gathered the world's armies to Megiddo in northern Israel (16:16); this may not be the location of the actual battle, but it will be nearby.

Dan 11:45 He [the Antichrist] will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

Jesus treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God (19:15)

Joel 3:12 Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat [Yahweh judges], for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. 13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. 14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

Rev 14:19 So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. 20 And the wine press was trodden outside the city [Jerusalem], and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.

The distance from Jerusalem to Megiddo is barely 60 miles

Jesus kills His enemies with the sword of His mouth (19:21)

Zech 14:12 Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth. 13 It will come about in that day that a great panic from the LORD will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another.

### 2. The lake of fire begins

In ancient times, the citizens of Jerusalem burned their trash and the dead bodies of animals or criminals in "the valley of the sons of Hinnom" just south of Mount Zion; this is the origin of the term Gehenna (*ge bene hinnom*). Over time, it became a metaphor of God's final judgment. When Jesus liberates Jerusalem after the 1260 days, the people will need to dispose of many dead soldiers, so Jesus will create the lake of fire near Jerusalem to deal with this problem.

During the Battle of Armageddon, God's army will capture the beast and the false prophet, and they will be thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone (19:20).

1Thes 2:8 Then that lawless one [the Antichrist] will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming

For the next 1000 years, Jesus will keep this lake of fire burning to deal with the dead bodies of those who rebel against Him

Isa 66:23 And it shall be from new moon to new moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all mankind will come to bow down before Me," says the LORD. 24 Then they will go forth and look on the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die and their fire will not be quenched; and they will be an abhorrence to all mankind."

Matt 10:28 (WEB) Don't be afraid of those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.

## 2. The lake of fire begins

Mal 4:1 "For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch." 2 "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall. 3 "You will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing," says the LORD of hosts.

Humans are mortal; they are annihilated in the lake of fire and cease to exist. The immortal soul doctrine comes from Plato based on pagan Greek philosophy.

## Chapter 20

Rev 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

### 1. Satan is imprisoned for 1000 years

An angel binds Satan with a great chain and imprisons him in the abyss for 1000 years so he can't deceive the nations. This event matches the symbolism of Yom Kippur (cf. Lev 16); on the Day of Atonement, Israel would fast as a sign of repentance, and the High Priest would cast lots over two goats. The goat "for the Lord" was sacrificed to atone for the sins of the people, and the goat "for Azazel" was exiled into the wilderness by a special assistant (cf. Matt 27:17)

When Jesus returns, Israel will recognize their Messiah, whom they pierced, and they will mourn because of their sins. Jesus will provide atonement for the sins of the people through His sacrifice, and a special assistant will exile Satan into the abyss for 1000 years. God and humanity will be reconciled for the first time since the Garden of Eden, and Jesus will crush the head of the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan (cf. Rev 12:9, Gen 3:15)

### 2. Satan's deception ends

With Satan out of the way, God's truth will spread over the earth for 1000 years



## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Jer 16:19 O LORD, my strength and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of distress, to You the nations will come from the ends of the earth and say, "Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood, futility and things of no profit." 20 Can man make gods for himself? Yet they are not gods! 21 "Therefore behold, I am going to make them know—this time I will make them know My power and My might; and they shall know that My name is the LORD."

Isa 2:2 Now it will come about that in the last days the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it. 3 And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that He may teach us concerning His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For the law [torah] will go forth from Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Rev 20:4 Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

1. The saints will reign with Christ for 1000 years

The Bible tells us who the top leaders will be

Ezek 37:24 My servant David will be king over them [Israel], and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them.

Matt 19:28 And Jesus said to them [the 12 apostles], "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

But, every Christian will assist Jesus in ruling the kingdom

Rev 5:9 And they [the 4 living creatures and the 24 elders] 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. 10 "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

Heaven isn't the reward of the saved; we will inherit the earth

This event matches the symbolism of the feast of Sukkot when the Israelites live in tabernacles for 7 days (Lev 23:33-44). The first day of the feast of Sukkot is a special holy day, which pictures the marriage of the Bride and the Lamb at the start of the Millennial kingdom. The saints will worship before God's throne with palm branches (Hebrew lulav) in their hands (7:9), and "He who sits on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them" (7:15).

All nations will keep the feast of Sukkot during the Millennium

Zech 14:16 (NIV) Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, and to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles. 17 If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord Almighty, they will have no rain. 18 If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The Lord will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles.

## 2. There are two general resurrections

The dead are asleep in the grave (Hebrew Sheol; Greek Hades). The first resurrection occurs at the seventh trumpet, when the saints, living or dead, receive immortal, spiritual bodies. The second resurrection occurs at the end of the 1000 years, when the dead rise with physical bodies (cf. Ezek 37:1-14).

1Cor 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming

John 5:28 Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

Dan 12:2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. 3 Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

## 3. The first resurrection is special

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power

1Cor 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. 53 For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Rev 20:7 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. 9 And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

### 1. The war of Gog and Magog

At the end of the Millennium, the world consists of two groups, those who follow God and those who reject Him. God will use Satan to gather the rebels together to destroy them; everyone will have to choose sides. John identifies the leader of this rebellion as Gog and Magog, which refers to the prophecy of Ezek 38-39. Gog is the ruler of Magog, a confederation of peoples north of Israel, who march against the beloved city, Jerusalem.

Gog and Magog are like the sand of the seashore; they are able to surround God's people (i.e., they outnumber them). Thus, even under ideal conditions, the vast majority of human beings will still choose to reject God and follow Satan.

Matt 7:13 Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

Ezek 38-39 comes to pass at the end of the Millennium. John mentions Gog and Magog only once, in chapter 20. In Ezek 38-39, Israel has been at peace for a long time and is living in towns without security measures (Ezek 38:11). That can only be the end of the Millennium, not the start. Jesus destroys the armies of the beast with a plague, but God destroys Gog and Magog with fire at the end of the 1000 years, not the start (cf. Ezek 38:22, 39:6, Rev 20:9).

### 2. The damnation of Satan

The devil is thrown into the lake of fire with the beast and false prophet, and they are tormented forever and ever (20:10). John doesn't mention the other demons, but Jesus said that they will also be cast into the lake of fire.

Matt 25:41 Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels'

The lake of fire is also known as Gehenna. Satan and the demons are immortal spirits, so fire can't harm them, but they will suffer mental anguish forever. Evidently, the beast and the false prophet are demons who can enter the bodies of evil men (Rev 11:7, 17:8, Luke 22:3).

Rev 16:13 And I saw, coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits like frogs.

When beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire, their human hosts will die, but they will not.

2Thes 2:8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming

Matt 10:28 Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

Rev 20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

### 1. The second general resurrection

At the end of the 1000 years, God will resurrect everyone who was not in the first resurrection

Rev 20:5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed

They are resurrected with physical bodies, not spiritual bodies

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power

Those in the second resurrection can die in the lake of fire

Rev 20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them....

When a person dies, the body decays in the grave (Heb Sheol, Gk Hades), and the mind is unconscious (Eccl 9:5, 10). God is able to re-create a human body from the dust of the earth and put a human mind into that body. The dead person awakens to new life at the same age when they died with no knowledge of the passing of time.

God showed Ezekiel a valley full of dry bones that came to life

Ezek 37:11 Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.' 12 "Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel.

This statement is a double-entendre, a figurative and a literal resurrection of the nation of Israel

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Ezek 37:13 “Then you will know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people. 14 “I will put My Spirit within you and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken and done it,” declares the LORD.”

God will resurrect the ancient Israelites, place them in their own land, and give them a chance for salvation, which they didn't have living under the old covenant, prior to Jesus

Matt 12:41 “The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment, and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. 42 “The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

Clearly, the men of Nineveh and the queen of Sheba will learn about Jesus and the Gospel when they rise again

### 2. Judgment Day

John doesn't identify the person sitting on the great white throne, but this can only be Jesus Christ (Act 17:31, 2Tim 4:1)

John 5:22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son

2Cor 5:10 (NLT) For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.

Sometime after the second resurrection, Jesus will gather all people to His great white throne for final judgment

Matt 25:31 “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. 32 “All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; 33 and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.

The sheep inherit the kingdom; the goats are condemned to the lake of fire

Matt 11:20 Then He [Jesus] began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent. 21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 “Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

The only way that Judgment Day can be “more tolerable” for Tyre and Sidon is if Jesus gives them a chance to avoid damnation

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 3. Different books are opened

Rev 20:12 says that “books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds”

The first set of books (plural) is a record of human deeds that determines faith or unbelief, rewards or punishment. The second book (singular) is the book of life that lists the names of those who will receive eternal life (3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 21:27)

Matt 12:33 “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. 34 “You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart. 35 “The good man brings out of his good treasure what is good; and the evil man brings out of his evil treasure what is evil. 36 “But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. 37 “For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

### 4. The second death

Rev 20:14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Those who die the second time in the lake of fire are annihilated and cease to exist; there is no further resurrection for them

Therefore, even death and Hades (the grave) are also annihilated by the lake of fire and cease to exist

Some commentators assume that everyone in the second resurrection will be thrown into the lake of fire, but the text doesn’t say that and other passages contradict this view.

The second resurrection will consist of those who knew the truth and rejected it, as well as, those who never had a first chance for salvation; evidently, God will give this latter group their first and only chance for salvation (Isa 30:18, 2Pet 3:9). There will undoubtedly be billions of children in this resurrection who will be able to grow up and have a chance for salvation.

The second resurrection may include people who come to faith during the Millennium and die of old age, or God might grant them resurrection bodies when they die; the text isn’t clear.

Although Satan and the demons will be tormented forever, the text doesn’t say that the lake of fire burns forever; it will grow and consume every evil work (2Pet 3:10-13)

This leads to the next phase of God’s plan in Rev 21 – the new heaven and the new earth....

## Chapter 21

Rev 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, 4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

### 1. The first heaven and the first earth pass away

2Pet 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. 11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

The great white throne judgment ends with everything wicked being cast into the lake of fire (20:10-15). Evidently, this "fire" will spread until it consumes and cleanses the heavens (plural) and the earth; everything is transformed. There is no further mention of Satan and the demons; they are in a separate place of detention for all eternity. God won't leave the earth in a burned out state; He will create something new to replace it - just like Genesis 1.

### 2. A new heaven and a new earth

This is allusion to another Old Testament prophecy

Isa 65:17 For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.

2Pet 3:13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

The Bible speaks of 3 heavens: the atmosphere, outer space, God's throne (2Cor 12:2)

Evidently, God plans to transform this universe since the third heaven is already eternal and perfectly righteous

Ps 102:25 Of old You founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. 26 Even they will perish, but You endure; and all of them will wear out like a garment; like clothing You will change them and they will be changed.

Matt 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

The biblical Holy Days listed in Lev 23 picture important events in God's plan of salvation. The Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot) pictures the marriage of the Lamb and the Millennial kingdom; falls on Tishri 15-21. Shemini Atzeret, the eighth day, pictures the great white throne judgment, the new heavens & the new earth.

Once this world passes away, much of the Torah is obsolete

Matt 5:17 Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 18 For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

The eternal state will be a "time of reformation" (Heb 9:10)

### 3. The new Jerusalem

The new Jerusalem comes down out of heaven from God. A voice from the throne calls it the "tabernacle" of God using the Greek term *shene*. The voice also says that God will "dwell" among His people; the Greek verb is *shenoo*, which means to tabernacle. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, He told Moses, "Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them," so Israel built a tabernacle for God (Ex 25:8).

Rev 21:4 and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.

This is an allusion to another Old Testament prophecy

Isa 65:18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing and her people for gladness. 19 I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying.

Rev 21:5 And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." 6 Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. 7 "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. 8 "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

### 1. A promise from God

He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end; these are unique titles of deity (Isa 44:6). He promises, "I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost" (cf. Isa 55:1, Rev 7:17).



## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the well, “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life” (John 4:13-14)

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

This was during the water pouring ceremony on the last day of Sukkot when Israel prayed for life giving rain, which symbolizes the pouring out of the Holy Spirit in the kingdom

### 2. A second promise from God

He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son (21:7) Christians will receive an eternal inheritance, as God’s children, in the new heaven, the new earth, and the new Jerusalem. God is encouraging every Christian, from the first century to the return of Jesus, to remain faithful despite persecution. The suffering of this life is temporary; the joy of salvation is eternal.

### 3. A third promise from God

Sinners receive the second death, lake of fire and brimstone. This includes the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, immoral persons, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars.

1John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

Heb 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

The abominable are those defile themselves with unclean creatures or sexual perversion (e.g., Lev 11:43, 18:24). Immoral persons (Greek *pornos*): a fornicator, male prostitute.

This agrees with other NT sin lists (1Cor 6:9-10, Gal 5:19-21).

Grace is not a license to sin; God will not save anyone who refuses to repent and obey Him (Matt 7:19-23, Rom 2:13, Heb 10:26-27, James 2:17)

Rev 21:9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper.

Rev 21:12 It had a great and high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels; and names were written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13 There were three gates on the east and three gates on the north and three gates on the south and three gates on the west. 14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

### 1. The new Jerusalem is the Bride

An angel says he will show John “the bride, the wife of the Lamb” and then shows him the new Jerusalem. The OT often uses the image of a woman to depict a group of people associated with a capital city. In Ezek 16, God depicted ancient Jerusalem as an unfaithful wife. In Rev 21, God depicts the new Jerusalem as a beautiful bride because she is the home of “those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life” (21:27).

### 2. The new Jerusalem sparkles

John says, “Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper” (21:11 NASB). Jasper comes in many different colors, but it isn’t crystal-clear.

The Greek says it is: ὡς λίθῳ ἰάσπιδι κρυσταλλίζοντι

John uses the present active participle of κρυσταλλίζω which means to shine like crystal, so it could be better rendered as “like a shiny, sparkling jasper” denoting a polished gem. The gold also shines like clean glass but isn’t transparent (21:18).

### 3. The new Jerusalem has 12 gates

There are 3 gates on each side; if they match the same pattern as the millennial city in Ezekiel 48:30-34, they would be:

- North: Reuben, Judah, Levi
- East: Joseph, Benjamin, Dan
- South: Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun
- West: Gad, Asher, Naphtali

Note that Ephraim & Manasseh are combined into Joseph; Dan is included here but was omitted from the 144,000 (7:5-8)

Each gate is named after one of the 12 tribes of Israel because Israel is central to God’s plan of salvation

Rom 3:1 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? 2 Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

Jesus told the woman at the well, “You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews” (John 4:22 NLT)

4. The new Jerusalem has 12 foundations

Rev 21:14 And the wall of the city had 12 foundation stones, and on them were the 12 names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb.

Eph 2:19 So then you [Gentiles] are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Rev 21:15 The one who spoke with me had a gold measuring rod to measure the city, and its gates and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as the width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal. 17 And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements. 18 The material of the wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

Rev 21:19 The foundation stones of the city wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation stone was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; 20 the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. 21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

1. The new Jerusalem is BIG

The city is laid out as a square (tetragonos), and an angel uses a golden rod to measure its length, height, and width (all equal). This implies that the city is laid out as a cube, not a pyramid as some think. The term "city" implies vertical walls, and a pyramid does not have gates. Also, the height of a pyramid would be calculated, not measured.

The length = height = width = 12,000 stadia ~ 1,400 miles. The corners of the walls would almost fit within the sphere of the moon. The wall is 144 cubits thick (12 x 12). Is it a physical object or a metaphor? It comes down out of heaven, but the text doesn't say if it lands on the earth. Does it rest on earth or orbit above?

2. The new Jerusalem is colorful

The 12 foundation stones are studded with gems: jasper (various), sapphire (blue), chalcedony (various), emerald (green), sardonyx (red-white), sardius (red/honey), chrysolite (golden), beryl (green), topaz (yellow/green), chrysoprase (green), jacinth (violet), amethyst (purple).

When the Israelites built the tabernacle at Mount Sinai, God told them to make a breast-piece for the High Priest with 12 gems inscribed with the names of the 12 tribes (Ex 28); the lists don't match, but God is certainly artistic.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

Rev 21:22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25 In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; 26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; 27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

### 1. The new Jerusalem is glorious

There is no temple because God and the Lamb live there. It doesn't need exterior lighting; the Lamb fills it with light. His light is so bright, there is no night there. John also says, "The nations will walk by its light" (21:24), which is clearly a double-entendre; God will illuminate the world both physically and spiritually.

Its gates will never be closed because there will be no night there; the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it (21:24-26)

Isa 60:11 Your gates will be open continually; they will not be closed day or night, so that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession.

Isa 60:19 No longer will you have the sun for light by day, nor for brightness will the moon give you light; but you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, and your God for your glory.

After the great white throne judgment, there is no more death; the only people still alive at this time are saved people who have immortal, spiritual bodies (Matt 25:31-46, Rev 20-21).

Therefore, the kings of the earth must be the saints from the first resurrection who received thrones with Christ.

The kingdom of God is an eternal, hierarchical government; those who come to God now receive greater rewards in the kingdom than those who receive salvation later.

### 2. The new Jerusalem is holy

John also says that "nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life" (21:27).

After the white throne judgment, God will incinerate the earth with a lake of fire; He will annihilate wicked humans along with everything unclean as the elements melt (2Pet 3:10-13).

Somehow, God will also separate Satan and the demons from the new heavens and the new earth; they are gone forever

## Chapter 22

Rev 22:1 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2 in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4 they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5 And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever.

### 1. The river of the water of life

In Rev 22:1, John sees a river of the water of life coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb running down the middle of the street of the new Jerusalem. This vision extends the prophecy of Ezek 47:1-12 and Zech 14:8, where a river of living water flows from the millennial temple in Jerusalem to the eastern and western seas. The river of the water of life symbolizes the Holy Spirit, so this scene is a biblical representation of the Trinity (John 7:37-38).

### 2. The tree of life

John also sees the tree of life on either side of the river, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations

Ezek 47:12 By the river on its bank, on one side and on the other, will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail. They will bear every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.

This reference to the tree of life connects Rev 22 with Gen 1-3

### 2. The tree of life

Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.

Clearly, God intends for His people to eat the fruit of this tree, which symbolizes the gift of eternal life (cf. Gen 3:22). Some have wondered if the comment about the leaves healing the nations refers to the millennium; since there is no more suffering or death in the eternal state, it seems unlikely that there would still be any physical bodies that need healing.

### 3. No more curse

John says that “there will no longer be any curse” (22:3), which again connects Rev 22 with Gen 3:14-19. Rev 2:7 connects the tree of life with the Paradise of God. Rev 22 describes the completion of God’s plan of salvation; the new Jerusalem represents the restoration of Paradise and the reconciliation of humanity with their Creator.

Rev 20-22 is the conclusion of a story that began in Gen 1-3

3. No more curse

<b>Gen 1-3 The Problem</b>	<b>Rev 20-22 The Solution</b>
Satan deceives humans	God illuminates humans
Sin, death	Righteousness, salvation
Humanity is cursed	Humanity is blessed
Tree of life removed	Tree of life restored
Paradise lost	Paradise regained

Rev 22:6 And he said to me, "These words are faithful and true"; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place. 7 "And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book." 8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. 9 But he said to me, "Do not do that. I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God."

1. Jesus is coming again

John says that the Lord sent His angel (Greek messenger) to show to His bond-servants the things which must soon take place. This may imply that the message to the 7 churches in Rev 2-3 covers a long period of time from John's day to the present. In Rev 22:7, Jesus says, "And behold, I am coming quickly."

2Pet 3:8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.

2. A promise from God

Rev 22:7 Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book

There are only two possible outcomes for every human being: (1) eternal life with God or (2) the lake of fire.

Deut 30:19 (NIV) This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live

Rev 22:10 And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. 11 "Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy." 12 "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. 13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

### 1. Revelation isn't sealed

The angel tells John, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near." The angel who spoke to Daniel said the exact opposite.

Dan 12:8 As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?" 9 He said, "Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. 10 "Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand.

### 1. Revelation isn't sealed

Ps 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever.

This again implies that the message to the 7 churches covers the period from the first century until the final heptad. It also implies that "the end time" began in John's day (1Jn 2:18). And, it also implies that true Christians can now understand the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation if they obey God.

### 2. There is no call to repentance

The angel also said to John, "Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy" (22:11). This seems odd because God always desires repentance. Revelation is the last book that God gave to the Church and the last book of the Bible; if people have read God's entire message and haven't repented by this point, they never will.

### 3. We are rewarded for our works

Jesus said, "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done." We are saved by grace, which is a gift that can't be earned, but God will also reward Christians for their works; this will include a greater or lesser position in His kingdom.

Matt 25:21 (ESV) His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

Rev 22:14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. 15 Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. 16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." 17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.

## The Book of Revelation - Notes

### 1. No dogs allowed

Sinners will never enter the new Jerusalem; Jesus will destroy them in the lake of fire after the white throne judgment. This list here is similar to Rev 21:8, 27; it includes dogs, sorcerers, fornicators, murderers, idolaters, and all liars. The term “dog” refers to the ungodly in general or to a male prostitute in particular (Deut 23:18, Mt 7:6, Php 3:2).

Ps 22:16 (NIV) Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet.

### 2. Jesus is the root and descendant of David

This is a reference to the deity of Jesus Christ; He is the God of the OT who created Adam and Eve, and He is the son of David through His human mother Mary (Luke 3:23-38)

John 6:46 Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father

John 1:18 (NLT) No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father’s heart. He has revealed God to us.

Rev 22:18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book. 20 He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming quickly.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. 21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

### 1. Don’t change the message

No one is allowed to add or delete anything from this book; changing the message could result in the loss of salvation. Translators and theologians have a serious duty to explain the meaning of the text clearly and accurately.

2Tim 2:15 (ESV) Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

### 2. A final promise

Jesus testifies, “Yes, I am coming quickly” (22:20). God’s plan of salvation began nearly 6000 years ago in Eden; from His point of view, the millennial Sabbath is almost here. If we die in the Lord, we will sleep until the last trumpet; from our point of view, God’s kingdom is just one heartbeat away.

Hab 2:3 (NLT) This vision is for a future time. It describes the end, and it will be fulfilled. If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.