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# REVELATION



A GOOD GROUND  
CHURCH STUDY

# INTRODUCTION

The book of Revelation is one of the most misunderstood books in the entire Bible. It is incredibly important to study though. It is the ending to the Bible, making it important to understand the entire story that is being told by Scripture.

It also promises blessings to those who read and hear it!

It is important to understand that there are good and bad ways to interpret Scripture, specifically prophetic text.

1. Don't search for mysterious meanings, when an explanation can be found in the text itself.
2. Understand the meaning of symbols by looking immediately in the context you are reading. If you can't find any meaning there, go back in Scripture to find it.

# CHAPTER 1

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## Revelation 1:1-3

[1] The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, [2] who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. [3] Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near. (ESV)

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# CHAPTER 1

The book of Revelation is a letter like most of the New Testament.

It was written by the Apostle John on the Island of Patmos around 95 AD.



Revelation means unveiling or revealing.

It was an unveiling that was given to John that played out before his eyes. He literally wrote down what he saw.

He didn't interpret what he saw, so interpretation is left to the reader by the Holy Spirit.

# CHAPTER 1

This is a revelation given so that the servants of Christ might know and understand what is to come.

There is also a blessing promised to those who read and hear what is written.

## Revelation 1:4-8

**[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 kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood [6] and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. [7] Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. 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.” (ESV)**

# CHAPTER 1

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The writer of the author is the Apostle John.

There is the first use of numerology in this book, seven. Seven in the Bible is used with completion or wholeness.

The seven churches used here mean all of the churches. So even though this is a reference to seven physical churches, the messages are intended for all of the churches, across all ages.

# CHAPTER 1

The terms used in verse 8 for Jesus are Alpha and Omega.

These are the beginning and ending letters of the Greek alphabet. Jesus is saying that He is the beginning and ending of all things.

Everything begins and ends with Jesus!

He is the author and finisher of our faith.

After John introduces this letter, he speaks of how he received it.

## **Revelation 1:9-11**

**[[9] I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account 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 a trumpet [11] saying, "Write what you see in a book 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."**

# CHAPTER 1

## Revelation 1:12-16

[12] Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, [13] and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around his chest. [14] The hairs of his head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, [15] his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. [16] In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength. (ESV)

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# CHAPTER 1

John introduces himself to the recipients of the letter. He is the Apostle John.

He writes it from the island of Patmos off the coast close to Ephesus. Once John returned from exile, this letter was probably circulated.

He was probably in his early 80's at the time of the writing.

John says that he was having a very spiritual day, in the Greek a “Lordy” day when he received a visitor.

It was a voice like a trumpet proclaiming to write what he sees.

The individual who was speaking we will see is Jesus standing in the middle of seven lampstands and holding seven stars.

The seven lampstands are most likely menorahs because no other type of lampstand is mentioned by John.

The lampstands represent the churches and the seven stars are the angels who serve the churches under Jesus' control.

# CHAPTER 1

The lampstands make sense to represent the churches, because the church illuminates the darkness with the light of Jesus.

Jesus' appearance is unique. It is His glorified body.

John says that He had hair like wool, eyes like fire, feet like bronze, a voice like roaring waters, a sword coming out of His mouth.

All of these match references found in the Old Testament.

Eyes of fire, hair of wool (Daniel 7:9)

Voice of roaring waters (Psalm 93)

Two edged sword (Hebrews 4)

All of these represent who Jesus is. His glowing whiteness represents purity and holiness. His robe is as His role of high priest with the sash representing faithfulness. The eyes of fire represent discernment. The face shining like the sun represents the light and truth of His holiness. His glowing feet represent judgment.

# CHAPTER 1

## Revelation 1:17-20

[17] When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, [18] and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades. [19] Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. [20] As for the mystery of the seven stars that 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.

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# CHAPTER 1

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John reacts with fear at seeing Jesus. He had a close relationship with Jesus when He walked the Earth, yet here he falls in fear.

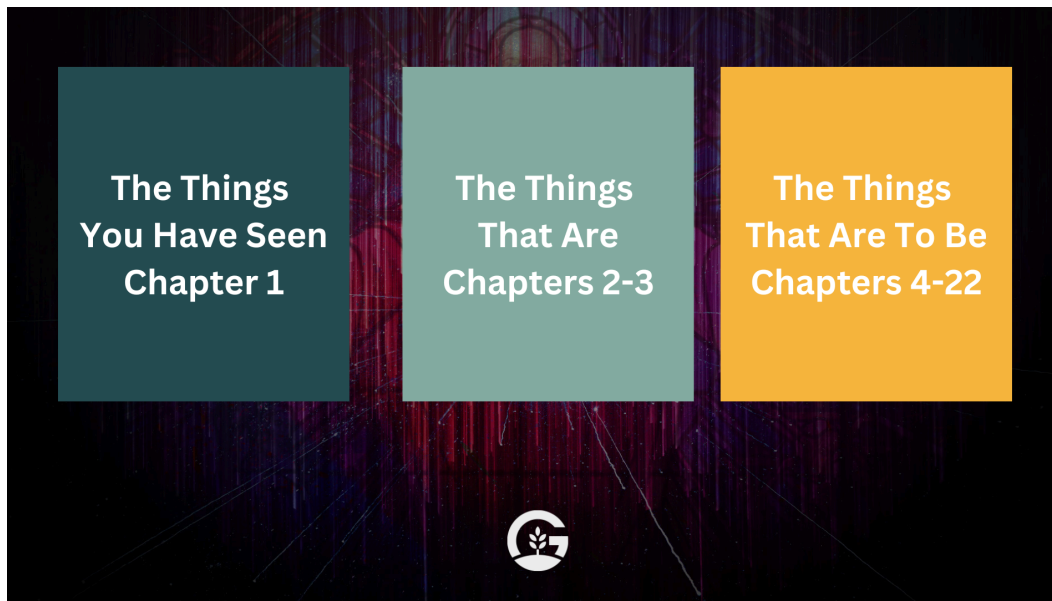
This is Jesus' glorified body. This is how He will appear at His second coming.

Jesus tells John to fear not.

And then Jesus tells him who He is.

And Jesus tells John what he is about to write.

# CHAPTER 1



This is an outline for the entire book of Revelation.

The things you have seen (Chapter 1)

*What John has written about and seen up until this point.*

The things that are (Chapters 2-3)

*The things that are. Those things leading up to a dramatic shift in Chapter 4.*

The things that are to be (Chapters 4-22)

*The things that are to be after the things that are.*

## CHAPTER 2

The book of Revelation is a series of letters within a single letter.

There are three ways to interpret these letters:

1. The literal meaning, what they say directly to that individual church.
2. The universal meaning, what they say to the church as a whole.
3. The prophetic meaning, what they say about a particular church age.

These seven churches are located in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). And the geographic pattern is arranged like a clock.



## CHAPTER 2

These churches countdown the ages of the church until Christ's return.

And this wasn't realized until the last of these church ages, because it wasn't realized until that final church age that the events of these ages closely aligned with historical events.

### Revelation 2:1-7

**[1] “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands. [2] “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. [3] I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not grown weary. [4] But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. [5] Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. [6] Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. [7] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’ (ESV)**

# CHAPTER 2

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Each letter is highly structured.

The letter begins with the church's name, usually has some sort of commendation and then a criticism, a warning and a promise.

There are also three ways to look at these letters:

- Literal
- Universal
- Prophetic



## CHAPTER 2

### Ephesus

Ephesus was a port city on the Mediterranean Sea

It was an influential city in the days of this letter's writing.

It also had one of the most influential churches of the early days of Christianity.

Jesus reminds the church that He holds the seven stars in His hands and walks among the seven lampstands.

It would seem that Jesus is reminding the church that He is in charge of the church and that He is over it still.

There are a number of commendations. They toil in perseverance and do not tolerate evil. In fact, they don't tolerate false apostles.

They also hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans.

So they tested apostles to make sure they fit the bill and they did not tolerate those who tried to lord a level of clergy over the people of the church.

## CHAPTER 2

But for all of the commendation, there is some criticism, Jesus says that they have forgotten their first love.

It seems that they refused to give Jesus rule over their lives.

Jesus said the way to fix this was to repent and do their first works over.

The church was active, but not in the right ways. They were busy doing things, but not the things Jesus wanted them to do.

This is the life of a self-satisfied Christian. Living off-mission. You are a member of the body of Christ, but are you being led by the Holy Spirit?

This is something the universal church can learn from as well. It does us well to remember that we are not our own and that we were bought with a price. We should be led by the Holy Spirit and follow His leading in all things that we do.

# CHAPTER 2

The Apostolic church began at Pentecost, so this letter tells us how the early church began. Initially it was led by the Apostles so they held to sound teaching and rejected false doctrine.

But as the Apostles died out and Romans began to intermingle with Jewish believers, pagan culture infiltrated the church. Eventually believers were more immature and carnal. And it became a self-satisfied organization.

In order to shake this up, Christ sent persecution and what was left were individuals truly committed to Christ.

<b>CHURCH AGE</b>	7	<b>LAODICEA</b>	<b>Apostate Church</b> 1900-? AD
	6	<b>PHILADELPHIA</b>	<b>Missionary Church</b> 1648-1900 AD
	5	<b>SARDIS</b>	<b>Reformation Church</b> 1517-1648 AD
	4	<b>THYATIRA</b>	<b>Roman Catholic Church</b> 600-1517 AD
	3	<b>PERGAMUM</b>	<b>Roman Empire Church</b> 313-600 AD
	2	<b>SMYRNA</b>	<b>Persecuted Church</b> 100-313 AD
	1	<b>EPHESUS</b>	<b>Apostolic Church</b> 30-100 AD

# CHAPTER 2

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## Revelation 2:8-11

[8] “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: ‘The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life. [9] “I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that 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 throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto 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. The one who conquers will not be hurt by the second death.’ (ESV)

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## CHAPTER 2

### Smyrna

Smyrna is a Greek transliteration of the word smurna which means myrrh.

Myrrh was an embalming spice used for dead bodies.

Smyrna was a Roman city filled with pagan temples. It was closely associated with emperor worship.

Roman law did not forbid religions other than emperor worship with some exceptions, most notably Judaism. Early Christianity was associated with Judaism by the Romans so it was initially left alone, but as they separated, Christians faced persecution.

Smyrna was probably on the forefront of this. Jesus' words reflect this.

He wanted Smyrna to see that for the persecuted church, death is not the end. Not only did they face persecution, but they also faced poverty because of it.

Jesus says do not fear the persecution they face. He said to face it with faith.

## CHAPTER 2

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### Smyrna

Jesus says that they will face prison for a short time and then face death.

Roman prisons were efficient and a decision was usually made within ten days as to judgment. This number ten is consistent with that number but also this number in the Bible means testimony.

So Jesus is saying this is an opportunity for testimony.

He says for them to not fear the second death. Their short-term suffering will result in eternal blessings.

The prophetic meaning of this church refers to the time of persecution suffered by the church in the Roman Empire from 96 AD - 313 AD.

Ten emperors starting with Domitian persecuted the church heavily. So the ten days of persecution applied not just to Smyrna but also the universal church.

## CHAPTER 2

### Revelation 2:12-17

[12] “And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write: ‘The words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword. [13] “‘I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. [14] But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality. [15] So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. [16] Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and 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 the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it.’ (ESV)

## CHAPTER 2

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### Pergamum

Pergamum is a mix of two words pergos and gamos and alludes to the union or marriage of a powerful institution.

It was a powerful seat of authority which held the ability to apply capital punishment.

Also had a number of pagan temples and a school of medicine.



## CHAPTER 2

Jesus says he holds the two-edged sword indicating He holds judgment and correction.

He commends the church says that they dwell where Satan's throne is, yet you hold fast to His name name.

Pergamum was home to the pagan worship of the god Esculapius represented by a snake and had a large amount of persecution. Antipas who stood against this persecution and was martyred for his stance.

But the church also had something against it, and that was they held to the doctrine of Balaam. Balaam, he was a prophet of God in the book of Numbers who was corrupt and greedy.

When offered money by Israel's enemy Balak, he tried to curse them. God prevents this from happening, but the intent of Balaam's heart is what Jesus is talking about here.

## CHAPTER 2

Pergamum tried to put stumbling blocks before believers, most notably related to sexual immorality and eating food sacrificed to idols.

So the church was teaching false doctrine because it was greedy.

It also had some who held to the doctrine of the Nicolaitans who we talked about earlier at Ephesus.

Jesus has correction for these false teachings, He says to repent, or else He will come with a two-edged sword. Jesus says I'm coming with judgment unless you correct your ways.

The idea of the doctrine of Balaam also applies to the church as a whole.

We need to guard against false doctrines invading our churches.

We need to ensure that we hold to sound teaching.

And that we don't become so greedy for power, numbers of prestige that in the process we compromise the teaching of the Gospel.

## CHAPTER 2

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Jesus says that he who overcomes will receive hidden manna and a white stone.

The hidden manna is meant to be a contrast to the meat offered to false idols.

The stone goes back to the healing center where individuals would be healed of their afflictions. It was said that once they performed a ritual and they were healed they would receive a white stone with their name on it to serve as a testimony to a false god. The contrast Jesus gives is that believers will receive a white stone with respect to their everlasting spiritual healing.

From a prophetic standpoint, this church represents around 313 AD. because that is when Constantine declared Christianity to be a state religion.

The church was married and joined to a powerful institution, Rome and persecution ended. So numbers were up, but also were all sorts of various ideas that came in from pagan practices, many of which crowded out Biblical doctrine.

Roman authorities became a stumbling block before believers. Eventually the sword did come around 600 AD when the Roman Empire was fractured and fell.

## CHAPTER 2

### Revelation 2:18–29

[18] “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: ‘The words of the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose feet are like burnished bronze.[19] “‘I know your works, your love and faith and service and patient endurance, and that your latter works exceed the first. [20] But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing my servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols. [21] I gave her time to repent, but she refuses to repent of her sexual immorality. [22] Behold, I will throw her onto a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works, [23] and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am he who searches mind and heart, and I will give to each of you according to your works. [24] But to the rest of you in Thyatira, who do not hold this teaching, who have not learned what some call the deep things of Satan, to you I say, I do not lay on you any other burden. [25] Only hold fast what you have until I come. [26] The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, [27] and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself 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.’ (ESV)

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### Thyatira

Thyatira was another pagan center of worship whose name means something along the lines of perpetual sacrifice.

It was the least significant of all the cities written to.

Jesus emphasizes the eyes of fire and feet of brass meaning He was looking at the church in judgment looking for purity.

## CHAPTER 2

Jesus says that they had love, service faith and patient endurance. And also that their works have increased. They are doing more things, service is up, they are helping others receive these good works.

They are working pious and diligently. But they became more service-based and not mission-based.

Jesus says this of the church, that they tolerate the woman Jezebel. Jezebel was the wife of Ahab a king of northern Israel in the Old Testament. It was a name synonymous with evil and corruption. The readers would have understood that this individual wasn't really named Jezebel, but rather this was an association of a person with the spirit of Jezebel.

Jesus is saying that a women or several women were claiming to be prophetesses and corrupting the church on the grounds of meat sacrificed to idols and sexual immorality. This individual had an evil heart who sought to do evil. The result of her unrepentant heart, she along with many of her children (her followers) will die.

For those who are true believers, Jesus tells them to hold fast. He assures them that one day they will rule with Jesus in the kingdom

Pergamum we had believers promoting false teaching and in Thyatira we have unbelievers in charge of teaching.

## CHAPTER 2

For the church as a whole this again reminds us to guard our doctrine.

To guard what we believe and most importantly to understand what we believe!

The prophetic age of the church runs from 600 AD - 1517 AD.

It was an age dominated by the Roman Catholic church, rising out of the rubble of the Roman Empire and became somewhat of a unifying power.

The church went from being joined with the government to being a government. The church ruled but not spiritually.

The church took over a number of social services, so works were increased but at the sacrifice of the mission of the church. Conversion was a matter of necessity rather than faith.

As a result of the heresies, judgment came. Sickness fell during this period through the Black Plague. Some of the hardest hit was the church due to the leaders carrying this disease around with them.

As a result the church weakened in both their hold over society as well as government. One of the biggest things the Black Plague led to was the Reformation.

# CHAPTER 3

Chapter three covers the final three church letters that John wrote to at the beginning of the book of Revelation: Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.





# CHAPTER 3

## Revelation 3:1–6

[1] “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: ‘The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.’ “I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. [2] Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. [3] Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you. [4] Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments, and they will walk with me in white, for they are worthy. [5] The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. 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.’ (ESV)

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# CHAPTER 3

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## Sardis

Sardis was a wealthy city that was in decline in John's day.

It's name means remnant. It was famous for being the place that first invented dyed wool and it was also known as having a very apathetic culture.

It was also known as an impregnable city with fortified walls difficult to break through.

Jesus says that He knows their works, not mentioning what they are, and that they have a reputation for being alive yet they are dead.

## CHAPTER 3

In other words, they had faith without the accompanying works.

Sardis had faith, but there was nothing to show for it and that's why their works are not complete in Jesus' sight. The church was content with having faith alone without spreading it.

The Christian walk should be as much practice as theory, but the church at Sardis became so wrapped up in theory that they failed to practice it.

It's the opposite of a Thyatira church where Thyatira was more interested in service than in holding onto sound doctrine. In Sardis, they were more interested in doctrine than putting it into practice.

Jesus told them to strengthen themselves, so there were some remaining who held firm to the truth and understood what the true church was.

He says remember what you received and heard. In other words, the key to being the true church is to take what you know first received. Have that same infectious joy and take it to others.

This is a warning for the church as a whole to not keep what we know inside of us and not take it outside the four walls of the church. The mission of the church is to take what we know outside of the four walls and serve outside.

## CHAPTER 3

The prophetic era of the church would be the Reformation Era from 1517 AD to 1648 AD.

The Reformation truly formed the church, it brought about a recommitment to Biblical truth and sound doctrine.

But also a number of things were abandoned during this time. There was an abandonment of evangelism and a de-emphasis on charitable works.

Perhaps because the Roman Catholic church emphasized salvation by works so much, the Reformation period abandoned it altogether.

So this became a culture that was alive in name only. It produced lazy Christians.

Eventually the church awoke and new Protestant faiths began to emerge.

And as result of the church awakening, a new age began.

## CHAPTER 3

### Revelation 3:7–13

[7] “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens. [8] “‘I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. [9] Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will learn that I have loved you. [10] Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth. [11] I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. [12] The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, 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 from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. [13] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’ (ESV)

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Philadelphia was a small but prosperous commercial center at the time of the early church.

The name of the city means “brotherly love”.

Jesus begins by saying He has the key of David in other words the key to grant access to the mercy seat in the temple.

He has the ability to grant forgiveness, and it is a door that He has opened and nobody can shut.

## CHAPTER 3

Philadelphia was a smaller church, but it was also a powerful church.

It became a model for how to evangelize. They abided in Him, relying on the Holy Spirit, operating in humility.

They are also one of the two churches to receive no chastisement from Jesus along with Smyrna. It seems one common thread among these churches was that they were both persecuted.

And as a result of their steadfastness, Jesus promised to keep them in the coming hour of persecution. There was no widespread persecution at the time of this letter's writing so it must be in a future time.

They are encouraged to hold fast because He is coming quickly. So this reminds us as the universal church to remain faithful to Christ.

To remain faithful and to be the whole church. To not just be like Thyatira and do works only, to not just be like Sardis and hold on to sound doctrine, but to be both.

Philadelphia had sound doctrine and then put that doctrine into practice. It is a reminder for us to walk out our faith and live it out before others.

## CHAPTER 3

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In terms of a prophetic aspect, this church age starts off where the Reformation ends in 1648 AD and runs to roughly 1900 AD.

After the Treaty of Westphalia the church experienced a remarkable rebirth through missionary movements.

There was a breakaway from state-run denominations.

So they were weaker in terms of not having as much ground to stand on, but they were more powerful and effective because they didn't rely on the state for their power, but on the Holy Spirit.

But it also introduced persecution as well.

Along with persecution came the mobilization of the church.

The church moved out of Europe and to North and South America. And for a time, the church re-established the true outward witnessing mission of the church.



## CHAPTER 3

### Revelation 3:14–22

[14] “And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: ‘The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God’s creation. [15] “I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! [16] So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. [17] For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. [18] I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. [19] Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so 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 eat with him, and he with me. [21] The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered 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.” (ESV)

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Where the church at Philadelphia received no criticisms, the church at Laodicea receive no commendations.

Laodicea means judgment of the people.

It was a very prosperous city. They generally refused any aid from the state because they were so wealthy.

They were known for banks and for their wool industry.

They also had a medical school known for selling a renowned eye ointment.

## CHAPTER 3

Jesus says He is the true and faithful witness.

He says He knows their works that they are neither hot nor cold. And He says that because of their lukewarm state He will vomit them out of His mouth.

This is an odd choice of words!

You have to understand that Laodicea was situated at the place where two rivers came together. One fresh-water, the other a sulfurous mixture.

Both had their benefits when separated, but when they mixed together what they became was of no use and in fact if you drank it you would vomit.

So such is the Laodicean's lives. They were unfit for anything because they were neither hot nor were they cold.

If they were hot, they could be found useful for service...

If they were cold, they could be converted and realize their unbelief and separation.

But they were somewhere in between.

## CHAPTER 3

The bigger problem was that they were blind to all of this.

They thought that they had it all when in reality they had nothing!  
They thought they were rich when they were poor.  
They thought that they were strong when they were weak.

Jesus says that the church existed as a church, but lacked none of what the church should be.

Jesus' solution is for the church to buy gold refined by Him.

Eternal treasure that does not perish.

Clothe themselves with white garments, put on holiness and sanctify themselves.

Finally to anoint their eyes with salve to see (look to heaven to see their eternal reward)

This is a warning for us today to make sure that we guard our hearts and to ensure that we live pure and holy lives. That is what holiness and sanctification are about, being different.

When we are different we live apart from who the world is and we become more like Christ. We also guard ourselves from becoming lukewarm by being formed in the image of Christ.

## CHAPTER 3

From a prophetic perspective, this is what we would call the Apostate church and runs from 1900 roughly to when the events of chapter 4 take place.

Around 1900 we began to see a number of charges in the church with respect to challenging the inerrancy of Scripture.

Compromises were made in doctrine and we face a number of issues in our churches today that stand against the truth of Scripture.

Because of it many question the truth of the Bible itself.

Sadly because of this Jesus has been left behind by many in our society.

When Jesus is left behind, the church becomes a human institution void of faith.

This is the final church letter and also the final church age prophetically.

The end of this church age gives rise to what comes next.

This reminds us that we are in the final church age and it encourages us all the more to look for Christ's second coming.

## CHAPTER 4

Chapter 4 is the dramatic shift in context in this book from what we have been previously discussing.

This movement is one into the final seven years of an age that is known as the Age of the Gentiles.

In Luke 21 you will find Jesus speaking about the Age of the Gentiles. This reference is from the book of Daniel, specifically, Daniel 9. In Daniel 9 we find this prophecy of 70 weeks which upon further examination is better translated at 70 sevens.

The angel Gabriel gives this prophecy to Daniel of 70 sevens, so 490 which is best understood as years. Gabriel speaks that for Israel, 490 years of judgment has been decreed for them. And this age of judgment is referred to as the Age of the Gentiles.

This judgment comes upon Israel because of their refusal to keep the covenant of the Law that they agreed to. In Leviticus 26 you find that there are blessings and curses that come upon Israel for keeping or failing to keep the Old Covenant.

Because of their disobedience, they come under this time of judging known as the Age of the Gentiles.

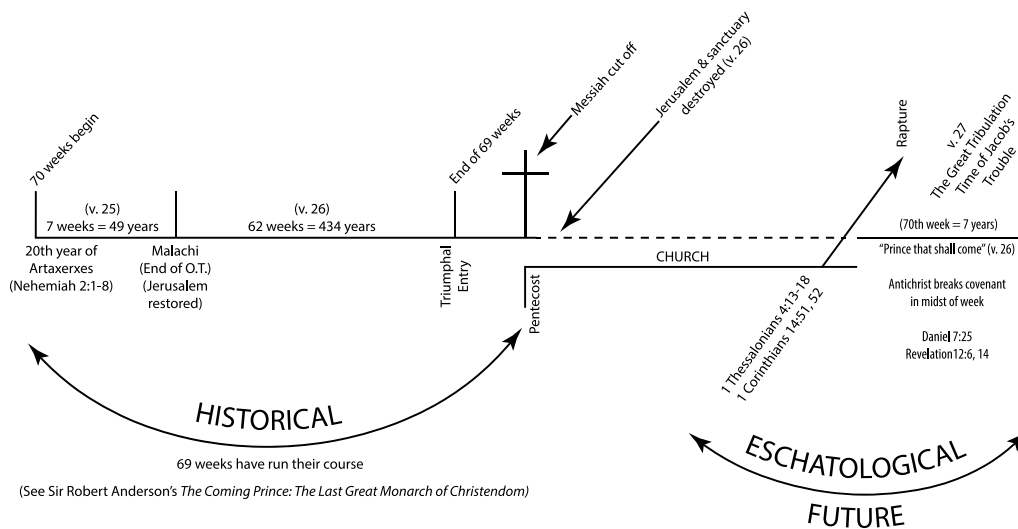
This begins with the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC and it ends with second advent, the physical return of Christ to earth to end the final seven years of this time period.

# CHAPTER 4

This is a bit confusing because you might me saying obviously more than 490 years have passed since this prophecy.

If you further investigate Daniel 9, you understand that these years are not all contiguous.

## THE 70 WEEKS OF DANIEL 9



## CHAPTER 4

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So what we understand is that 69 of these 70 sevens have taken place between Daniel's prophetic vision and Christ's first coming.

Then there is a pause between the 69th and 70th seven or as some scholars call it "The Great Interval".

That pause or interval is what you and I are both living in currently. Paul says that it was necessary so that the Gentiles might be brought into the family of God.

That pause or interval is also what you might call the church age. It's the age that we read about in chapters 2 and 3.

So at the end of the church age, we are ushered into the final seven of the sevens.



# CHAPTER 4

## Revelation 4:1-4

[1] After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” [2] At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. [3] And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. [4] Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads.

### Notes:

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## CHAPTER 4

Chapter 4 is a transition from the things that are to the things that are to be. It is a shift into Daniel's seventieth seven.

There are a number of names that we know this seven as. The most common name in the New Testament for this age is "the day of the Lord."

It's also called the "Day of Jacob's trouble", indicating a time of trouble for Israel as a nation.

The most common name for it comes from the book of Deuteronomy and that is The Tribulation. The root word for it in Hebrew means to constrict or compress like a grape in a press.

This chapter begins with a door being opened and it is an amazing scene of the throne room of God. The voice of Jesus, the voice of one as a trumpet from chapter one speaks to John and tells him to come up here.

John is taken to the throne room of God and the first thing he sees is God the Father seated on the throne. He gives a description of Him appearing as jasper or diamonds. God the Father is shining bright with a dazzling fiery light abounding in the throne room.

## CHAPTER 4

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Around this throne are twenty-four elders. The elders are wearing crowns on their heads and white garments seated on thrones of their own.

Elders are always associated with human beings who are leaders in the church in the Bible. The use of the word elder, means that these are humans. This is the first time we see elders being mentioned in the throne room of God, as the vision of Isaiah and Ezekiel do not mention elders.

They are are wearing crowns and have robes of white and sitting on thrones. The robes of white are connected to salvation through faith. They are believers who have put on the righteousness of Christ. With white representing the work of the saints.

The thrones represent authority. We know that Jesus said saints will rule with authority in His kingdom.

Lastly, they are wearing crowns and the Greek word means a reward for excellence. So this is the believer's eternal reward for completing their race.

## CHAPTER 4

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These elders represent all of the leaders of the church throughout the ages. Jesus couldn't possibly show John all of them, so He showed him 24.

So why does Jesus show John 24?

The number twelve is associated with leadership in the Bible.

Twelve tribes govern Israel, twelve apostles govern the church...

Doubling that to 24 means to make complete. So 24 is used to signify that these are all of the leaders of the church.

# CHAPTER 4

## Revelation 4:9-11

[5] From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, [6] and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: [7] the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. [8] And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”

[9] And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, [10] the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, [11] “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.” (ESV)

# CHAPTER 4

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## Notes:

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There were seven torches of fire which as John tells us are the seven spirits of God. Now obviously there is only one Holy Spirit, so why the use of seven?

It's John's way of saying that all or 100% of the Holy Spirit is in the throne room of God at this time. And if 100% of the Holy Spirit is in the throne room of God, it must mean that He is nowhere to be found on earth at the time.

It makes sense for this to be true since we understand that Jesus told us that His presence would remain with the church until the end of the age.

## CHAPTER 4

With what John witnesses here, it would serve to indicate that all of the church is present at this time in the throne room of God. Because if all of the leadership is present in the throne room of God, it would serve that all of those under its care would be present. And also all of the Holy Spirit is present in the throne room as well.

And it leads us to believe that the church has been taken up out of the earth and into the throne room of heaven.

Aside from the suppositions we make from John's description, what else leads us to believe this?

There are two terms used in the Bible for Jesus' appearing and sometimes they become confused with one another. And its important to distinguish between them because they are two different events.

We talked about the term "The Day of the Lord" earlier and this refers to the second coming of Christ to the Earth. This event ends the tribulation period and starts what we refer to as the Millennial Reign of Christ to be discussed further in our study. It has definitive events that need to happen before it can occur.

## CHAPTER 4

The second term we associate with Christ's return is "The Coming of the Lord". Most often we use the word rapture to indicate this event.

And this is not the return of Christ to the Earth, but rather Christ's gathering of believers to be with Him. So we believe in what is referred to as a pre-tribulation rapture of the church, meaning that the church will be caught up before the events that are about to be played out through the next several chapters of this book.

We believe this because of the description that John gives us in this chapter. And we can believe that the entire church is in the throne of God for a few different reasons.

The first is that we know that there is a distinctive catching away of believers from the earth by Christ. The term "day of the Lord" is used in James as indicating a time that could be at any moment. We know that since it had no preceding events, that it could happen at any time. So it made it distinctive from The 2nd Coming of Christ.

Jesus says in John 14 that He was coming to bring us to the place that He had prepared for us. He takes us off of this earth and to the place that He has prepared for us.

Throughout the New Testament, we find that we are instructed to believe that the coming of Christ is ever possible. The Second Coming of Christ depends upon rulers rising up and other events. The Coming of the Lord doesn't depend on anything and could have happened today.



## CHAPTER 4

The second thing we know from 1 Corinthians 15 is that if we are to appear in the throne room of God, there must be a change to our bodies. The corruptible cannot put on the incorruptible.

So our bodies must be transformed. Our current bodies cannot inherit the kingdom of God. So when Jesus comes we must be resurrected to put on a new eternal body.

Paul says in 1 Thessalonians that those who are dead in Christ will rise first and that those who are still living will be caught up next. So if we are living, we will be resurrected to this eternal body without ever tasting death. But regardless, both those who are living and those who are dead who are in Christ will be resurrected and transformed.

The third thing is that in Hebrews 11, we understand the promise of the Kingdom is given to all at once. In other words no one person from a group can receive their inheritance of an eternal body apart from the rest of the group.

The fourth thing we understand from John 14 is that at the coming of the Lord, we will receive our eternal reward. We as believers will all be judged and based on our judgment receive our reward. Paul talks about this in 1 Corinthians 3 when he speaks to what we are using for building materials. And that those things that we've built with will be judged by fire. So based on that we will in turn receive our reward for our works.

## CHAPTER 4

If we pull all of this together, we can say that the 24 elders in the throne room have glorified bodies with crowns to represent their rewards represents all of the church who has been taken out of the world along with the Holy Spirit.

They've been removed from the world because of the coming tribulation that is about to unfold. Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5 that the coming tribulation is not something that the church would experience.

He also speaks in 2 Thessalonians that the lawless one, the Antichrist cannot appear until the one who restrains is taken away. It appears that the Holy Spirit is this One who is the restrainer. And once He is removed from the earth, it gives the ability for the Antichrist to have his way.

At this point in chapter 4, we can believe that the church has been raptured off of the earth and is sitting in the throne room of God.

John says that there are four living creatures which if we connect Revelation to the book of Ezekiel, we understand them to be cherubim which is the highest classification of angelic beings.

These angelic beings have a particular role and that is that they serve as the guardians of God's glory. So these angelic beings sit around the throne of God and they cry out Holy, Holy, Holy.

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## CHAPTER 4

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This is a reminder of what happens in the throne room of God day in and day out, 24x7. Constantly praising God in the highest.

It's a reminder to you and I of what we will one day do as well.

The phrase Holy, Holy, Holy is used in order to place an emphasize on it to the max. So Holy, Holy, Holy indicates praising God's holiness and worthiness to the utmost.

When praise happens, what the church does the church do? They cast their crowns before Him. The rewards, everything that they earned is because of God. And its nothing and means nothing in the presence of Him.

# CHAPTER 5

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## Revelation 5:1-5

[1] Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals. [2] And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” [3] And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, [4] and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. [5] And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”

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## CHAPTER 5

Chapter five begins with God the Father holding a scroll. And the details that John gives us is that it is written on both the front and the back and sealed with seven seals.

The seven seals, again mean that it is completely sealed.

The Greek work *biblion* here indicates a rolled up piece of parchment. These rolled up pieces of parchment would typically be legal documents. They were sealed with wax in order to prevent tampering where the seal edges met.

A seal that was broken signified that the writing on the scroll was no longer valid and the agreements within the scroll needed to be agreed to once again.

It is important to consider what this scroll is. The Bible doesn't explicitly state what it is, but John gives us a clue with what he says about it. He says that there was writing on both sides of the scroll.

A scroll with writings on both sides of the scroll signifies a land deed. Typical scrolls such as the Torah or other types of writing were only written on the inside, but land deeds were written on both sides.

The outside of the land deed had a summary of the contents within.

## CHAPTER 5

What would this land deed before for? It would be a land deed for Israel. Since 605 BC, Israel had been set outside of their promised land and had been given over to the Gentiles. So during this Age of the Gentiles, the land has been given to the Gentiles. As we enter into this time of tribulation, the land is about to be given back to Israel as the Age of the Gentiles comes to an end.

The tribulation is meant to bring the nation of Israel to the realization that Jesus is the Messiah and to restore the land of promise back to them. These seals need to be broken by a magistrate. So the question is who can do it?

We would think that God the Father could do it, but when we understand the idea of land deeds, He is unable to do so because He is a party in the agreement, He gave the land to Israel initially. What is needed is someone who can serve as a proper mediator. Someone who could represent both God and man in this case.

John says that no one could be found worthy to do so. Worth in this case doesn't mean good enough, but rather appropriate. Understanding the scroll's implication, allows us to understand why John was moved to tears.

At first he thought no body would be able to return this land to Israel and to end this Age of the Gentiles. But then an elder says that there was one found who was worthy. The elder says the Lamb who has overcome has been found worthy to open the scroll.

# CHAPTER 5

## Revelation 5:6-14

**[6] And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. [7] And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. [8] And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. [9] And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, [10] and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.” [11] Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, [12] saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” [13] And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” [14] And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped. (ESV)**

# CHAPTER 5

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John describes Jesus appearing in this scene as the Lamb standing as though it had been slain. And this is an idiom of speech indicating that He appeared in His resurrected, glorified form.

John says that He appeared with seven horns and seven eyes.

Seven horns representing absolute authority.

Seven eyes representing all-seeing.

These details represent the Holy Spirit who is sent out into the earth. And this detail indicates that the Holy Spirit is most likely sent back to the earth after being removed with the church.



## CHAPTER 5

Jesus is found worthy because He has overcome. Overcoming means that He is victorious over something or someone.

We know that Jesus has overcome the world. He has overcome Satan. He has overcome death.

Through Jesus' death and resurrection He has overcome it all. Through this He has overcome the enemy's dominion on earth.

By His death and resurrection, Jesus is worthy to play mediator between God and man to judge.

Jesus removes the scroll from the Father's hand and as He does so, all of those gathered in the throne room begin to praise Him.

Their praise speaks of His authority. It speaks to where the opening of these seals will eventually lead, the establishment of His Kingdom on Earth.

This chapter ends with incredible praise for God with an innumerable amount of angels rejoicing and praising Him.

This deed has seven seals that will begin to be opened. This is a process that happens over the next several chapters. As a seal is opened in heaven, something else happens on earth.

And John goes back and forth between what He sees in heaven and what he sees on earth.

## CHAPTER 6

Chapter six begins the events that happen as part of Daniel's 70th seven, better known as the Tribulation.

From our previous week's studies we know that the Tribulation is one of the periods of history meant to bring to completion the Age of the Gentiles that Jesus talks about in Luke 21.

It was a prophetic vision by Daniel found in Daniel chapter 9 and ultimately as these ages come to a close, Israel is restored completely.

The unfolding of these events of tribulation occur due the opening of a scroll that we identified as a land deed.

Jesus begins opening the seals and as He opens these seals events unfold on the Earth. This land deed is likely for the land of Israel. So the purpose of these events is to bring to completion the Age of the Gentiles and return the land of Israel to that nation.

We know a few things about the tribulation.

We know that it is a time of judgment for Israel.  
We know that the church won't be present for it.

But what are some of the signs that we are coming to this period?

# CHAPTER 6

## 1.) World Wars.

Jesus talks about this in Matthew 24 and Luke 21. These are massive scale wars with nation rising up against nation. They increase just like birth pains, the more that happen the greater they are.

## 2.) Increasing Famines

Again Jesus talks about this in Matthew 24 and Luke 21. Often the word famine in our minds has to do with third world countries, and often that is where famine exists. But as we've seen during the COVID pandemic, supply chains can shrink pretty quickly. So famines increasing in the earth, not only from pestilence and destruction, but possibly also from supply chain shortages.

## 3.) Increasing Earthquakes

This is another item that Jesus talks about this in Matthew 24 and Luke 21. Earthquakes happening more frequently in places that don't normally receive them. Jesus says as the tribulation period approaches, the likelihood and intensity of these will increase.

## 4.) Church Apostasy

Paul talks about this in 2 Thessalonians 2 in which false teachers would rise up and be accepted by the church.

# CHAPTER 6

## 5.) Ten Kings Ruling

Daniel 2 and 7 talk about 10 kings ruling from which the Antichrist will spring up out of.

## 6.) A Covenant Signed Between Israel and the Antichrist

In Daniel 9, as the Age of the Gentiles comes to an end in this 70th seven, a covenant agreement is made between this certain world leader and Israel. The covenant is for the rebuilding of the temple.

## 7.). The Church is Raptured

From our study in Revelation 4 and also from 2 Thessalonians 2, we know that the church will be caught up prior to the tribulation. It's not meant for us, so we will be caught up from the earth prior to this period taking place.

## 8.). Israel is Regathered

Ezekiel 20 talks about Israel being regathered. And the purpose of their regathering is so that they might endure the tribulation period.

# CHAPTER 6

## 9.) The Return of Elijah

Malachi 4 tells us that Elijah must return in order to bring Israel back to orthodoxy. In other words to bring Israel back into being practitioners of the Old Covenant Law. There must be a reason for the temple to be rebuilt, and if the Jewish people aren't practicing, or don't have a zeal for the Law, there is no reason for the temple to be rebuilt.

So Elijah is meant to restore the hearts of the fathers to children and children to fathers. In other words, the purpose is to bring the nation back to being practitioners of the Law. And it would seem that Elijah's coming serves an extended purpose as we will find out in a few chapters from this one.

The true purpose in the tribulation is meant to bring an end to the Age of the Gentiles and also bring the nation of Israel to the realization that Jesus is the Messiah. We see all of this calamity and all of this destruction, but the true purpose is to save Israel.

Why is Israel meant to endure this tribulation? Its because they are bound to the law of the Old Covenant. And with the law there are obligations. We talked about this in past weeks, there are blessings and curses.

It is a national covenant that they agreed to in the day of Moses. Because of it they are bound to keep the entire law.

# CHAPTER 6

Through tribulation they are brought under the judgment for not keeping the Law, even though the ultimate goal is their salvation.

The Tribulation is broken into three parts.

- The first half is covered in Revelation 6 - 9.
- The middle part is covered in Revelation 10 - 15.
- And the final part, called the Great Tribulation is covered in Revelation 16 - 19.

As chapter six kicks off tonight, what happens in the background is the fulfillment of all of these nine events. Most notably somewhat recently the Antichrist has signed an agreement with Israel concerning the restoration of the temple worship. This agreement will pave the way for the third temple to be rebuilt for the nation of Israel as we will talk about in a couple of weeks.

## The First Seal

### Revelation 6:1–2

**[1] Now I watched when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice like thunder, "Come!" [2] And I looked, and behold, a white horse! And its rider had a bow, and a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering, and to conquer.**

# CHAPTER 6

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Chapter 6 continues that scene from chapter 5 in the throne room of heaven, with Jesus opening up the seals of a scroll.

There is a pattern that happens with the opening of these seals.

The seal is opened and upon the seal's opening, there are events that transpire on earth. And as the events transpire on earth, John's attention is turned in that direction.

John first sees a white horse and this is the first of what is commonly referred to as the four horseman of the apocalypse.

Each of the first four seals results in the appearance of a different colored horse on the earth.

## CHAPTER 6

The first rider that John sees is a white horse with a rider who carries a bow and a crown. And the rider came out conquering and to conquer.

This is the only unnamed rider. And the reason that this rider is unnamed is because of the assumed context of this chapter.

If we realize that this is the beginning of the 70th seven of Daniel 9, we know that the "he" referenced here is the Antichrist, the little horn of Daniel 9. The rider arrives with a bow, but there is no mention of arrows.

So it is like a ruler who has a weapon with no ammunition. The suggestion is that you are dangerous and there is a threat, but nobody knows that you don't have anything to power your weapon.

The crown mentioned here is the Greek word "stephanos" meaning a crown that is earned through achievement. It isn't a natural born crown, so the indication is that this man is a ruler of military or political power.

With the first seal, Jesus lets loose a man upon the earth who goes out conquering and gathering. And this makes sense in the context of the fact that an agreement is brokered by this man for Israel to begin to worship at the temple again.

Another thing we know about this man is that he comes from a certain people. The Antichrist comes from the same people that destroyed the Jewish temple. All this means is that he comes from a country of the former Roman Empire.



# CHAPTER 6

It's obvious to see that this man would be launching a conquest as brokering a deal for peace in the Middle East is no small feat. But the true power comes from the seal that Jesus breaks not from this man's abilities.

Knowing the full story, we know that this peace is only temporary. And this peace actually comes to destroy the earth in the end.

## The Second Seal

### Revelation 6:3–4

**[3] When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" [4] And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword.**

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## CHAPTER 6

The white horse signaled the arrival of the Antichrist on the world's stage. Just as the first horse signaled the arrival of someone, this second horse signals the arrival of something. Being that it's a horse, we can assume that there is a connection between this one and the first. But this horse has a different color, it's red.

The fact that there is a connection between the horses and he doesn't address the rider as someone else, we can assume that this is the Antichrist as well. With the second seal being opened, the Antichrist's power is rising. With the first seal, we saw him threatening war and with the second seal, we seal the delivery of the threat. The Antichrist now begins to take peace from the earth.

The rider carries a sword, representing terror and the red color of the horse represents the bloodshed that is a result of his sword. And there is not just threat of war, but actual war breaking out. It would make sense that as someone tries to consolidate power, force is often a side-effect at some point. As he gains power, it leads to wars being fought on the earth. And it leads to widespread war and bloodshed.

### The Third Seal

#### Revelation 6:5–6

**[5] When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a black horse! And its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. [6] And I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures, saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius, and do not harm the oil and wine!"**

# CHAPTER 6

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The rider's name isn't changed, so we can assume that John is talking about the Antichrist again.

This horse has a different color, black which could symbolize a number of things. Because of that, we need to consider what is in the rider's hands, scales.

Today, we consider scales in modern times in terms of justice, but at the time of this writing, it would have meant something else. Scales were used as a way of determining the validity of what was being used as payment.

When the transaction was done, the scales were used to determine the validity of the payment being used.

## CHAPTER 6

If they were paying with gold, a piece of gold would be weighed against it to say whether or not it was real. It could also be that someone shaved off some of the monetary values being exchanged in order to accumulate more money for themselves and cheat someone out of the exchange.

The use of scales indicates that our attention is being drawn to an economic impact on the world. This would make sense, the white horse brought military force which caused bloodshed and as a result impacted the world's economy. We can assume that because of this war, the price of goods increased.

John tells us that a quart of wheat and three quarts of barley would be a denarius. A denarius was the equivalent of one day's labor for an individual. Typically a poor family could live on the bread bought by a denarius for almost two weeks. But as a result of the inflation caused by the antichrist's wars, a denarius can only buy a loaf and a half of bread. And that is probably the equivalent of a loaf of bread costing \$75.00 in today's money (2024).

The result would be widespread looting and violence. War and inflation results in scarce supplies and thus rampant crime. Those who are unable to obtain food will ultimately starve. So this black horse represents starvation and death from the war that is happening.

The oil and wine are excluded here for some reason, and why that is we can't say for sure. It could be that these are important crops in Israel so in some ways, maybe Israel is shielded from the warfare.

# CHAPTER 6

## The Fourth Seal

### Revelation 6:7–8

**[7] When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” [8] And I looked, and behold, a pale horse! And its rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.**

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The final horse has a pale color. And this horse continues carrying out the effects on the earth.

This time John says that the rider has a name and that is Death and Hades followed him.

## CHAPTER 6

This is the final ultimate effect of the Antichrist's rise to power. It is the condition of death and the location of Hades.

The logical conclusion we can find here is that he brings widespread death to the earth and the effect on an unbelieving, unsaved world is entry into Hell.

The color pale probably indicates a pale green, the color of the body after it has after many hours of death. As a result of the sword of the first and second seal, the famine of the third seal and the pestilence which happens from the fourth seal, a fourth of the world's population is wiped out.

That would mean if it happened today (2024) and the church was still on earth, it would be 2 billion people who were wiped out.

Looking back on these horses, we can see them all being connected. The world sees these as natural occurrences rather than judgments in heaven. And that makes sense, because the number of four represents the Earth in scripture. The world sees this as an earthly event rather than the true judgment from heaven.

# CHAPTER 6

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## The Fifth Seal

### Revelation 6:9–11

**[9] When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. [10] They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” [11] Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.**

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## CHAPTER 6

The fifth seal breaks the pattern of the four horses. And also the attention of the action moves from the earth to heaven.

Under the altar in heaven, a place of sacrifice, John sees the souls of those who have been slain for the word of God and their witness. So these are the souls of martyrs meaning they are disembodied spirits.

They are also asking for justice for their deaths, but they are told to wait, for there would be more who would be killed as they were.

When Jesus opens up the fifth seal, it is the opening of a door for His followers to be persecuted. This is not a moment in time, but a summary of the seven years. We can believe this because verse 11 says that more will be coming. And from Daniel's writings in Daniel 7, we know that the second half of the tribulation will be even more intense persecution than the first half.

Over the seven year tribulation period, the believers of Christ that are on earth will face intense persecution and many will die because of their faith. We know these individuals are not part of the Church because they were caught up with Christ in the rapture.

So this means that they became believers after the church was raptured. After Christ raptured the church, new faith arrived on the earth. And in some way these believers found faith and became followers of Christ. These individuals were killed for their faith meaning that their faith and belief in Christ truly came at a cost.



# CHAPTER 6

## The Sixth Seal

### Revelation 6:12–17

**[12] When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, [13] and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale.**

**[14] The sky vanished like a scroll that is being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. [15] Then the kings of the earth and the great ones and the generals and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, [16] calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, [17] for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”**

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## CHAPTER 6

The sixth seal shows us that as these seals are opened, the intensity increases and the more supernatural that they are. And the world finally realizes that these are judgments from God.

These supernatural events come in waves. And much of what we will say about this is speculation with respect to what will occur.

John first says that a great earthquake shook the earth. He then the sun became black. This wouldn't be like an eclipse because that would be expected, but rather this must have been some darkening of the sun that had consequences on earth.

Next the moon was like blood. This could have been a consequence of the sun being black as the moon reflects the light of the sun. The stars begin to fall from the sky. And this could be meteor showers striking the earth. John then says that the sky vanished and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

We can't say whether or not this is a literal expression of all parts of the earth experiencing this change, or whether it is intended to mean that as a whole devastating changes would occur on the earth so that the earth's very structure in many places changes.

In either case, we understand that great changes are happening in the earth's structure, most likely due to the effects of what has happened that John just mentioned.

## CHAPTER 6

If the sun stopped shining, we understand that there would be an incredible drop in temperature on the earth.

This could produce instability in the atmosphere and the cooling of the surface coupled with the earthquakes could cause a shifting in the continental plates and release magma on the earth.

The side-effect of this is that mankind seeks shelter in the caves and the rocks of the mountains. Mankind is forced underground because of the cold and the instability of the atmosphere.

John notes that all are there, rich and poor, powerful and weak. And they begin to wish for death because they cannot stand what is happening on earth.

They also understand that these supernatural occurrences are happening because of a judgment by God. More specifically, they realize that it is the judgement of the Lamb.

# CHAPTER 7

In chapter six, we talked about six of the seven seals that were opened up by Jesus in heaven and the effects that they had on the earth.

The book of Revelation does not always play out chronologically, and sometimes things happen in parallel or even predate events that were written in a previous chapter.

As we explore chapter seven, we are going to talk about some events that are happening in before and in parallel with the events of chapter six.

## **Revelation 7:1–3**

**[1] After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. [2] Then I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, [3] saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.”**

# CHAPTER 7

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John begins by describing four angels standing at the four corners of the earth. In other words, they are standing over all the earth.

How do we know that these events predate the events of chapter six?

Remember last week we talked about the fact that the sun was darkened, and the face of the earth was devastated. If that's the case, then it runs contrary to what John is describing here relating to these angels.

So this predates chapter six and describes what is happening at the beginning of the tribulation. Specifically, the Lord commands that no winds are to blow on the earth. This means that these supernatural events were happening even before the fifth seal was opened that we talked about last week.

## CHAPTER 7

Stopping all of the winds on the earth would have devastating consequences. Without wind, the earth would experience famine, drought and starvation. So there would have been an interruption in the food supply.

This chapter also shows us a new pattern in judgment. Angels were carriers of messages to John, but they also carry out judgment on earth. When Jesus opens a seal, an angel does something to effect that judgment on earth.

But God says in verse 3 that they cannot carry out judgment until they have sealed the servants of God on their foreheads. Servants means a believer in Christ. Being sealed is a way of saying that they are born again. We see Paul talking in 2 Corinthians about receiving the Holy Spirit in earnest or as a down payment on a future promise.

So this is how faith comes back to the earth following the removal of the church in the rapture. The mention of foreheads is interesting, and may have to do with the fact that later in this book we read about individuals being required to receive a mark on their forehead to do business.

As the Antichrist is wreaking havoc on the earth, a new generation of believers rises up.

# CHAPTER 7

## Revelation 7:4–8

**[4] And I heard the number of the sealed, 144,000, sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel:[5] 12,000 from the tribe of Judah were sealed, 12,000 from the tribe of Reuben, 12,000 from the tribe of Gad, [6] 12,000 from the tribe of Asher, 12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali, 12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh, [7] 12,000 from the tribe of Simeon, 12,000 from the tribe of Levi, 12,000 from the tribe of Issachar, [8] 12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun, 12,000 from the tribe of Joseph, 12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin were sealed.**

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This is the 144,000 that you may have heard about. Often this is misinterpreted by many including the Jehovah's Witnesses, claiming that they are the 144,000.

The text itself refutes this because it tells us that these 144,000 come to faith after the beginning of the tribulation.

## CHAPTER 7

This means that Holy Spirit will be back on earth, and providing a way of salvation during the tribulation. This means that believers today will be raptured at the beginning of the tribulation but those who remain will still have the opportunity to be saved.

The 144,000 will come from the tribes of Israel, so nobody who is not of Jewish descent can be factored into this 144,000. This number indicates 12,000 people being saved from each of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Why does God start with the Jewish people? Salvation always starts with the Jewish people. Jesus said in John 4 that salvation is of the Jews. The patriarchs, the apostles, Jesus Himself were all Jews. So everything relating to salvation comes through the Jewish people. During the time of tribulation this continues.

The other interesting thing about these individuals is the use of the number 12. We talked about this earlier in our study, but the number 12 indicates authority. These individuals are representative of the new house of God on earth. They are leading the new evangelistic effort on earth.

As we are about to see, God appoints these men to come to faith and as a result of their coming to faith, many other individuals are saved as a result.



# CHAPTER 7

## Revelation 7:9–12

**[9] After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, [10] and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs 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.”**

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## CHAPTER 7

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John uses the connecting phrase "after this", indicating a cause and effect relationship. In chapter four it connected the end of the church age and the beginning of the age that is to be.

Here it connects the first half of the chapter with the second.

As a result of these 144,000 Jewish believers, the world experiences a revival in the midst of tribulation. And John describes a multitude standing before the throne room of God representing every tribe and every nation.

This indicates that they are different than the original 144,000. Their palm branches, their white robes, their mere presence here indicates that these individuals are believers. And they stand in the midst of the throne room of God proclaiming the majesty of God. In the middle of persecution and tribulation, individuals still come to faith.

# CHAPTER 7

## Revelation 7:13–17

**[13] Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?” [14] I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. [15] “Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. [16] They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. [17] For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”**

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## CHAPTER 7

One of the elders asks John who these individuals are, and John, probably in fear of being incorrect tells the elder that he knows surely.

The elder goes on to tell us why these individuals are in the throne room of God.

The first is that they came to faith during the tribulation. The fact that they have washed their robes white in the blood of the lamb indicates that they came to faith.

The second is that they were suffering. The elder mentions that now they shall hunger no more, they shall not thirst, they shall not face the scorching sun. They were most likely suffering persecution because of their faith and also physically suffering because of the physical environment that was being impacted by the seals that were being opened from chapter six.

What John is told here at the end of this chapter means a few important things. The first is that living as a believer or a nonbeliever in the tribulation is deadly. These individuals were most likely martyred during the tribulation for their faith. And if they weren't martyred, they faced hunger, thirst and deadly heat.

The second is that these events run parallel with the events from last week in chapter six. This chapter tells the story of evangelistic outreach during the tribulation. These believers faced the impact of the seals being opened that we talked about last week. They faced hunger, thirst and a scorching sun.

# CHAPTER 8

## Revelation 8:1–4

**[1] When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. [2] Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. [3] And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, [4] and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.**

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As Jesus opens up the seventh seal all of heaven falls to silence for a half an hour. And this speaks to the awe of this judgment that is about to occur. The trumpet and the bowl judgments all serve as the culmination of what the prophets have foretold.

## CHAPTER 8

This silence lasts for about half an hour. John isn't specific because it would lead us to focus on the purpose and significance of the time component. In reality, what John is trying to have us focus on is the significance of the pause.

All of heaven remains silent for a half an hour due to what is coming. The trumpet judgments will be unique in that they impact both the human body and physical body of the earth. The final three are terrible enough that they are referred to as "woe" judgments.

Woe is often associated with eternal judgment, so these in a sense are previews of eternal judgment that will occur for all unbelievers. Before these judgments begin, John sees an angel standing at the altar with a golden censer with much incense to offer.

Your prayers, and my prayers go up as incense before God. So these prayers are lifted up before God and we can probably assume that these prayers are prayers for justice, for protection and for a reprieve from what they have been experiencing on earth. And it's obvious from these judgments that the Lord hears their prayers.

These judgments are announced with the blowing of a trumpet. These are the final warnings of the age. Each blowing of the trumpet is a warning that the coming of the end is near. Six of these trumpet judgments happen in the first half of the tribulation. So this is God's final attempt to give man the chance to repent.

# CHAPTER 8

## The First Trumpet Judgment

### Revelation 8:5–7

**[5] Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth, and there were peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. [6] Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to blow them. [7] The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth. And a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.**

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Before the trumpets are blown, supernatural physical disasters occur on the earth. Thunder and lightning across the earth along with an earthquake.

# CHAPTER 8

The first angel blows his trumpet and as a result hail and fire that was mixed with blood fell upon the earth. This reminds us of the judgment that fell upon Egypt in the book of Exodus.

Throughout all of these trumpet judgments we will see a loose connection between the plagues upon Egypt and the plagues that then fell upon all of the earth during the tribulation. It's just that through the trumpet judgments, the impact is greater.

John says that as a result of the hail that falls upon the earth, a third of the earth was burned up, trees and grass. So a third of the earth that was once inhabitable no longer becomes inhabitable. Each of these judgments will slowly decrease the amount of the earth where populations can live.

## The Second Trumpet Judgment

### Revelation 8:8–9

**[8] The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. [9] A third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.**



## CHAPTER 8

### Notes:

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What John sees thrown into the sea here is highly debatable. It's been speculated that it is a meteor, others have said it is sea volcano that erupts and causes magma to go throughout the waters of the sea.

But volcanoes and meteors don't turn the sea red. It would most likely be that John would recognize these things as being natural. So it is most likely something not natural and something John doesn't recognize.

As a result of whatever happened, a third of the sea became blood. Again this reminds us of the plagues in Egypt with the Nile River becoming like blood.

John says as a result of this plague, not only is a third of the sea turned to blood, a third of all living sea creatures dies and a third of the ships were destroyed.

# CHAPTER 8

The fact that the ships were destroyed is an indication that this is a natural event that happens because if water did turn to blood, the liquid that the ships were floating on would produce greater buoyancy. This greater buoyancy would cause ships to ride higher and leader to a higher probability of capsizing.

Again we see this idea of a third of the earth being destroyed. A third of the sea in equal measure is turned to blood. So this narrowing down of the earth's inhabitable areas, eventually places the focus on the Middle East as we will see eventually. So leading up to that, God eliminates life on the rest of the earth so that eventually the only life will be concentrated in the Middle East.

Israel and Babylon remain in tact and occupied at the end of tribulation, so it could be that God eventually pushes people from the ends of the earth to these areas.

## The Third Trumpet Judgment

### Revelation 8:10–12

**[10] The third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell from heaven, blazing like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. [11] The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many people died from the water, because it had been made bitter.**

# CHAPTER 8

## Notes:

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With the third trumpet judgment, John says a great star falls from heaven. And as a result of this falling, a third of the rivers and springs of the earth became wormwood. Wormwood is both the name of this star and the result of its actions. Wormwood in Greek means bitter.

So this star is called bitter and as a result, a third of the fresh water on earth is made to be bitter. And as a result of this bitter water, many people die as a result.

What is this star? It would not be a literal star as any star that would fall to earth would consume the earth. It could be a meteor, but unless there was some other supernatural connection between the meteor and God carrying out this judgment, it wouldn't turn the waters bitter.

This star has a name which usually doesn't happen with meteors in Scripture. Usually a name associated with something indicates personage.

# CHAPTER 8

Which leads us to stars in other contexts in Scripture which is angels. Angels can have names which glorify God like Michael or Gabriel. Or they can have names which suggest their fallen nature.

So we might also suggest that this is a fallen angel, a demon loosed on earth to poison a third of the fresh water on earth.

## The Fourth Trumpet Judgment

### Revelation 8:12

**[12] The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light might be darkened, and a third of the day might be kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night.**

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John continues this theme of third with the fourth trumpet judgment. This time a third of the sun, moon and stars are impacted so that their lights are dimmed. What does this mean, does it mean a third were removed or reduced by a third?

## CHAPTER 8

If you look at the end of this verse, you get the answer. It would appear that the earth receives a third less of the light energy that it would receive today. So the effect of all of this is that there was an almost total blackout for a third of every 24 hours. And the effect of this as a whole would fear and panic - how often do you just see complete black and nothingness around you?

It would result in crops failing, livestock dying, water (whatever is left) would freeze. So as we are seeing, life is harder and harder on earth. The planet becomes less and less hospitable.

### Revelation 8:13

**[13] Then I looked, and I heard an eagle crying with a loud voice as it flew directly overhead, "Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, at the blasts of the other trumpets that the three angels are about to blow!"**

John sees an eagle flying overhead and crying with a loud voice woes upon those who are about to endure the effects of the other trumpets.

The ESV leaves out a word here indicating where the eagle was flying and that is in the mid-heaven. The Jewish people talk about "three heavens" starting with the earth and going up. The first heaven is where birds fly. The second heaven is where the planets and stars. The third heaven is where God lives.

## CHAPTER 8

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John says that this eagle is flying in the place where planets and stars dwell. Obviously eagles can't live in outer space nor do they speak.

So this is probably an angel, it could have the appearance of an eagle as John described the faces of those in the throne room of God earlier.

And this angel goes over the earth proclaiming woes on the earth.

# CHAPTER 9

## The Fifth Trumpet Judgment

### Revelation 9:1–6

[1] And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit. [2] He opened the shaft of the bottomless pit, and from the shaft rose smoke like the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke from the shaft. [3] Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth. [4] They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. [5] They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings someone. [6] And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

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## CHAPTER 9

Upon the fifth angel blowing his trumpet, another star falls to earth. John identifies this star with personhood, so we know that this isn't a meteor but rather a fallen angel, a demon. He carries out actions, so we know for certain that he has an identity.

In fact as we will read later he has a name Abaddon in Hebrew and Greek Apollyon. So this demon is given the keys to the shaft of a bottomless pit. This bottomless pit is a prison for disobedient spirits.

This is sometimes referred to as Sheol in the Old Testament. Sheol is talked about in Luke 16 as a place for unbelievers and before Christ's work on the cross, the souls of Old Testament believers. For believers it was a place of comfort, for unbelievers a place of torment.

Peter tells us that there are special places reserved for fallen angels in 2 Peter 2:4-5. When Jesus confronted the demonic force named Legion in Luke 8, they asked not to be sent back to the abyss. So it would seem that there is a special place reserved for demons in the pit. Many demons roam the earth today, but some were so terrible that they were banished by God to this pit.

Abaddon/Apollyon is given the keys to this pit to release upon the earth these demons to inflict pain upon the earth. As the pit is opened, smoke comes up from the earth to blot out the sun. Out of this pit comes what John describes as locusts with the power of a scorpion.



## CHAPTER 9

But their power comes with restrictions. They cannot hurt vegetation of earth but only certain people. They can hurt anyone who does not have the seal of God upon their foreheads.

So these "locusts" can inflict anyone who is not a part of the 144,000 that were saved or those who saved as a part of their evangelizing. This is the first time that they are mentioned as being excluded from a judgment so the previous judgments would have impacted them as well.

The "locusts" inflict a painful sting upon humanity. It is a painful sting that will last five months. The pain is like that of a scorpion sting which is incredibly painful but rarely lethal. Whether a single sting lasts five months or the torment is from five months of stinging.

The fallout is that individuals will seek to end their own lives, yet they won't be able to. How will God do this? We aren't sure, it could be that they won't simply be able to die, almost immortal. It could also be that these locusts will inflict so much pain that they simply can't do anything other than be in pain.

You can imagine how painful this must be because otherwise sane people will long for death in the face of the pain that they are facing.

# CHAPTER 9

## Revelation 9:7–11

**[7] In appearance the locusts were like horses prepared for battle: on their heads were what looked like crowns of gold; their faces were like human faces, [8] their hair like women’s hair, and their teeth like lions’ teeth; [9] they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the noise of their wings was like the noise of many chariots with horses rushing into battle. [10] They have tails and stings like scorpions, and their power to hurt people for five months is in their tails. [11] They have as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek he is called Apollyon.**

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John says they were like horses prepared for battle, so they emerged ready to carry out their mission. You can see why John refers to them as being like scorpions based on their long tails. That's a prominent feature and that coupled with their powerful sting leads you to see why John would refer to them as scorpions.

## CHAPTER 9

He also says they have crowns on their heads indicating authority in the demonic realm from where they came. Many people have tried to refer to this as being machines of war - helicopters, planes, etc.

But as of now the world is pretty desolate so most likely most of the mechanical equipment is hardly functioning. The world is very much filled with people just trying to survive. And in the middle of the suffering, these locusts inflict more suffering on those who are not believers.

How do these locusts inflict harm on all unbelievers on earth? Well if they are demonic they are supernatural entities, so it is highly possible for them to move unrestricted by barriers. I also think that most likely people can see them so that they know the source of their judgment.

It is interesting that this is carried out for five months on the earth because five is the number associated with grace. You might ask how is God showing His grace here? Well even in judgment God is giving an opportunity for unbelievers to repent. They know that the judgment comes from God and here God is giving them a taste of what it looks like in Hell.

Constant torment, wishing to die but never being able to. So for five months no individual goes into the pits of hell since the Garden of Eden.

# CHAPTER 9

## The Sixth Trumpet Judgment

### Revelation 9:12–19

[12] The first woe has passed; behold, two woes are still to come. [13] Then the sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, [14] saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, “Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.” [15] So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, were released to kill a third of mankind. [16] The number of mounted troops was twice ten thousand times ten thousand; I heard their number. [17] And this is how I saw the horses in my vision and those who rode them: they wore breastplates the color of fire and of sapphire and of sulfur, and the heads of the horses were like lions’ heads, and fire and smoke and sulfur came out of their mouths. [18] By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed, by the fire and smoke and sulfur coming 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 with heads, and by means of them they wound.

### Notes:

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## CHAPTER 9

Verse 12 tells us that these two additional woe judgements need to wait for the first to be finished - so they are sequential. Five months pass and you would think that humanity was so relieved to not experience the pain of the sting of these locusts. But after five months, another judgment comes upon the earth.

And this one is initiated by angels who were bound at the Euphrates River. So the fact that these angels were bound and their location in Babylon, the Euphrates River, indicates that they were fallen. These were demons who were bound and could not be released until a certain time. It would seem that this woe coupled with the last woe would indicate that some fallen angels are more harmful to humanity than others. And they were so awful that they had to be bound by God lest they should be unleashed on earth and kill humanity.

So what was the army that devastated the earth? Well it was an incredible army because John says the number was 200 million. And this army has been speculated to be a number of different things, but if you look at the description that John uses there are some similarities to the locusts.

So most likely this is a demonic horde unleashed on the earth who have the ability to kill a third of humanity that was on the earth. If you read Joel 2 you will see a prophecy of this coming army.

# CHAPTER 9

## Revelation 9:20–21

**[20] The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, [21] nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.**

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Those who survived these devastating plagues who were unbelievers did not repent. These individuals had been through so much, but still refused to turn their hearts toward God in repentance.

At the end of this chapter, we have reached the halfway point of the tribulation. As a result of the first 3.5 years, 50% of the earth's population is dead. 1/3 of the earth's surface is uninhabitable and 1/3 of the waters are undrinkable and unnavigable. And we've reached the middle of the tribulation which is an important time.

# CHAPTER 10

Chapter 10 begins a period known as the Mid-Tribulation. This period is an important time of great changes on earth. The book of Revelation devotes four chapters to this time period plus two chapters introducing and concluding it, so chapters 10 - 15 are all dedicated to the Mid-Tribulation period.

This is just a brief time dividing the first 3.5 years and the final 3.5 years, but when we say Mid-Tribulation we are talking about the time period surrounding this middle of tribulation.

As we cover the next several chapters (10 - 15), we need to remember that these events are happening roughly at the same time. Outside of chapters 10 and 15, we will find a reference to this Mid-Tribulation moment. It will either be times, time and half a time, 42 months or 1,260 days. Each of these comments means 3.5 years and it indicates that we are in the middle of the tribulation.

## Revelation 10:1-7

**[1] Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. [2] He had a little scroll open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land, [3] and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring. When he called out, the seven thunders sounded.**

## CHAPTER 10

**[4] And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down.” [5] And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven [6] and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay, [7] but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.**

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John says another mighty angel came down from heaven. It is important to note John's use of the word another because it was distinctive from the angel that descended previously in the book in chapter 7. He was like the previous angel, but his appearance was different. This angel carries a small scroll in his hand and so large that he places one foot on the sea and the other on land.



## CHAPTER 10

This angel's voice is so loud that it sounds like a lion roaring. In response to his voice, voices from heaven respond with seven voices of thunder.

Whatever these voices responded with must have been something that caught John's attention, but John is told not to write it down. This scene needs context which takes you back to Daniel 12. Daniel 12 opens with the statement "Now at that time..." connecting this chapter to Daniel 11 which describes the rise of the Antichrist. At that time, a prophecy is made about a powerful angel named Michael who will arise and take his station during this time period that is referred to as a great time of distress. Jesus refers to this period as the Great Tribulation which is the second half of the tribulation.

In Daniel 12:5 we see a description very similar to John's description of the angel in Revelation 10. There are other similarities including Daniel hearing a prophetic word but being told to seal it up. Specifically he is told about the wonders that will go on for a time, times half a time so there is the reference to 3.5 years or the middle of tribulation.

So what we can see here is that Daniel has part one of a conversation with the same angel to that John has part two of a conversation. Daniel is told to seal up what he has heard, meaning write it on a scroll until the end of the age of the Gentiles. Most likely this is the little scroll that has a message that is to be given to John.

John hears things spoken he can't speak of yet concerning the very end of Tribulation. We see the angel standing on the sea and land to praise the Lord for not delaying longer in the fulfillment of these things.

# CHAPTER 10

What is this delay? It's the delay that has ensued since the day of Daniel. The events of the Great Tribulation were revealed to Daniel so long ago, but they were sealed. As they were later revealed to John, they are still yet to be complete, but in a future day, that great angel will arise and when he does, the events of the Great Tribulation will finally take place. These things will be fulfilled when that seventh trumpet is blown and the bowl judgments come to pass. So it falls to John to reveal the details of the Great Tribulation that Daniel heard so many years earlier.

## Revelation 10:8–11

**[8] Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." [9] So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to me, "Take and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." [10] And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. It was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. [11] And I was told, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings."**

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# CHAPTER 10

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John is told to take this scroll and eat it. This seems like an odd request, right? John obliges the angel and the angel says that when he eats it, it will make his stomach bitter but it will be sweet in his mouth.

The point being made here is the bitter-sweet nature of prophecy about God's judgment and the end of the age. It's an attractive, exciting topic. But as this truth of what it speaks of sinks in, there is a bitterness to it. How many will die on earth through these judgments. John is told to prophecy what he received from the scroll that was written by Daniel. Revelation 11-19 are events that come from this scroll and what Daniel wrote. There is one other item to note from Daniel 12.

## CHAPTER 10

In Daniel 12:7 we know that the events Daniel wrote down happened at the mid part of tribulation. The tribulation was started by the signing of a covenant between Israel and the Antichrist in Daniel 9 allowing the people of Israel to return to sacrificing in a new temple. Daniel 12 confirms that the mid point of tribulation comes 1,260 days after the signing of a covenant. Daniel 12:11 confirms that at the mid-point of tribulation, the Antichrist abolishes sacrificing in the temple. Daniel 12:11 also speaks of 1,290 days following this mid-point which means there are 30 extra days in here. So over the next few weeks we will talk about what goes on in the middle of the tribulation and how it relates to the covenant being broken. The extra thirty days we will return to in a future chapter.

# CHAPTER 11

## Revelation 11:1–2

**[1] Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told, “Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, [2] but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.**

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We know that the Tribulation period impacts the entire Earth through the judgments that are carried out on the earth, but the central region and nation is the Middle East and Israel. And starting in the mid-tribulation period, it begins to be a focus of attention.

This chapter begins with John being taken to the Jewish temple. He is told to measure the temple but he never gives the measurements meaning that the size of the temple probably wasn't important.

## CHAPTER 11

The point for the reader is that there is a temple again in Jerusalem. The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD by the Romans and has not been rebuilt since. Many Jews desire to rebuild their temple, but as of yet they have not been able to do so. And that is the point of the agreement with the Antichrist at the beginning of the tribulation.

It is meant to allow the Jewish people to rebuild their temple and to begin worshipping again. This is a huge deal for someone to accomplish because the place of the Jewish temple today is a holy site for those who are Muslim. John's vision here tells us that there is some sort of temple in place and that the Jewish people are worshipping there. The courtyard itself had a wall that separated the Jews from the Gentiles. John is told to measure the courtyard where the altar stands and the worshippers gathered but not the Gentile court.

What does this tell us in relation to the mid-tribulation time period? The first is that temple is in operation in Jerusalem and Jewish people are worshipping there. The Lord has most likely been sparing Israel from most of the calamity that has been happening on earth then.

Second, just because this temple has been rebuilt, it doesn't mean that the Age of the Gentiles has come to an end because they will trample the city for 42 more months.

The third is the reference to the mid-tribulation period in verse 2. Those 42 months indicate that we are mid way through the tribulation with 3.5 years to go. This brings us to the question how does this chapter relate to the mid-tribulation period?

# CHAPTER 11

## Revelation 11:3–6

**[3] And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.” [4] These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. [5] And if anyone would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes. If anyone would harm them, this is how he is doomed to be killed. [6] They have the power to shut the sky, that no rain may 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 kind of plague, as often as they desire.**

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John moves to a new scene that involves two prophets. John was talking about the temple, but now he shifts to these two witnesses.

So what is the connection? The two witnesses have been prophesying for 1,260 days which is our connection to the Mid-Tribulation time period and it because of that they are connected with the operation of the temple.

## CHAPTER 11

The term witness here is associated with someone who speaks the truth. The Law of Moses required that in order for an accuser's trespasses to be founded, at least two witnesses need to come forward against him. These two men are speaking the truth of God and condemning the sin of the world. They are also wearing sackcloth which indicates that they are in mourning and they have supernatural powers.

There is a lot of speculation as to who these two men are, and John gives us an indication of who they are by pointing to the two olive trees and two lamp stands that stand before the Lord. This is a reference to the prophet Zechariah, particularly in Zechariah 4. Zechariah is a prophetic book of the Old Testament written to the Jewish people who were returning to Israel from exile in Babylon.

Through Zechariah, God assures the nation of Israel that the temple which was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar would be rebuilt. The temple that is rebuilt is what is eventually known as Herod's temple, one of the incredible structures in the world. In Zechariah 4, as the Lord reveals all of this to the prophet, the prophet wonders about the two olive branches and lamp stands he sees in the vision standing on either side of the temple. The Lord tells Zechariah that these are the two anointed ones standing by the Lord of the whole earth. In other words, their ministry will have an impact on the entire world.

The interesting picture painted by the olive branches and the lamp stands is that of oil lamps being filled with oil directly from the olive tree. This is a picture of the power of the Holy Spirit at work in these two men's ministries. It is an abundant supply of power from the Holy Spirit.



## CHAPTER 11

We can't say exactly who these two men will be. Many will say they are Enoch and Elijah who never died a natural death but were supernaturally taken up into heaven. The reality is we don't know who they are, but we do know that they will have incredible powers given to them by God. They have power that will allow them to attack any enemies that come against them with fire coming from their mouths.

Why would men want to harm them? Not only did God give them the ability to supernaturally protect themselves, but they could also carry out supernatural plagues. They could stop the rain from falling causing drought. For 3.5 years they are declaring the truth of God, they are bringing harm on the earth, so people really don't like these two guys.

We don't know what they will be prophesying exactly, but it could be conjectured that that they are speaking a narration of sorts to what is playing out with the unfolding of the seal and trumpet judgements.

These two witnesses have the ability to do the same things that are being done with the opening of the seals and the blowing of the trumpets, so why is there duplication? The world can't see what is happening in heaven, but they can see what these two men are doing. So perhaps they are a way of being a manifestation on earth of what is happening in heaven. They are a way through which the earth can see what is being carried out in heaven.

These first 3.5 years, everything that is happening is pinned on these two witnesses. And these witnesses tell the whole earth it is judgment from God. But these men only have 3.5 years to carry this out.

# CHAPTER 11

## Revelation 11:7–10

**[7] And when they have finished their testimony, the beast that rises from the bottomless pit will make war on them and conquer them and kill them, [8] and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city that symbolically is called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was crucified. [9] For three and a half days some from the peoples and tribes and languages and nations will gaze at their dead bodies and refuse to let them be placed in a tomb, [10] and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth.**

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John says that once their time is up, the beast will rise up from the bottomless pit and make war with them and eventually kill them. This beast is associated with the bottomless pit we talked about over the last two chapters, so we know that this entity is from the demonic realm. We will arrive at who this beast is eventually, but he kills the two witnesses and their bodies remain visible for 3.5 days.

# CHAPTER 11

They are killed in the city of Jerusalem. John says it is the city where their Lord was crucified, so we know for a fact that he is speaking of Jerusalem.

But he also calls it symbolically Sodom and Egypt. Why did he chose that terminology? It would appear that by the time of the Mid-Tribulation, Jerusalem had become a city of great depravity and idolatry. So this city is not holy as God intended for it to be.

As a result of the beast killing these two witnesses, the whole world celebrates. They go as far as giving one another gifts. They celebrate because they associate these two men with all of the destruction and death that they had experienced over the previous 3.5 years. The beast will be celebrated as a world hero for his act of killing these two men.

The connection to the temple is seen in these two men's ministry out of the temple. For the first 3.5 years of Tribulation these men protect both Israel and the temple from all of the calamity that is going on around the world.

## Revelation 11:11–13

**[11] But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. [12] Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them. [13] And at 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.**

# CHAPTER 11

## Notes:

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After these two men have been dead for 3.5 days, they are resurrected by God. And they stand up and walk upright. So fear comes upon the world because they are probably thinking that these two guys are going to bring the plagues back on the earth. And secondly because they just witnessed these two individuals be resurrected after being dead for 3.5 days!

But they hear the voice of the Lord call the two witnesses up into heaven and they are caught up to the Lord. And as they are caught up into heaven an earthquake occurs which causes 1/10th of the city of Jerusalem to fall and seven thousand people to die.

Zechariah said that the whole earth be witnessed to as a result of these two men. How is that possible? The first option is that with increased technology, the witness of these two men will be seen by all. The second option is that since there is little to no technological infrastructure, and as the judgments mount and destroy the earth, most of the world is narrowed down to a small region in the Middle East. So all of the world knows about these men and is witness to them because they are close to them.

# CHAPTER 11

## Revelation 11:14–19

**[14]** The second woe has passed; behold, the third woe is soon to come. **[15]** Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, 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 shall 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 thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. **[18]** The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.” **[19]** Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

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## CHAPTER 11

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John says as chapter 11 ends that this is the end of the second woe, but a third woe with the seven bowl judgments remain.

In chapter 11, verse 15, the seventh angel blows his trumpet signaling that the third woe judgment is about to begin.

As this chapter closes out we see voices in heaven declaring the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of the Lord.

In other words, this last trumpet leads to Christ's second coming.

# CHAPTER 12

## Revelation 12:1–5

**[1] And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. [2] She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. [3] And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. [4] His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. [5] She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne,**

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## CHAPTER 12

As we open this chapter, we see a great sign that appeared in heaven. A sign is symbolic for something that is seen in the real world. They are tools that tell us about something they represent. The important thing is that we realize a sign in the Bible for what it is, it's not the actual thing that it represents.

There are two signs given to us as we open up this chapter. The first is a woman with a child and the second is a red dragon. It is up to us to determine what these signs represent. We are first told about a woman who gives birth to a child. Verse 5 tells us that this male child is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but this child was caught up to God and to His throne. This reference to a rod of iron takes us to Psalm 2 which is a Messianic prophecy. So this is a reference to Jesus who came into the world as a child born to a woman.

This sign shows us that this male child is seated in heaven. This means that this sign represents Jesus the Messiah who will rule all of the nations seated at the right hand of God. This is important in order to keep us from distinguishing who the woman is. Since this child represents Jesus who is seated on His throne at the right hand of God, we need to dig a bit deeper to interpret who this woman is.

Who is the woman? John says that the woman is clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. There is nothing in the immediate context of this chapter and also nothing in the book of Revelation that help us interpret the meaning of this sign. In order to interpret this sign, we must go back to the book of Genesis.



## CHAPTER 12

If you read Genesis 37 you find that Joseph has a dream where the sun, the moon and the eleven stars all bow down to him. Jacob gives an interpretation of this dream in that these celestial bodies represent Jacob, his wife Rachel and his eleven brothers.

The immediate interpretation of this dream was realized whenever Joseph ascended to authority in Pharaoh's court in Egypt and his family had to come to him in order to purchase grain. But we also now realize what is meant by the sign that John sees here in Revelation 11. This woman is a representation of Israel, the family of Jacob. This also makes sense because Jesus was Jewish and was born out of the family of Jacob.

The next sign is that of a red dragon. If you read a bit further down this is a bit simpler because you see that John says the red dragon is Satan. John also says that Satan's tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven. We've talked in previous weeks about the fact that stars usually symbolize angels. Fallen stars represent fallen angels or demons.

So 1/3 of the angels in heaven follow Satan's rebellion. And the dragon's tail represents Satan's influence to pull these angels from heaven. The beginning of this chapter is telling the story of the opposition of Satan to Jesus. Satan has been waiting to destroy the Messiah when He appeared, but Christ conquered the grave and triumphed and today has ascended to heaven on His throne.

And because of this, Satan must change his tactics and we will see how his tactics change during the Mid-Tribulation.

## CHAPTER 12

The one final piece to interpret is the seven heads and ten horns of the dragon. This takes us back to the book of Daniel, in particular Daniel 7.

According to Daniel 7, there is a symbolic fourth beast that represents the final Gentile kingdom that rules the world during this age. This kingdom will take the form of a ten-king ruling structure that controls the entire world. Daniel tells us that the ten kings will be reduced to seven because an eleventh ruler rises up to subdue three of the ten. This ruler will have absolute authority a period of times and half a time, our connection to the 3.5 years and the Mid-Tribulation.

So these ten kings rule for 3.5 years, but in the middle of the Tribulation, the eleventh king rises up to rule over all. So the ten horns are the ten kings that rule the earth at the beginning of Tribulation. Daniel tells us that by the Mid-Tribulation period there are only seven ruling kings plus the Antichrist. So seven kings are ruling what ten kings previously ruled. The symbology here is the ten horns representing ten kingdoms ruled (represented by seven diadems, meaning crowns) by seven heads.

The implication is that these rulers are controlled by Satan. They are his horns. They are his heads. Putting all of these symbols together, we see that Satan stands in opposition to Jesus the Messiah. A woman Israel brought forth the Messiah who Satan seeks to destroy.

The story of Scripture is the story of God working to reconcile humanity through the Messiah Jesus. Because God brought the Messiah through Israel, Satan has sought to destroy the nation. Verses 1-5 tell the backstory of Satan's ages-old effort to destroy to stop the coming of the Messiah. But the Messiah has come to Earth, He conquered and now He sits on His throne at the right hand of God.

# CHAPTER 12

## Revelation 12:6–12

[6] and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days. [7] Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, [8] but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. [9] And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. [10] And 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 brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. [11] And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. [12] Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”

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## CHAPTER 12

So we know that the woman is Israel and John says that she flees into the wilderness as a place of provision prepared by God. John says she will be nourished for 1,260 days. And here is our reference to the mid-point of Tribulation. The circumstances of why this is necessary comes next.

John describes a war that comes about in heaven between Michael and the angels fighting against the dragon. John says that as a part of this war the dragon is defeated and both him and his fallen angels are thrown down to earth. We know that this battle happened long ago, yet we find this war happening again at the mid-point of the tribulation. So this is a different war, one that is happening at the Mid-Tribulation time frame.

At this point, Satan and his demonic forces lose access to the throne room of God. Up until now, they've had some level of access. John writes that Satan is called the accuser of the brethren, a reference to the fact that Satan stands accusing you and I of all sorts of different things. If we read the book of Job, we find Satan accusing Job in the throne room of God. But at this point, Satan loses access to the throne room of God as a result of the battle that he loses with Michael.

So at this point, Satan is confined only to the earth. For the first time since his creation, he no longer has access to heaven. And because of this, he understands that he is defeated and that his time is running short. And the song that is sung in heaven reminds Satan of his impending defeat.

Why did God wait until now to do this? We could say that it is because of God's grace to the world. When Satan loses access to heaven, he understands that his time is running out.

# CHAPTER 12

Because his time is running out, he is seeking to take out his anger on those on earth. Once Satan loses his access to heaven, his attacks intensify. So banishing him earlier would make life much more difficult for us on earth today. This is part of the reason why the second half of the Tribulation increases in intensity in terms of anguish on the earth. It's because Satan loses access to heaven.

In particular, Satan is about to take out his wrath on Israel. Satan has always opposed Israel because of the role that Israel plays in God's plan for redemption. This is why God makes a provision for Israel to ensure that the nation isn't wiped out. So Israel escapes into the wilderness to escape this rage for 1,260 days.

## Revelation 12:13–16

**[13] And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. [14] But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. [15] The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. [16] But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth.**

# CHAPTER 12

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John says that Satan goes after Israel and pursues them. He perceives them as the enemy and he tries to attack them because he knows that his fate is uniquely tied to the people of Israel during the Tribulation. So destroying the Jews is Satan's only help for self-preservation.

John next talks about how the Lord protects His people during these attacks. The woman receives two eagle's wings so that she might fly from the serpent. And she is carried here for a time, and times, and half a time. This flight is made possible by the eagle. Since the woman is a symbol, we understand that so is the eagle's wings. John describes it as a great eagle, so there is some significance here.

In the book of Exodus, the last time that Israel had to flee into the wilderness for protection, the Lord describes the process of escorting His people into the wilderness of Midian as bearing them on eagle's wings. So the symbology is a picture of the Lord's supernatural ability to protect His people in a wilderness journey.

## CHAPTER 12

So God will provide a supernatural escape for the nation of Israel. They are in the presence of the serpent, yet God promises to protect them in his presence. So this means that Satan is here on earth.

There are a number of tactics that Satan tries to use to destroy Israel. He sends a flood to swallow them up even as they flee. But the Lord causes the ground to open up that swallows up the water that is sent. So is this water literal or figurative? Well, everything else here is symbolic, so what could the water represent and if not, what is this water?

If we allow the water to be a river that is semi-literal, then maybe we can pull together a picture. In Matthew 24, Jesus talks about the abomination of desolation that is a desecration of the temple which references back to Daniel 9. At this time as the Antichrist desecrates the temple, this is the cue for Israel to flee to the desert. This is what we see happening here in chapter 12. This flight will be the Jews who believe in Jesus, fleeing with nothing just as their forefathers had in Exodus.

And if you read Jesus' warning in Matthew 24 he says that it will be a day unlike the world has ever seen. So as bad as things had been in the first half of tribulation, the remaining part of the tribulation will be even worse.

The prophets Isaiah and Micah both reference a place to take refuge in that is an impregnable rock. This place is somewhere you've probably heard of before, the name of it is Petra. Petra has places where fast moving waters can threaten anyone traveling through the area. So apparently the enemy brings about one of these flash floods in order to destroy Israel, but he is thwarted by the Lord.

# CHAPTER 12

## Revelation 12:17

**[17] Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.**

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John says that Satan is furious with the Jewish believers for escaping so he storms off to make war with the rest of her children. And there are two different groups of people that John references here.

The first is the rest of her offspring. In other words, unbelieving Jews. So these Jews hold to the Law and the traditions of Judaism. But they haven't called Jesus Lord.

The second is those who hold to the testimony of Jesus. If they were Jewish believers they would be at Petra. So these individuals would be Gentile believers. So Satan in his rage is lashing out at any Jewish or any Gentile believer.



# CHAPTER 13

## Revelation 13:1–2

**[1] And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. [2] And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority.**

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This chapter begins with symbols once again. Some are ones that we already know and others are new. We know that the dragon represents Satan and we know that he is confined to earth from the last chapter.

The new story that is being told in chapter 13 centers around the beast. We've heard his name in the past, particularly in chapter 11 where he killed the two witnesses. The beast also appeared in early chapters, but he wasn't called the beast then. Instead, he was riding horses that opened seal judgments.

## CHAPTER 13

At that time, he may not have been called the beast because he had not yet taken prominence. But in chapter 13, he is given the name beast. John says that the beast rose out of the sea and that the dragon, Satan gave his power and his throne and great authority to him.

What does it mean that the beast rose out of the sea? If you go back again to the book of Daniel chapter 7, you see Daniel's vision of a beast rising out of the sea. In this case, the beasts rising out of the sea was a reference to Gentile nations. Daniel 7 has an unnamed fourth beast which leads us to believe that this is the final beast that Daniel references.

Jumping back here to Revelation 13, we see that this beast has references to all of Daniel's beasts. This final beast is a reference back to the beasts rising out of the sea in Daniel 7 and this creature is an embodiment of the Age of the Gentiles. This beast is the final ruler before the return of Christ.

Connecting the dots we find that there is a final world ruler who will come to full power at the middle part of the Tribulation. He will be given power by Satan to rule and conquer. He is depicted as a bear, a lion and a leopard because he embodies every part of the Gentile kingdoms that preceded him.

This beast is different from other evil rulers of the past, because he is given power from Satan directly. There is also the question of heads horns and diadems (crowns), but we have to wait a few chapters to really understand the meaning of these symbols.

# CHAPTER 13

## Revelation 13:3

**[3] One of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast.**

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One of the heads has a mortal wound, but it was healed. Rather than skipping ahead, for now let's just say that this head that was mortally wounded is the Antichrist. We will understand the symbology later on.

We will learn in Revelation 17 that these heads are world leaders and the seventh is the Antichrist himself. It's important to realize the story of the Antichrist that we've talked about over the last couple of chapters.

We know that the Antichrist would rise to power over the first 3.5 years of the Tribulation and come into full power at the mid point. We know that he will rise as a political and military leader who makes an agreement with Israel to allow them to worship at a rebuilt temple once again that kicks of the Tribulation.

## CHAPTER 13

We also know that there are ten ruling kings at the beginning of the Tribulation, but he isn't one of them. He rises as this eleventh ruler and he consolidates power through threats of war and military conquest.

At the height of his power, the Antichrist is fatally wounded. It's a head wound that causes him to die, but the fatal wound is healed. The only way for a fatal wound to be healed is for the dead body to return to life. The Antichrist is killed and then resurrected. What kills the Antichrist, we don't know, but we can maybe guess based on the context. We know that three world leaders are removed by the Antichrist, so perhaps these three leaders gather and try to kill the Antichrist. Once he comes back to life, he then wipes them out.

How does this man come back to life? We know that God has the power to bring the dead back to life, but this isn't a work of God. Instead it would appear that through whatever power is granted to the Antichrist, that Satan is granted the ability to bring this man back to life. We can't say for sure how Satan's power is given to the Antichrist, whether through some sort of transfer or him dwelling inside of him, in either case he has power from Satan. So through this act of being raised from the dead, the world's attention turn toward worshiping the Antichrist and in turn Satan.

# CHAPTER 13

## Revelation 13:4

**[4] And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"**

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So the world turns their attention to Satan indirectly, and they begin to worship him. They worship Satan behind the scenes. They don't know necessarily that Satan is doing all of this but they end up worshipping him.

What we know from the past weeks is that Satan had control over all of the world leaders. These ten kings, Satan controlled. So by these kings assuming power and trying to kill the Antichrist and by virtue of him being raised from the dead, we see that Satan orchestrated the entire thing.

He sets everything in motion so that he can raise the Antichrist from the dead and set everything in motion.

## CHAPTER 13

This is the moment that the Antichrist fully dominates the world scene. And this is partially from where we can see that his name is derived. He is the Antichrist, an imitator. He embodies exactly what Satan always tries to do which is imitate God. But he's a counterfeit.

Paul and Daniel both tell us that the Antichrist would claim to be God and take up a seat in a newly built Jewish temple claiming to be Christ. He exalts himself above every god and speaks blasphemous things. He will claim to be above other religions and make the claim to be the Messiah.

In reality, the Antichrist will worship the god of this world - Satan. He will put an end to all other religions in the world, and will put an end to worship in the Jewish temple. The end of sacrifice at the middle of Tribulation happens because he claims to be god and there is no longer a need for worship in the temple any longer.

And this begins the abomination in the temple. Jesus and Daniel refer to it as the abomination of desolation. So the Antichrist is murdered, but by the power of Satan is resurrected and after he is resurrected, he is worshiped.

He puts an end to the worship in the Jewish temple. The Antichrist is celebrated because he killed the two witnesses in chapter 11 and brought an apparent end to the perceived afflictions on the earth. And because he was resurrected after he was killed.

# CHAPTER 13

## Revelation 13:5–10

**[5] And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. [6] It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. [7] Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, [8] and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain. [9] If anyone has an ear, let him hear: [10] If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain. Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.**

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## CHAPTER 13

As we continue through this chapter, we see the tell-tale sign that we are at the Mid-Tribulation period with the reference to 42 months. And the effects of his power is apparent. He attacks anyone who worships anyone but himself. At the end of chapter 12, Satan goes off to wage war with the unbelieving Jews and believers in Christ. And many of them will be martyred for their faith.

The Antichrist will use the world to go out and conquer those who believe in Christ. Those who know Christ will not bow and thus will be killed. Those who do not know Christ will follow along with the Antichrist, believing him to be god.

The edict is given to worship God and die, or worship the Antichrist and live. John says there is no resisting the captivity of the attacks of the Antichrist. If a saint is to go to captivity, that's where they will go. If they are to be slain, they will be slain.

In other words, there is no resisting what the Antichrist desires to do to the believers in Christ. Most likely, if you are a believer in Christ at this point, you will be killed for your faith. In the next part of this chapter, we are introduced to another character.



# CHAPTER 13

## Revelation 13:11–14

**[11] Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. [12] It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. [13] It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, [14] and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.**

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Another beast emerges, but this time from the earth, not the sea. This beast is a combination of a lamb and dragon. A lamb is often used as a picture of Christ in His ministry as the dying prophet sent to be sacrificed.

The dragon means that he speaks for Satan. This man will be a spokesman for the Antichrist, raised up by Satan to be his prophet.

## CHAPTER 13

This man is often called the False Prophet of Tribulation meaning that he will exercise the authority of the Antichrist in the Antichrist's presence. He will accompany the Antichrist and perform miraculous signs by the power of Satan.

Satan raises up another man alongside the Antichrist who calls upon the world to worship the Antichrist as god. He performs signs even making fire come down from heaven. But this only in the presence of the Antichrist - this is an indication that they are directly related to the power that the Antichrist is given by Satan because Satan is not omnipresent.

This false prophet commands that an image is constructed of the resurrected Antichrist. And this image, this idol will be setup in the temple to be worshiped. So again, we see Satan being a counterfeit.

Setting up an image to be worshiped. Setting this image up in the Jewish temple. And this image will compel worship in unusual ways.

# CHAPTER 13

## Revelation 13:15–18

**[15] And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. [16] Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, [17] so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. [18] This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is 666.**

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## CHAPTER 13

The false prophet has the ability to give this image speech. The image can breath and speak and kill those who do not worship the image. This is the abomination of desolation that Daniel references in chapter 12 and Jesus talks about in Matthew 24. This abomination starts with the Antichrist sitting in the mercy seat of the temple, but there is an on-going abomination of desolation that is set up, indicating something is put in place.

This statue is brought to life by some sort of demonic force. The final thing that the false prophet does is command the world to worship the Antichrist through economic means. Every individual who wishes to buy and sell must take a mark on their right hand or foreheads. This is similar to the mark that we read about in Revelation 7 of God sealing the believers.

This mark bears a number that is representative of the Antichrist's name and that number is the number 666. Numbering a name is a uniquely Jewish way of turning a name into a number. They would assign a numerical value to each letter of the Hebrew alphabet, all 22 of the letters. The Hebrew alphabet isn't number 1-22, but rather 1-10 and then by tens from 20 to 100 and finally by hundreds to 400. If you add up an individual's Hebrew name you arrive at a single value.

Whatever the Antichrist's name is in Hebrew when you add up the letters you arrive at 666. 6 in the Bible is representative of fallen/sinful man. And this number is repeated three times. If you remember when we talked about the throne room of God praising God with the words holy, holy, holy, it meant holy to the utmost. The same thing happens here, with then number 6. The Antichrist is being described as the most sinful man.

# CHAPTER 14

## Revelation 14:1-5

[1] Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. [2] And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, [3] and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. [4] It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb, [5] and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

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## CHAPTER 14

John describes the Lamb standing on Mount Zion. We know that from the past several weeks of study that the Lamb is a name for Jesus, so where is Mount Zion? This name is often associated with the temple mount in Jerusalem. But we know that Jesus has yet to return to earth. So at this point, the Lamb is still in heaven which begs the question what is the reference to Mount Zion?

John also references the 144,000 Jewish believers that were sealed from the events of Revelation 7. They were sealed by God with the vocation of evangelizing the earth. John hears a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. Because it comes from the throne, this must be the voice of God. Next John hears a song being sung by the 144,000 before the throne of God and before the creatures and elders. John says that nobody knows this song except for the 144,000 so it must be they who are singing at this point. Since they are gathered around the throne, we must conclude that they and Jesus are both in Heaven.

Why did John use the term Mount Zion in verse 1? Mount Zion is often used as a term in the Bible for the Kingdom of Israel in glory. So John sees the future kingdom of Israel in glory depicted in the throne room of Heaven. Jesus in His glory is preparing to rule and the 144,000 Jewish individuals prepare to enter and rule with Him. They were standing on the heavenly Mount Zion in the New Testament in Heaven. Mount Zion is referenced in both the book of Hebrews and Romans and it indicates that this is a heavenly place that is prepared to descend to the earth when Christ returns to earth. So this scene indicates that this is a time of preparation for the descending of Mount Zion to the earth in a coming time.

## CHAPTER 14

Why is this mentioned in the Mid Tribulation period? Verse 3 mentions that they were redeemed from the earth. To be redeemed means that they were purchased from the earth, specifically by the blood of Christ. So these believers left the earth and entered heaven and we are told in verse 4 that they were redeemed from mankind as a firstfruits of God. Firstfruits were the first part of a harvest. They were typically the best part of the harvest, they were the low-hanging fruits because they were the best fruit.

So in connection with them entering heaven, we can say that these individuals were first and best of the martyrs that were soon to enter heaven. Since they entered heaven at the Mid-Tribulation time period, it means that they died during the first part of the Tribulation. They were the first to receive faith after the rapture and they were the first to spread the Gospel during the Tribulation. Verse 5 tells us that they were blameless indicating that they were models of obedience and service during their time on the earth.

So as a further act of grace towards these individuals, God allows them to leave the earth before the worst of the Tribulation happens in the second half. You might remember in earlier chapters that these individuals were protected from being harmed, but apparently by the Mid-Tribulation time period, this protection has been lifted. In particular, you may remember from last week that if anyone is destined for captivity or to be killed it will happen. So at this point there isn't really a way to be undecided.

For these individuals, they choose to believe in God and as a result they were martyred for their faith.

# CHAPTER 14

## Revelation 14:6-11

**[6] Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. [7] And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water." [8] Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality." [9] And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, [10] he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur 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, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name."**

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## CHAPTER 14

John sees an angel proclaiming the Gospel over the earth and this is a final effort by God to deliver the eternal Gospel that there is only one way to the Father, through Christ so that the world might be saved.

This is a final presentation to the world prior to the return of Christ. In this moment, the Gospel is proclaimed to the entire world just as Jesus promised. So God, in His incredible love, decides to share the message of Gospel and call for repentance one last time.

There is also another announcement that is made to the earth by an angel. The name of the Antichrist's kingdom is called Babylon and we will discuss it progressively over the next couple of chapters.

There is also an announcement from a third angel. This angel proclaims that if anyone worships the image of the Antichrist and takes the mark of the beast, he or she will also drink of this same wrath that is destined for Babylon. And it is an eternal punishment of being tormented with fire and sulfur.

This is a reminder of us that there is an eternal punishment for those who do not believe in Christ. It isn't figurative, or something that is only of the mind. Hell is a real place that those who fail to repent of their sin are destined to find themselves in.

Scripture is clear that those who refuse to repent and turn to Christ are destined to dwell there for eternity and be tormented night and day.

# CHAPTER 14

## Revelation 14:12-20

**[12] Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. [13] And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!" [14] Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. [15] And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe." [16] So he who sat on the cloud swung his sickle across the earth, and the earth was reaped. [17] Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. [18] And another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has authority over the fire, and he called with a loud voice to the one who had the sharp sickle, "Put in your sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe." [19] So the angel swung his sickle across the earth and gathered the grape harvest of the earth and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. [20] And the winepress was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the winepress, as high as a horse's bridle, for 1,600 stadia.**

# CHAPTER 14

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John calls for the endurance of the saints and to those who keep the commandments of God. John is saying for those who are facing the final part of the Tribulation to have endurance for what is about to occur. Hope can be maintained by understanding that death is truly a blessing based on what they would otherwise be facing.

The voice calling from heaven says that death is actually a rest from what they would be facing. They can rest from their labors because their deeds follow them. What they labored for on earth follows them to heaven. They can press on knowing that if death comes it will actually be a blessing of rest.

John also sees one seated on a white cloud one like a son of man with a golden crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. This is an angel, and not Christ. The term son of man is at times used to reference Christ, but it also indicates a particular appearance.

## CHAPTER 14

The word for crown here is a *stephanos* not a *diadem*, Christ always wears a *stephanos*. Lastly, this individual takes a command from another angel, something Jesus would never do. So angels are reaping the earth of believers through martyrdom. The angels will be reaping the earth of believers but the actual forces of death will be the Antichrist. The Lord allows the Antichrist to prosper and have success killing saints for 3.5 years, but his time is only temporary.

Two more angels appear out of the temple in heaven and also begin to reap. This angel is called to reap a different group of individuals because they face a different fate. This is a description of the fate of unbelievers at a point near the end of Tribulation.

This chapter has been describing on a whole what happens to the world's entire population over the course of tribulation. By and large unbelievers will face death towards the end of the Tribulation. And specifically what this references is the battle of Armageddon in which unbelievers face the wrath of God.

John describes this as a time of great bloodshed as unbelievers literally become a bloodbath. The blood that John describes is 4.5 feet high and stretches for two hundred miles. This is possible because it happens in a narrow ravine that runs in Israel, the valley of Kidron. This is the blood of billions of individuals.

The ending of this chapter refers to the fate of unbelievers upon the return of Christ. And this foreshadows the bowl judgments that we will begin talking about in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 15

## Revelation 15:1-4

**[1] Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and amazing, seven angels with seven plagues, which are the last, for with them the wrath of God is finished. [2] And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire—and also those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name, standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. [3] And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations! [4] Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.”**

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## CHAPTER 15

John's attention is turned once again to the heavens. And here he sees another sign, seven angels with seven plagues. In fact, this entire chapter uses a series of signs and symbols to make a point.

John says that these are the last plagues because with them, the wrath of God is finished. So these are the last of God's judgments as a consequence of the Old Covenant between Himself and Israel. If you remember back several chapters, we talked about these seventy sevens that were decreed in the book of Daniel. And the purpose of these seventy sevens were to address the sins of Israel under the Old Covenant.

The purpose of these judgments are due to Israel's disobedience under the Old Covenant and are not directed at believers. Hence this is the reason that the church is raptured prior to the Tribulation beginning. And also why the Jewish people who believed were taken to safety at Petra.

John talks about the sign he sees and it has multiple parts to it and it begins with a glass sea mixed with fire. John is trying to describe something that is just plain other-worldly, and this is the best way that he can describe it. So John is taking things that he can describe and combining them in an attempt to describe what he is seeing by using impossible combinations. Those who are standing on this sea are those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number its name.

Those who had been victorious are those who were martyred. Their death is called a victory over the beast. Death is a victory because it removes the person from the influence of the beast and brings them to a place of rest.

## CHAPTER 15

These individuals overcame the beast because they didn't give in and show a love for their physical lives over the Lord. This is the type of eternal perspective that we are called to have as believers. There is nothing that we should love over the Lord.

We see these saints singing with harps and singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. The song of the Lamb is a song praising Christ that is referenced in verses 3 and 4. The song of Moses is a reference to a song in the Old Testament in Deuteronomy 32 or Exodus 15.

In Deuteronomy, the song is Israel becoming faithless and how in their rebellion, God brings them to a low point to break their rebellious hearts. The song is prophetic in that its ultimate fulfillment is in the events of Tribulation. The entirety of Exodus is a picture of the Tribulation. Ultimately through miraculous judgments, God brings Israel to Himself to dwell safely in the Promised Land. In a similar way, this is how the Lord brings Israel to the realization that Christ is the Messiah.

This is heavenly scene that communicates what is going to happen at the end of the Tribulation. The first song is about Christ returning to Earth and that His return is imminent. This gives the believer on earth something to hope for as they face intense persecution. The second song is a bit different and sung to a different group of people. This song is directed primarily at orthodox Jew who have yet to believe in Christ. The part of the song from Deuteronomy reminds God's people that the judgment of God is a part of the Old Covenant's demands. The second part of the song from Exodus reminds the Jewish people of God's faithfulness in the middle of attack.

# CHAPTER 15

## Revelation 15:5-8

[5] After this I looked, and the sanctuary of the tent of witness in heaven was opened, [6] and out of the sanctuary came the seven angels with the seven plagues, clothed in pure, bright linen, with golden sashes around their chests. [7] And 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 sanctuary was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

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## CHAPTER 15

There is a transition in verse 5 in which part of the sign transitions to the temple in Heaven and the tabernacle opening. In the heavenly realm stands a tabernacle similar to the one that Moses built for Israel under the Law. And Hebrews tells us that the earthly tabernacle was patterned after a heavenly version. In the tabernacle on earth resided an ark with a mercy seat which is given to the top or the lid of the ark. The Shekinah glory of God dwelt in the earthly tabernacle by resting on top of the mercy seat. But the Lord's presence left the temple shortly before the Age of the Gentiles began. And it won't return until the Kingdom begins and a new temple is built.

So as the Lord prepares to pour out His final wrath upon Israel and the world, He opens the tabernacle in Heaven as a sign. The glory of the Lord on the mercy seat becomes visible for a time alluding to the Lord's impending return to the tabernacle.

Finally, the seventh trumpet judgment is the seven bowl judgments, and now these bowls are being prepared. God's wrath is commonly depicted as something being poured out. God's wrath or judgment is also said to be being stored up as in filling a cup or a vessel. But now God's wrath is being accumulated in something greater than a cup, it's a bowl.

## CHAPTER 15

Finally, something peculiar happens as the temple is filled with smoke representing the power and the glory of God. Additionally with this, no one could enter the temple. On earth, with Israel and the Law, the High Priest could only enter the Holy of Holies.

In heaven, this is reserved for Jesus, the Great High Priest. So the indication is that the Father has barred Jesus from entering the temple until the end of the bowl judgments. If Jesus cannot enter the temple, it would indicate that He cannot make intercession. And if no intercession is made, then no grace can be offered.

So the implication of all of this would be that no grace and no new faith will be found on earth during this time period. This chapter is a transition chapter that leads us out of the Mid-Tribulation period. The bowl judgements will take place toward the end of the second half of Tribulation.

In the next chapter we will talk about these bowl judgments and see how they play out on the earth.

# CHAPTER 16

## Revelation 16:1–11

[1] Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling 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 harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. [3] The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea. [4] The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood. [5] And I heard the angel in charge of the waters say, “Just are you, O Holy One, who is and who was, for you brought these judgments. [6] For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink. It is what they deserve!” [7] And I heard the altar saying, “Yes, Lord God the Almighty, true and just are your judgments!” [8] The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch people with fire. [9] They were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues. They did not repent and give him glory. [10] The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in anguish [11] and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores. They did not repent of their deeds.

# CHAPTER 16

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We see God's final wrath poured out upon the earth through a series of bowl judgments. And each of these is a new level of misery for individuals who are dwelling upon the earth.

The first bowl judgment is a series of harmful and painful sores that come upon people who bore the mark of the beast and who worshiped its image. These sores that come upon the flesh of man are vile and wicked, causing unimaginable pain. Just imagine the amount of pain that individuals must have been feeling because of these sores.

## CHAPTER 16

The second bowl judgment kills every living thing that is in the sea. The stench of the dead animals would be awful, rotting and putrid. Aside from the dead fish, the water would become putrid and congealed. This would also shut down the water cycle of the planet stopping all rain on earth.

The third bowl judgment causes all fresh water on the earth to turn to blood. And the angel who pours out this bowl judgment says that this is repayment for the world pouring out the blood of the saints. Because the world did this, it says the world deserves to be without water. This is an indication that these judgements occur toward the end of the Tribulation because humanity cannot live without water for more than a few days.

The fourth bowl judgement causes the sun to burn even more in intensity that it burns men. This would further intensify the dead rotting animals from the ocean also. So a putrid smell on top of it all.

The fifth bowl judgment plunges the earth into darkness. And this is a darkness so intense that it causes unbearable pain. This is a pain because it isn't just physical darkness, but also spiritual darkness. The Lord has left the world exposed by withdrawing His protection.

The pattern at work here is a pattern of many judgements. And we could say that this is again a preview of what awaits unbelievers in hell. Scorching heat, darkness, no water, no relief from pain. Hell is the pouring out of God's wrath and in a way this is a preview of what awaits unbelievers.

## CHAPTER 16

What is the earth's response to these judgments? They continue to blaspheme and deny God without repentance. And this fits the pattern found in Exodus where Egypt held Israel captive and in order for them to be freed, God poured out his judgments upon them. Bowl judgments 1, 2, 3 and 5 mirror the plagues in Egypt. So it is a reminder that these judgments are ultimately moving the nation of Israel to a good outcome.

So how do these judgments fit the overall plan for the end of Tribulation?

The first five of these judgments are a systematic delivery of judgment upon the earth in preparation for the Lord's return. They bring God's wrath to the world but also prepare for the events of the next two chapters. The final two judgements are large in scale compared to these first five but they are part of a larger set of events. And these climax in the War of Armageddon with multiple stages.

The war ends the Tribulation and leads to Christ's second coming. The first two stages of the war are set into motion by the final two bowl judgements. Armageddon is a term that I'm sure you've heard before, and I think it helps for us to understand what this battle is. It is a fairly complex event like the events of war themselves. It is even more complex to understand because the description of this war is strung out over several chapters in Revelation. So we are going to talk about Armageddon over the next few chapters, but we first need to establish a relationship between the bowls and the events of this war.

# CHAPTER 16

## Revelation 16:12–16

**[12] The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east. [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 demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. [15] (“Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!”) [16] And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.**

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## CHAPTER 16

The sixth bowl judgement dries up the Euphrates River. The Euphrates River is a major river in present-day Iraq that is near the ancient city of Babylon. We know that the river is already turned to blood from a previous bowl judgement. So why is this a judgement?

Its because it prepares a way for the kings from the east. These kings are a reference to the Antichrist and the seven kings who serve him. We know that originally the Tribulation period begins with ten kings in power, but the Antichrist rises up and wipes out three of these ten kings and the remaining seven follow him. So the river dries up to make a way for them to travel.

What does traveling here have to do with the judgment? At the end of this section we see how this plays into the judgement. Satan sees this as an opportunity to enact his plan against God and he sends out demonic spirits described as frogs which is an Old Testament symbol for an unclean spirit. And these demonic spirits go out to the kings of the earth and have them assemble their armies. The gathering place of this place is called Armageddon or Har-Megiddo.

The word har in Hebrew means a hill or valley and Megiddo is the name of a city in the northern part of Israel in the Jezreel Valley. The transliteration of this name is Armageddon.

Satan knows that his time is short so he assembles the kings of the world and their armies in preparation for the return of Christ at the Mt of Olives. And when Christ returns, Satan will be waiting to attempt to destroy Him. Additionally he is going to attempt to destroy any Jews that are hunkering down in Jerusalem.



## CHAPTER 16

This war is going to unfold over several stages in the next several chapters. The first of those is the sixth bowl judgment. Stage one of this war is the movement of the Antichrist's forces out of the capital city, Babylon and toward Israel. We don't know that it is Babylon yet, but the Euphrates River drying up gives us a clue. The river was bloody so it was an obstacle.

The Lord dries it up so that these forces can move into action. He also adds a call to those who are reading in verse 15 that He will come like a thief in the night. It is a reminder for believers to be prepared for His return.

### **Revelation 16:17–21**

**[17] The seventh angel poured out his bowl into 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, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. [19] The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. [20] And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found. [21] And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people; and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.**

# CHAPTER 16

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Finally we see the final bowl judgement poured out upon the earth. And the wrath of God covers the entire earth. Earthquakes occur unlike any that have ever occurred. Mountains are gone, islands are destroyed.

And then a voice says it is done. This means God is saying that it has been accomplished. Hail falls from the sky, and they are about 100 pounds each. They fall upon people and upon all of the land. Yet people still don't recognize the incredibly power of God and instead choose to curse Him.

John says that all of the cities of the nations fell. The Greek word for nations here is ethnos, a term translated to Gentiles. So God destroys all of the Gentile nations in this act. Only Jerusalem is excluded from this plague. There must also be one Gentile city remaining as well because in verse 19 John says that the great city was split into three parts.

## CHAPTER 16

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This great city is not Jerusalem, but rather Babylon. John says that Babylon is receiving the wine of God's wrath. Remember we talked about bowls and cups being used for pouring out God's wrath.

And now God's wrath is being poured out upon Babylon. The destruction of Babylon is complex and it takes two chapters to deal with its destruction. Babylon always plays the antagonist to Christ's protagonist in the story of the Bible.

In the next chapter we are going to talk more about Babylon as we move into chapter 17 and highlight a few themes in Scripture.

## CHAPTER 17

In the last chapter we talked about the fact that Babylon is where the Antichrist's capital would be located, but this isn't the first time we've heard about Babylon in the Bible. There is a theme in Scripture for Babylon.

The destruction of Babylon is one of the two major themes of Scripture along with redemption, and often the two play off one another. The idea of Babylon stands for five related concepts in the Bible.

The first is that it is the home of sin since it is the location of the Garden of Eden in present-day Iraq. It was the original location of sin and the first place of Satan's attack against humanity and in turn God.

The second is that Babylon was a source of idolatry on earth. If you read Genesis 11, you find that the people of the earth tried to construct a tower that ascended into heaven. The construction of this tower was the first idol on earth.

The third is that Babylon was the first Gentile kingdom to conquer Israel and Jerusalem.

The fourth is that Babylon represents the seat of power for the Antichrist during the Tribulation. Since this has always been Satan's headquarters so to speak, it makes sense that the Antichrist would setup his kingdom here.

## CHAPTER 17

The fifth is that Babylon represents the false religions in the world. There are really two religious systems in the world, the one that God made available by His promises found in His word and through our faith in the work of Christ and then everything else that Satan has constructed. Everything else is Babylon.

Jerusalem is the opposite of Babylon. It is God's dwelling place, the capital of His people and the place of Christ's sacrifice. It will be seat of Christ's kingdom and the center of the world going forward. In fact, these two are always opposed to one another in Scripture.

As Babylon is east of Jerusalem, moving east means moving toward sin. Cain moved east after killing his brother Abel. In a similar way moving west means moving towards God. Abraham moved from the east to the west, indicating his move from paganism to worship of Yahweh.

So at the end of the age the two cities left standing are Jerusalem and Babylon. The bowl judgements are God's final wrath upon the earth so they have to bring an end to Babylon. With the end of Babylon come an end to Satan's kingdom, the rule of the Antichrist, the end of false religion and the end of idolatry. The seventh bowl judgment that we talked about last week brings an end to Babylon.

An end is brought both to physical Babylon as well as spiritual Babylon. Over the next two chapters we see an end brought to spiritual Babylon in chapter 17 and physical Babylon in chapter 18.

# CHAPTER 17

## Revelation 17:1–8

[1] Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters, [2] with whom the kings of the earth have committed sexual immorality, and with the wine of whose sexual immorality the dwellers on earth have become drunk.” [3] And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast that was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. [4] The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and jewels and pearls, holding in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality. [5] And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: “Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth’s abominations.” [6] And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her, I marveled greatly. [7] But the angel said to me, “Why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman, and of the beast with seven heads and ten horns that carries her. [8] The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.

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## CHAPTER 17

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One of the seven angels approaches John and gives him greater insight into this seventh bowl judgement. The symbology used here is that of a prostitute who is seated on many waters. In verse 5 we learn that this woman is symbolic for Babylon.

Women, or the role of women are used often in Scripture to describe religious systems. Israel is the wife of Jehovah, the Church is the Bride of Christ. In this instance, a prostitute is used to describe the false religion of Babylon. This term fits well with what false religion really is. It is the illusion of something that is really a counterfeit. It is used to describe a false religion relationship rather than true covenant with God.

This particular woman is described as the mother of prostitutes - or in other words, the source of all counterfeits. So symbolically this is a fitting representation of Satan as the source of all false religions.

The waters that the prostitute sits on is described later in verse 15, but it represents the nations and the languages of the earth. Sitting on it means that she dominates them. False religion deceives the nations of the world and it finds itself in Babylon.

## CHAPTER 17

The angel describes the leaders of the world committing sexual immorality with this woman and as a result the nations become drunk with sexual immorality. They use false religions for their own gain and own pleasure. They become drunk in a sense because they lose their abilities under Satan's influence.

John describes being carried away into the wilderness in verse 3 and in doing so we see the prostitute in a new way. The woman is riding a beast having seven heads and ten horns. And this calls back to chapter 13 with a beast being mentioned that looks exactly the same as the one described here. This beast is the Antichrist. So where the prostitute previously sat on the waters of many nations and controlled them, now she rides solely on the beast.

In a sense we can say that Satan, Babylon - the false religions and lies of the world, and the Antichrist are all united as one. And this means that all world religion is vested in one single man and that's the Antichrist. No longer will there be many false world religions, but only one.

The woman is clothed in fine array like royalty because the world will be required to worship the beast. In verse 4, John says that the prostitute holds a cup of abominations and immorality - she indulges in these things like a drink and takes pleasure in them. Finally in verse 6 John hears that she is drunk on the blood of the saints. This is a picture of martyrdom in the time of Tribulation and other times. False religion is Satan's tool to enslave the world in sin and to persecute the church



# CHAPTER 17

## Revelation 17:9–14

**[9] This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; [10] they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while. [11] As for the beast that was and is not, it is an eighth but it belongs to the seven, and it goes to destruction. [12] And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast. [13] These are of one mind, and they hand over their power and authority to the beast. [14] They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.”**

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## CHAPTER 17

A mind with wisdom is a call in Scripture to remember history and the rest of the Bible, specifically the Old Testament. So the angel tells John that the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated.

So why go from heads to mountains to kings? The angel is distinguishing the seven kings from the seven leaders who rule under the Antichrist. Mountains are used in the Bible for kings who rule with the highest authority. This means that the kings cannot be under the Antichrist, because that would not be of the highest authority. The woman sits on these kings meaning this must be before the time of the Antichrist because she sits on him as we talked about earlier.

The angel says that five have fallen, one is and one will come as of John's day. So these are a sequence of events that unfold over time. The ten kings that we've talked about earlier all rule at the same time. Later on in this chapter we learn that the ten horns represent the kings of the Tribulation period. So these kings rule in succession prior to the Antichrist.

The Antichrist is one of these as mentioned in verse 11. He is actually mentioned as a seventh and an eight. And this is most likely a reference to the fact that he is the seventh, then he is killed but resurrects back to life as the eighth.

To understand the meanings of these heads we have to go back to chapter 13. In Revelation 13, we saw the beast described as incorporating aspects of the four beasts of Daniel. Each of these beasts represent rulers who ruled during a particular period of the Age of the Gentiles. Obviously many kings ruled over the 2600+ years of the Age of the Gentiles, so who do we know are these seven heads?

## CHAPTER 17

John is told that five have fallen, one is and one will come in a short while. These kings would have had to have conquered both Babylon and Jerusalem. The nations that rule over Israel will also possess Babylon.

So which kings had ruled over both by the time that John wrote this letter in 95AD?

History only records five such. Nebuchadnezzar's dynasty was the first. That was followed by Cyrus and the Medo-Persian empire. Alexander's Greek empire would be the third. Following the dissolution of his empire, Ptolemy II of the Ptolemaic Empire was the fourth. And the fifth and final was Antiochus Epiphanes IV.

So these are the five that were, but the angel also says that there was one who was. In John's days this was a General Titus who conquered Jerusalem in AD 70 and ascended to the emperor of Rome, thus conquering Babylon. The remnants of the Roman Empire continued to exert control over both cities until the early 1900's. The next head will be the Antichrist and he will be the last world leader to gain control over both places. He comes for a little while, the 3.5 years of Tribulation doing what others had done.

So these seven heads are those kings who lead Satan's kingdom, a spiritual Babylon which serves God's purpose of Gentile domination over Israel. The prostitute of Babylon has been with these kings over history until the final king, the Antichrist.

Finally the angel tells John that the ten horns are the ten kings and they exist only to give power to the Antichrist, the beast.

# CHAPTER 17

## Revelation 17:15–18

**[15] And the angel said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the prostitute is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations and languages. [16] And the ten horns that you saw, they and the beast will hate the prostitute. They will make her desolate and naked, and devour her flesh and burn her up with fire, [17] for God has put it into their hearts to carry out his purpose by being of one mind and handing over their royal power to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled. [18] And the woman that you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth.”**

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## CHAPTER 17

As we talked about earlier, the prostitute sits on the waters which represent the nations of the world.

But now as the seventh bowl judgment is poured out, this corrupt counterfeit religion is brought to an end. Verses 16 and 17 state that the world leaders under the Antichrist come to hate the prostitute.

At the mid-Tribulation period, the Antichrist demands all worship be given to him. As a result, all of the religious institutions, mosques, temples are destroyed. These things constitute her "flesh" and they are destroyed.

Verse 17 tells us that God has put it into the hearts of these kings to carry out His purpose in spite of them thinking that it is their own idea.

So, at the end, all that is left of this false religion is the worship of Satan, the Antichrist and the False Prophet on earth. Verse 14 tells us that Christ will take care of them Himself.

# CHAPTER 18

## Revelation 18:1–3

**[1] After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. [2] And he called out with a mighty voice, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. [3] For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living.”**

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## CHAPTER 18

Chapter 18 begins with the familiar phrase "after this." So this implies a cause-and-effect relationship between the events of chapter 16. Chapter 17 was an interruption of sorts, so this harkens back to the bowl judgement of chapter 16. Chapter 17 is the backstory of how spiritual Babylon existed for millennia but in the end it will be destroyed. So now in this chapter, John returns to the literal description of Babylon being destroyed.

In verse 1 the direction is moving down from heaven to earth. An angel moves down with a proclamation about Babylon being fallen. And what follows is God's fulfillment of numerous prophecies concerning Babylon. The angel declares that the city will be so utterly destroyed that it will be uninhabited forever. The only thing that will remain there are demons and unclean spirits that will be confined there during the Kingdom.

Both Isaiah 13 and Jeremiah 51 speak to the destruction of the city and the desolation of it. We may think that these are references to the conquest of Babylon by the Medo-Persians, but that event was largely uneventful. Cyrus the Great overthrew Babylon by diverting the Euphrates River and coming in under the walls of the city. So this must be a reference to a future time. Verse 3 lists out reasons for her destruction.

First, the nations have become drunk by her immorality. This is a reference to physical Babylon however, so it must indicate the city's corrupting influence on the world of that day, the worship of the beast. Second, the kings of the earth will commit acts of immorality with her. Third, the merchants of the world will have profited from the Antichrist's rule in Babylon. Since the Antichrist regulates all commerce by his mark, the city becomes incredibly rich. The world's economy therefore depends upon Babylon.

# CHAPTER 18

## Revelation 18:4–8

**[4]** Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues; **[5]** for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. **[6]** Pay her back as she herself has paid back others, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed. **[7]** As she glorified herself and lived in luxury, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since in her heart she says, ‘I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.’ **[8]** For this reason her plagues will come in a single day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her.”

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## CHAPTER 18

Verse 4 calls for all of those who belong to God to leave the city so that they might escape the judgment that is coming. If God's people remain in this city, they will surely be impacted by the judgment upon the city. We know that when God pours out judgment in Scripture, He protects those who are His. For example, He made sure that Lot and his family left Sodom before He destroyed the city. He removed the church before the Tribulation period. So again, God calls for believers to leave Babylon before He pours out judgment upon the city.

The Jews living in the city and those who haven't taken the mark of the beast will flee from the city in response to this warning. Only those who believe God's word will flee from the city. Jeremiah 51 says that they will go to Jerusalem.

The angel tells us in verses 6-8 that this is repayment for the mistreatment that Babylon has shown to Israel during the invasion of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar. The city will be destroyed as punishment for the history of the city and its people opposing Israel and corrupting the world.

There are two parts to the destruction of the city. The first part is accomplished by the hands of man and directed against the citizens of the city. The second part is accomplished supernaturally by God alone and directed against the structures of the city.

Revelation 18 only summarizes this destruction, so we have to look elsewhere in Scripture to see details of each part individually.

## CHAPTER 18

Isaiah 13 describes the destruction of the city at the hands of man. God first begins by commanding His mighty warriors to execute judgment against Babylon. Isaiah describes these individuals as being set apart for His purpose. He goes on to describe a mighty army sent to destroy Babylon.

Jeremiah describes the army in Jeremiah 51. Jeremiah describes a mighty army blowing in from the north that results in the total desolation of the city of Babylon. Jeremiah describes this army coming against Babylon as being from Turkey, Armenia, southern Russia and the Medes. Who these nations are at the time of the Tribulation we can only guess aside from their general locations. Perhaps these kingdoms come together as a combined force to attack Babylon.

We might also question who would dare to attack the Antichrist? We know that in the early stages of Armageddon, the sixth bowl judgment dries up the Euphrates which makes it possible for the Antichrist's armies to cross the river to go towards Israel. Second, God causes the kings of the earth to give their allegiance to the beast, but this allegiance only is for a time. According to Revelation 17:17, it says that they do this until the words of God are fulfilled.

So these kingdoms pledge allegiance until God's purpose has been fulfilled. This means that God will eventually use them to destroy an unoccupied Babylon. We can suppose the reason for the attack is to topple the city while the Antichrist is away, but in reality God is using them to accomplish His purpose in destroying the city. So this is Phase II of the battle of Armageddon, the destruction of the city of Babylon by an invading army. This phase happens in conjunction with the destruction of spiritual Babylon.

# CHAPTER 18

## Revelation 18:9–20

**[9] And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. [10] They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, “Alas! Alas! You great city, you mighty city, Babylon! For in a single hour your judgment has come.” [11] And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, [12] cargo of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all kinds of scented wood, all kinds of articles of ivory, all kinds of articles of costly wood, bronze, iron and marble, [13] cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls. [14] “The fruit for which your soul longed has gone from you, and all your delicacies and your splendors are lost to you, never to be found again!” [15] The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud, [16] “Alas, alas, for the great city that was clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels, and with pearls! [17] For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste.” And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off [18] and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning, “What city was like the great city?” [19] And they threw dust on their heads as they wept and mourned, crying out, “Alas, alas, for the great city where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! For in a single hour she has been laid waste. [20] Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her!”**

# CHAPTER 18

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The ruin of the city of Babylon is complete. Everything has been laid to waste. The world who profited from her mourns her loss. The destruction of the city comes very quickly. Three times there is a mention that the destruction occurs within a single hour. So this is a swift, decisive defeat and destruction that occurs as a result of the judgment of God being poured out on the city.

# CHAPTER 18

## Revelation 18:21–24

**[21] Then a mighty 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 be found no more; [22] and the sound of harpists and musicians, of flute players and trumpeters, will be heard in you no more, and a craftsman of any craft will be found in you no more, and the sound of the mill will be heard in you no more, [23] and the light of a lamp will shine in you no more, and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more, for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, and all 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 earth.”**

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## CHAPTER 18

A mighty angel takes a great millstone and throws it into the sea. And the symbol that is intended to be seen here is what God wants people to think of when they think of Babylon's future. The enemy's work will be completely vanquished and forgotten

We might wonder what the Antichrist thinks of this. Jeremiah 50 and 51 describes a courier delivering a message to the king of Babylon, the Antichrist. And when he hears this news his hands fall limp and he is in great agony.

At this point he has not choice but to attack Jerusalem. Destroying the Jews is the last hope for rescuing himself. The Lord is steadily moving the Antichrist towards his complete destruction.

So this completes the second stage of the War of Armageddon, and the final stage sets the stage for the return of the Lord which we will talk about in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 19

## Revelation 19:1–5

[1] After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, [2] for his judgments are true and just; for he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.” [3] Once more they cried out, “Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up forever and ever.” [4] And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” [5] And from the throne came a voice saying, “Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great.”

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## CHAPTER 19

This chapter begins with the familiar phrase after this indicating a cause and effect relationship.

What John is indicating here is that the events of chapters 16-18 the seventh bowl judgement is what leads to what we are about to read from here out.

This bowl judgment made it possible for the Antichrist to move his forces out of Babylon and in turn it resulted in the destruction of Babylon. Babylon's demise paves the way for Christ's return.

The preparation for His return begins with the marriage supper of the Lamb that is described at the beginning of this chapter. And all of heaven rejoices at this moment because it has a moment that has been anticipated since the beginning of human history.

Heaven declares that salvation, glory and power belong to our God. And they praise God for avenging the righteous by destroying Babylon. In this moment there is also a moment of praise and worship for Who God is and what He has done to bring about the Kingdom.

John states that the elders and the creatures fall down and worship. Verse 5 is a call to the servants to worship as well. This is an indication that the saints in heaven already and that they are to fall and worship God at this moment. So the stage is set for Christ's return and next we see the preparations for that return.



# CHAPTER 19

## Revelation 19:6–10

[6] Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. [7] Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; [8] it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure” — for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. [9] And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.” [10] Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

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## CHAPTER 19

As we read this passage we see that a great multitude has cried out in praise that Christ reigns. The composition of this multitude is examined over the next few verses. The first group is called out from within the multitude is the Bride who has made herself ready for the Lamb. This is a reference to the "Bride of Christ" which is a reference to the Church saints.

Paul writes about the bride of Christ in Ephesians 5. In other places Paul compares the church's relationship to Christ as one of a bride to a husband.

Paul will define the word church to mean those who have been indwelt with the Holy Spirit. So this would be individuals who were saved between Pentecost and the Rapture of the Church. And this analogy makes sense in the sense of a Jewish wedding.

As we have received the Holy Spirit and called Jesus Lord of our lives, we have entered a betrothal period, a covenant. We are now in a period of waiting. It is when Christ comes back and raptures us and he comes to get us as a groom came for his bride. The marriage supper of the Lamb is a celebration of the joining together of the bride and the groom.

John says that the bride has been made ready. In other words, the saints receive bright clean linen to wear. This bright clean linen that adorns the saints reminds us of the righteousness of the saints through Jesus. So if that is the first group, is there another group?

## CHAPTER 19

Well there are two ways of looking at verse 9. One is that this blessing pronounced upon those who are invited is indicative of anyone who is a part of the figurative bride. In other words, anyone who has called Jesus Lord of their lives.

But we can also look at this another way and say that since the church encompasses a period of history after Pentecost, this invitation could be for those to celebrate who were saints prior to Pentecost or those who were saved after the Rapture. We might say that they only watch as the church participates in this marriage supper of the Lamb. Up until now, they have not received resurrected bodies - they await their time of resurrection.

At this point John falls down in worship but the angel stops John and tells him that he is a co-laborer with him. The author of this message is the one who deserves true glory, not the deliverer of it. So at this point, John moves into describing the return of the Lord next, but there are some events on earth that are left hanging that we need to investigate.

If you remember, both Phase I and Phase II of the battle of Armageddon have been completed, so there is a final phase that has yet to play out. And this final phase involves three different locations. The Mount of Olives, Jerusalem and Bozrah (Petra).

If you go back to Daniel 11, you find that the Antichrist will dominate the world. We've talked a lot about that so far in our study. But when you arrive at Daniel 11:40, it says that in the end time kings will collide with him.

## CHAPTER 19

This reference to the end time means at the end of tribulation. Two of the seven kings will attempt to take action against him. Daniel says that a king from the north and a king from the south rise up against him. They collide, or a better interpretation of the Hebrew word is press in.

These are the two kings that rise up against him that we talked about in Revelation 18. Daniel 11:40 states that they collide against him as he passes through other countries. Remember the Antichrist was headed toward Jerusalem and as he does these kings attack Babylon.

Daniel 11:41 says that the Antichrist will enter Israel and that Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon will be rescued out of his hands. This is roughly the area around present-day Jordan. This also includes an area called Bozrah or Petra as we talked about earlier in our study. Since these were rescued it means that the Antichrist must attack these areas in the very end. The prophet Jeremiah confirms that the Antichrist will attack this region in the very end in Jeremiah 49.

So the Antichrist's army is largely in two places. The first is around the Jezreel Valley, ready to attack Jerusalem. The second is a small group centered outside of Babylon who watched the city be destroyed. Jeremiah says that the Antichrist will request this army come and destroy the Jews that are in Petra. This is where the believing Jews are held up that had escaped Jerusalem that the Lord had provided protection for. At the very end of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will try to destroy these Jews as well. Even though he tries to destroy them, Jeremiah says that the Lord protects them.

## CHAPTER 19

Daniel 11 continues this narrative as the Antichrist continues to attack the nations of the Middle East, he eventually pitches his encampment between the holy mountain of the temple and another sea, a place called Shephleah. So the Antichrist's deployment of forces to Petra and to Jerusalem is Phase III of the battle of Armageddon. His movements are in response to the news that comes from Babylon. As the Antichrist moves in on Jerusalem, he lays a siege of the city and destroys a part of the city and takes the lives of many individuals.

The prophets Joel and Isaiah both speak of Israel being under siege by the Antichrist. As a result of this siege, the inhabitants will anticipate death at any moment. And in their fear, they will bow their heads to the ground in humility and turn toward the Lord in prayer.

The prophet Zechariah speaks of God's defense of the city in Zechariah 12. God comes to the city's defense as they bow themselves before Him. So God preserves the city and defends them against the Antichrist. And this is the moment when the people of Israel have called out to God and this call is captured in Psalm 79 and 80 in which the nation calls for the Son who God has strengthened for Himself.

So in this moment, Israel calls for Jesus to save them from utter defeat and as they call out to Him, He returns to save them.

# CHAPTER 19

## Revelation 19:11–16

**[11]** Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. **[12]** His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. **[13]** He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. **[14]** And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. **[15]** From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. **[16]** On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

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## CHAPTER 19

John describes Christ's return as he sees it from heaven. John says that all of heaven is opened and is visible from earth. Jesus is seen at the front of the procession. His eyes are like flames and on his head are many diadems or crowns. Next John says that Jesus is riding a white horse. This is interesting because earlier, the Antichrist also rode a white horse. And the symbolism here is that of ruling. The Antichrist riding this horse was symbolic of a false ruler. But as Jesus comes to earth, we see the true ruler riding on it.

John says that he has a sword and will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God. And along with him are those who are clothed in robes in white. So these are the saints who were mentioned earlier. So for you and I, this will be our vantage point to as we return with Christ. Matthew 16 tells us that Jesus will also be accompanied by a large army of angels.

From the perspective of earth, we have to look to Matthew 24 to see what will appear. Matthew 24 tells us that at the end of tribulation all lights will be removed from the sky. In other words, there will be total darkness, but after that time the heavens will open and the Lord Himself will be the only light. There are two phases to Jesus' return to earth the first is that he wipes out the armies waiting at Petra to destroy the Jews. The reference to that can be found in Isaiah 34, 63 and Micah 2. And finally he destroys the army of the Antichrist in Jerusalem.

## CHAPTER 19

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As Jesus descends to the earth in Jerusalem, he comes to the Mount of Olives. And Zechariah tells us that when He descends, He splits the mount in two. Jesus and the armies that descended with him from heaven advance into Jerusalem and attack the armies of the Antichrist and completely wipe them out.

The destruction of these armies are carried out by Jesus' word only. His word alone is enough to utterly destroy and wipe out an entire army. So this completes both Phases IV and V of the battle of Armageddon.



# CHAPTER 19

## Revelation 19:17–21

[17] Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, “Come, gather for the great supper of God, [18] to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great.” [19] And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. [20] And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. [21] And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

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## CHAPTER 19

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So now we returned to the heavenly perspective of what is happening on the earth. All of the prophets that we talk about gave a view from the earthly perspective, but John gives a view from the heavenly perspective.

At this point, John is seeing the aftermath of the battle of Armageddon and the carnage of everything that is occurred. In the aftermath, John sees the angelic cleanup.

Everything that remains on earth that was killed is devoured by birds that eat flesh according to John. John concludes this chapter with a description of what happens with the Antichrist and the false prophet.

John says that they were thrown alive into the lake of fire. These two have the distinction of being the first two individuals who are thrown into the lake of fire that burns forever.

So at this point we have reached the end of war on earth and in the next chapter we will talk about the Millennial Kingdom period.

## CHAPTER 20

Last week we concluded our discussion of the battle of Armageddon and this week we move into chapter 20 and the Millennial Kingdom. But before we get there, we need to talk about a period of time that is sandwiched between the end of Tribulation and the beginning of the Kingdom. And this period is a bridge of sorts between the end of one period and the beginning of another.

If you remember from several chapters ago, we talked about how Daniel 12:11-12 spoke about how from the middle of Tribulation and how regular sacrifice would be abolished. But rather than using the typical 1,260 days as an anchor from beginning to end, he uses 1,290 days and then adds a statement about blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains the 1,335 days.

This reference of 1,290 includes an additional 30 days. This particular reference is with respect to the abomination of desolation, the idol that was setup in the Jewish temple for the whole world to worship the Antichrist. So after Jesus' second coming, it takes 30 days to remove this image from the temple. Not only does it take 30 days to remove this image from the temple, but it probably accounts for cleaning up what is left on the earth after the destruction that occurred throughout the Tribulation period.

Isaiah 65 mentions the earth and heavens being created anew. And this is different from what John is eventually going to talk about in Revelation 21. God creates something completely new in that chapter. But here, Isaiah is talking about a restoration.

## CHAPTER 20

Ezekiel describes a new temple being created on earth which is where Christ will dwell. So why 30 days? Obviously this could happen all at once supernaturally.  $3 \times 10$  equals thirty and we can look at these two numbers and see that 3 represents the Godhead and 10 represents testimony. So this is a time period through which the earth will learn God's character, purpose and power. So the temple will be repaired and the earth will be cleansed during this period.

So if that accounts for the additional 30 days, what about the 45 days that Daniel speaks of in verse 12? Again, let's look at the numerology.  $9 \times 5 = 45$

Nine is a number associated with judgment and five is associated with grace. So this is a time of both judgment and grace.

Those additional 45 days are for those who have yet to be resurrected and are waiting to enter the kingdom that John writes about in Revelation 20.

This is primarily two groups of individuals. The first are those who are the Old Testament saints, the invited guests to the marriage supper of the lamb who have yet to be resurrected. The second would be those saints who died during the Tribulation period.

Revelation 20 tells us that this time period begins with the partial judgment of Satan.

# CHAPTER 20

## Revelation 20:1–5

[1] Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. [2] And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, [3] and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

[4] Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. 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 ended. This is the first resurrection.

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## CHAPTER 20

There are still angels in heaven based on John's writings at the beginning of this chapter. They are attending to the Father in the throne room of heaven. God the Father remains in heaven throughout the Millennial Kingdom.

The angel descends to earth with one purpose, to bind Satan for 1,000 years. And this marks a time of peace on earth. The holding place for Satan will be the abyss. We talked about the abyss a few chapters ago and if you remember it isn't Hell, but it is somewhere similar. It is a place reserved for demonic spirits until the appropriate time when God will unleash them on the earth in Tribulation. Both Hell and the Abyss are temporary holding places.

John then moves onto the citizens of the kingdom. Remember that the church was raptured, first those that were dead and then those who were alive, and in the rapture received new glorified bodies. Those counted in this number were those who were alive during the church period, the time between Pentecost and the Rapture. These individuals returned with Christ during the second coming of Christ. Those Old Testament saints and those who died during the Tribulation were present at the marriage supper of the lamb only in soul form so they need bodies on earth because the Kingdom is a physical place. So John says that they receive physical bodies.

These 45 days after Christ's return and the beginning of the Kingdom will be a time where these individuals receive their physical bodies.

## CHAPTER 20

Daniel 12 sets the stage for this judgment in the beginning of the chapter when he speaks about individuals being raised to everlasting life and others to disgrace and contempt. Those who are righteous will be raised to receive new bodies, but the unrighteous will wait until the end of the Millennial Reign for their judgment.

John sees four thrones setup and these four thrones are used for judging. As John describes them they are in soul form meaning they have yet to receive a body. The term "came to life" describes their receiving of physical bodies.

What about the unbelieving Jews who were alive at Christ's return? They repented and called on Him for help, but they have sinful bodies, so what do we make of them? We don't have enough time to go through all of it right now, but if you look at the Old Testament concerning the new covenant that God will make with Israel that we've been grafted into in Ezekiel, Jeremiah and Isaiah, we can say that some of Israel will be perfect possessing glorified bodies, but others will have natural bodies. There is no clear indication of exactly how this will play out, but for now that is the best that we can speculate about.

John concludes this portion of Scripture by stating what we mentioned earlier, those who are not resurrected will not come to life until the end of the Millennial Reign. There will be two judgments, the first of the righteous and the second of the unrighteous. Believers will be judged first and then the unbelievers.

# CHAPTER 20

## Revelation 20:6–9

**[6] Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years. [7] And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison [8] and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. [9] And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them,**

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## CHAPTER 20

Between verse 6 and 7 we learn that the kingdom begins and then in verse 7 we see what happens after it ends. Revelation doesn't speak much to what happens because the rest of the Bible has a number of details about what happens. Throughout Scripture, the idea of the Kingdom progresses. It begins as a promise to a proposal to a program to a physical place.

In the book of Revelation it becomes a physical place. It is a very real place, a very real world that we will inhabit for 1,000 years. We don't know exactly what it will look like, but it will be a world that is beautiful and meant to be enjoyed. And it will be all the more enjoyable because we will know, serve and worship God in a way that we never have before.

So at the end of this 1,000 years, John says that Satan is released from his prison. You might remember that he was thrown into the abyss at the beginning of the Millennial Reign. But when Satan is released, he immediately begins to tempt humanity.

And the result is a war on earth for the first time since the Tribulation. This involves countless individuals from Gentile nations and their target is Israel and the temple in Jerusalem. Verse 9 states that these nations come to the broad plain which if you refer to Zechariah's description of Israel during the Millennial Reign in Zechariah 14, you see him talk about a broad plain around Jerusalem. This battle ends quickly as they are devoured by a fire that comes from heaven. So there are a number of questions about why this is happening and what's going on right?

## CHAPTER 20

This first question we may ask is why was Satan released in the first place? We know that Satan is the father of lies and that his role is as a deceiver and accuser. He stands in contrast to Jesus who is the Truth and our advocate before the Father. The Bible says that when Jesus rules the earth during this kingdom, He will do so with a rod of iron enforcing perfect righteousness. If Satan were loosed, there would always be a chance for sin to take a foothold and undermine the authority. There are still individuals in this kingdom who possess natural bodies. And because of that sin, can still take hold in their lives.

The second question is why doesn't the Lord destroy Satan at the beginning of the Millennial Reign? The very purpose of the Millennial Reign is so that Jesus can fully rule over sin both spiritually and physically. At the end of all of this all creation will be under the perfect rule of God. The corrupting effect of sin will no longer be a problem because sin will be destroyed and perfect holiness restored. So the reason that Satan is released is so that Jesus can finally crush him completely.

The third question is who are Gog and Magog in this final war? Gog and Magog are references to the book of Ezekiel. If you read Ezekiel 38 and 39 you find a lot about what is prophesied concerning this war. Gog is an actor from the nation of Magog. Gog is a title, not a specific name, similar to Pharaoh or Caesar. This man comes from Magog and has allies from the south and east who will start this war. There are very rudimentary war elements in use as Isaiah says that all metal will be fashioned into farm equipment during the kingdom.

## CHAPTER 20

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Gog desires to attack Israel under the influence of Satan. He sees this as an opportunity to obtain wealth since Israel will be blessed more than any other nation during the kingdom.

So this army comes toward Israel like a cloud covering the land. Israel is defenseless because for 1000 years there has been no war, so even primitive weapons from a large gathering pose a threat. But as this army attempts to destroy Israel, God sends fire from heaven to consume them. So once again we see the Lord providing for Israel.

With this, the final attempt of the enemy to destroy Israel is thwarted. And at this point the Millennial Reign is completed, but there are a few more things that need to be discussed in this chapter.

# CHAPTER 20

## Revelation 20:10–15

[10] and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. [11] Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. [12] And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. [13] And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. [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.

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## CHAPTER 20

The last part of this chapter is about judgements being held. And the first individual to be judged is Satan himself. Satan begins a new existence of eternal torment in the lake of fire with the Antichrist and the False Prophet. It appears that this lake is somewhere in the heavenly realm and right now it is vacant, but at the end of the Millennial Reign, it will house the False Trinity of Satan, the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

This place is the very definition of spiritual death. It's a place for those who are unable to enter the presence of God. It's a place of torment not just because of the conditions, but also because of the separation. Anyone who is thrown into this lake will be eternally separated from God. After death there is no chance for repentance, so this is an eternal state that the soul will occupy.

John goes on to describe a second resurrection. Remember that the first resurrection was a blessed resurrection. It was those who believed in Christ. The second resurrection will not be a blessed event as these are the unrighteous who are resurrected. All unbelievers will now face their eternal judgement.

John sees a great white throne appear and Jesus is seated on the throne to judge the unrighteous. John describes that all unbelievers are brought up from hell and judged before Christ. Remember our bodies are temporary, but our spirits or souls are eternal.

## CHAPTER 20

John also describes the sea, or the abyss giving up their dead and this is a reference to where Satan was bound for 1,000 years. And the indication here is that most likely his demons were sent there with him and that now they too will be judged. Judgment comes in the form of a book.

We learned earlier that there is a Book of Life in which all names to whom the Lord has show mercy and who have called Him Lord is written. Verse 12 mentions books, so what may these other books be? There are a number of ideas, but one is that they are a list of all the sins that individuals have committed.

A second idea is that it is the Law of Moses by which one sin will cause the whole Law to not be kept. The Great White Throne is a judgement only for unbelievers. And anyone who is not found in this book will be thrown into the Lake of Fire.

And this is a sobering reminder of our need to make sure that we spread the Good News of Jesus. Hell is not just a place of fiction, it is a real place.

The Lake of Fire is not just a made up store, it is a literal place of eternal torment and separation from God.

# CHAPTER 21

## Revelation 21:1–8

**[1] Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. [2] And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. [3] And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. [4] He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” [5] And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” [6] And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. [7] The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. [8] But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.”**

# CHAPTER 21

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John begins with the description of what the New Heavens and New Earth look like. The first interesting point is that there is no sea. And this in contrast to the fact the earth we inhabit today in which there is more sea than land.

Next the Lord places a new city on the earth, a new Jerusalem. It isn't a city made of earthly things but rather a city that descends from the heavens. It's appearance will be like that of a bride who appears for the first time to her husband. It's dramatic and anticipated and so is this moment of the appearance of the New Jerusalem to the earth.

John hears a declaration from heaven of the arrival of the city. And with it, God dwells again with man on the earth. John says that all of the markers of sin have been removed as well.



## CHAPTER 21

There are not tears, not death, no mourning. All of the sources of rebellion are cleansed and a holiness of sorts has been restored to the earth. Holiness is not just something that we live our lives seeking after. In the end, God Himself will bring this idea of holiness to all of creation.

This portion ends with a call to salvation to the reader. The reason is two-fold. The first is so that salvation may be found while it is available, before it is too late. This is a call to call Jesus Lord of your life before its too late.

The second is because this is what is waiting believers who call Jesus Lord of their lives. It is something that can be achieved. And it is something awaiting us if we persevere.

Who will dwell in this city? The book of Hebrews lists out that the entire Trinity will dwell in this city along with the angels and all believers. What an incredible gathering this will be!

# CHAPTER 21

## Revelation 21:9–14

[9] Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” [10] And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, [11] having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. [12] It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— [13] on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. [14] And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

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## CHAPTER 21

The angel escorting John through this city describes the city as the Bride of Christ. This title in the New Testament is reserved for the church in the rest of the New Testament, but here it transfers to the New Jerusalem. And this makes sense if we remember that the Bride of Christ refers to where the Spirit of Christ dwells. In the New Jerusalem, Christ dwells with the Father in the temple of the city.

John describes the city shining bright, as bright as the sun. There are walls surrounding the city, not for protection but for a testament to God's previous creation. And each gate has an angel stationed at it, twelve total representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Gates are entry to the city, so we are reminded that Israel is the gateway to the redemption and knowledge of God.

God worked through Israel to fulfill His promises of redemption for all the world. These gates are arranged in three's which reminds us of the Trinity.

John also mentions there are twelve foundations with the twelve names of the twelve apostles of Christ. Which also makes sense as the apostles laid the foundation for the church after Jesus left the earth.

# CHAPTER 21

## Revelation 21:15–21

[15] And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. [16] The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal. [17] He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. [18] The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, like clear glass. [19] The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, [20] the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, 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 of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

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## CHAPTER 21

John describes the city being 1,500 miles x 1,500 miles. That's an incredibly large city which today would span most of the continental United States.

The city is also a perfect cube extending up 1,500 miles. This means the city will reach up to the height of a satellite's orbit.

You will notice the measurements are built on a different unit of measurement from modern measurements. And you will notice in this passage that they were all divisible by 12. Again if you remember from earlier, the number 12 indicates God's perfect ruling through man.

So the city is a testament to God's plan perfected through Israel and the Church. The building materials are filled with grand extravagance. The very thing that we treasure and desire, gold, precious gems are all building materials in the new city.

# CHAPTER 21

## Revelation 21:22–27

**[22] And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. [23] And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. [24] By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, [25] and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. [26] They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. [27] But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.**

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## CHAPTER 21

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John says that there is no temple in the city, for God Himself is the temple. There will be no need for a physical building because sin has been erased. And notice that the Father and the Son dwell together in the New Jerusalem.

John says there is no need for sun or moon because God's glory itself will be the light for the city. He says that the gates of the city will never be shut, so again the walls aren't for protection, but as a testament to God's prior creation. And John adds that there will be no night in this city.

The fact that God Himself is the light of the world suggest that this new city is flat, something that could not be possible if the new world was a sphere. Another interesting thing to point out is that there really isn't a measurement of time because there is no night since darkness does not exist.

# CHAPTER 22

## Revelation 22:1–5

**[1] Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb [2] through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. [3] No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. [4] They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. [5] And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.**

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## CHAPTER 22

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John says that from the throne of God flows a river as bright as crystal.

The river runs through the middle of the street of the city and on either side of the river is tree of life with twelve kinds of fruit. This tree is singularly called the Tree of Life, a reference to the book of Genesis.

Before Adam and Eve sinned, they had access to this tree in the Garden of Eden. In the New Jerusalem it would appear that there is a connection between this tree and physical immortality. And it would make sense because it is sustained directly from the throne of God.

So each time that one eats of this tree, they are reminded of where true life comes from, God Himself. The tree also produces fruit on a monthly schedule, meaning that at least months will be counted in the New Jerusalem. Because we are perfect, we will see God face to face. Imagine that for a minute, you will see God face to face.

# CHAPTER 22

## Revelation 22:6–15

**[6] And he said to me, “These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place.” [7] “And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps 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 them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, [9] but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God.” [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 evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.” [12] “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. [13] I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” [14] Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. [15] Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.**

# CHAPTER 22

## Notes:

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Jesus finishes up this book in a personal way stating that these words are true and trustworthy. We can trust the words of this book, John saw things that were to come and we can trust them as we can trust the words of the prophets of the Old Testament. Jesus says I am coming soon. Obviously these words were written 2,000 years ago, but today Jesus is nearer to coming back than He was then. We need to always look to the future with our eyes on His coming. Anticipating that He is coming one day soon.

In verse 10, unlike Daniel, John is to not seal up these words. Daniel was told to seal up his prophecy, but John is told to reveal these words to all the earth. The end of this section is the final altar call of sorts in the Bible. It is the final call for repentance. It is a reminder for all that read it to repent while salvation may be found. Jesus reminds us that He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

## CHAPTER 22

Everything in our lives begins and ends with Jesus. He is the beginning of our salvation, and He will one day be the end of our salvation. In other words, we will receive the full consummation of what we received in earnest through the Holy Spirit when we first called Him Lord of our life. Jesus seems to indicate that the Lake of Fire is somewhere outside of this city because He indicates that the unrighteous will not be able to enter the gates and that they will be outside of the gates.

### **Revelation 22:16–21**

**[16] “I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about 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 desires take the water of life without price. [18] I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, [19] and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. [20] He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! [21] The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.**

# CHAPTER 22

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## Notes:

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Jesus testifies one last time that these words are true. And He bids us one final time to come, anyone who is thirsty. If they are seeking nourishment, they can find it in Him.

Jesus also warns about adding to Scripture. Anyone who makes changes to this book will have the plagues of this book added to them and they will not share in the New Jerusalem. Undermining the Word of God is a trait of the unbeliever.

Jesus concludes this chapter by saying that He is coming soon. And then the benediction to Come Lord Jesus! And the final word is Amen.

Amen is symbolic of let it be. I think I would add a double Amen to this chapter. We all seek out Jesus' return!